

THE
TEMPLE
CLASSICS



THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

Englished and

Edited by

F. S. ELLIS

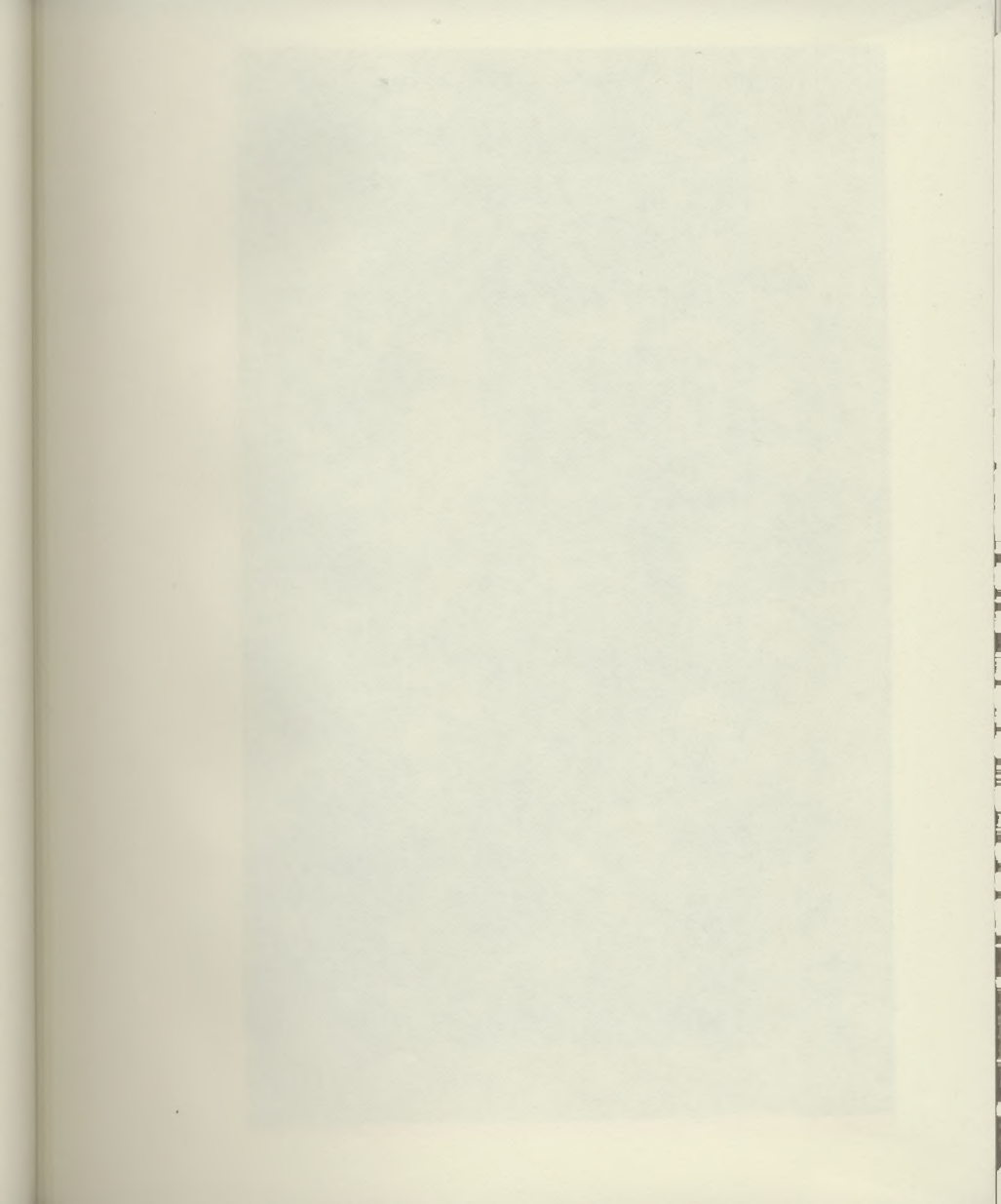
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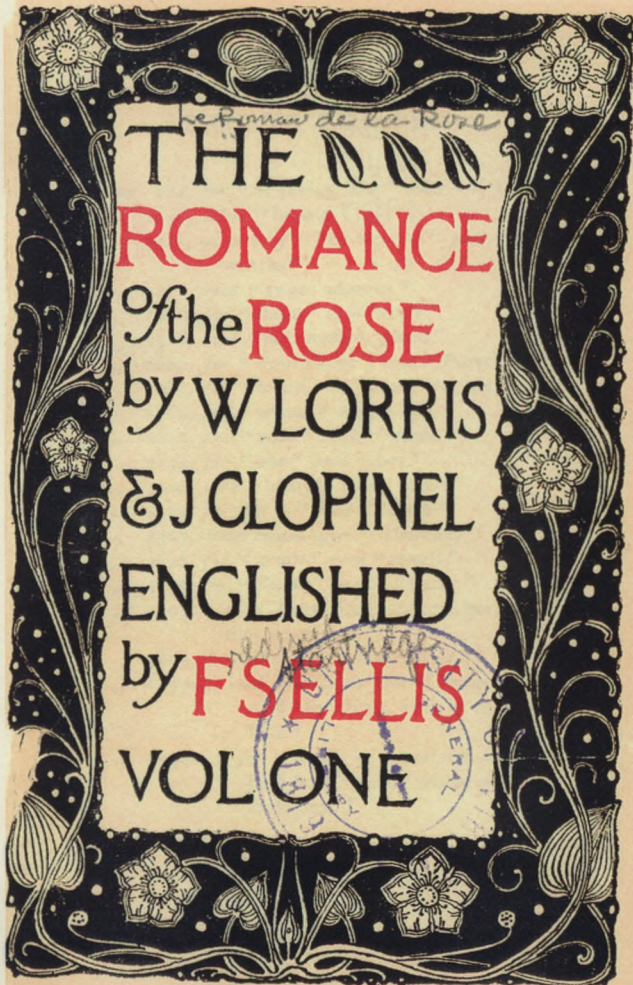
H. S. Ellis





ARTUR ELGEE

**IDLENESS
AND THE
DREAMER**



Le Roman de la Rose

THE

ROMANCE

Of the ROSE

by W MORRIS

& J CLOPINEL

ENGLISHED

by F SELLIS

VOL ONE

MDCCC · PUBLISHED · BY · J · M · DENT ·
AND · CO · ALDINE · HOUSE · LONDON · W · C

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1900a

v. 1

FAULTS ESCAPED

- line 882, for "of loving kiss" read "of a kiss,"
,, 1297, delete "he was"
,, 1421, in place of "For wearied" read "Fore-
wearied"
,, 1462, read "sweet odorous"
,, 1486, for "there" read "rare"
,, 1516, read "She wasted, pined"
,, 1640, for "Pourtrayed" read "Portrayed"
,, 2089, for "wondrous" read "yet 'tis"
,, 2764, for "whom" read "who"
,, 2841, for "who" read "whom"
,, 3153, for "she" read "her"
,, 3202, read "beneath love's smart,"
,, 4353, for "It is" read "Alone"
,, 4507, insert comma after "Thereby,"
,, 4696, for "men's" read "man's"
,, 4735, for "Flees;" read "Fleeth;"
,, 4805, read "They bind around her, while
they scourge"
,, 5695, for "Pressed" read "Press"
,, 6197-9, read "Bethink you of Diogenes
And Heraclitus, both of these
Had"
,, 6549-50, for "where he conceived
Had been," read "where conceived
He'd been"

PROLOGUE

AMONG the books which throw light on the lives, minds, and ways of men in the wonderful thirteenth century—the century of Roger Bacon, of St. Francis, of S. Louis, of S. Thomas Aquinas, of Duns Scotus, and of the youth of Dante—there are three which, while they had for three hundred years as great vogue as the most widely read of nineteenth-century romances enjoy for a few months, have, nevertheless, been neglected by succeeding ages to a degree that must be regretted. A knowledge and study of them will afford a far clearer insight into the daily life, and the spirit working within the people for whom they were written, than the annals of the wars that raged during the same period between kings and nobles. The three books referred to are “The Romance of the Rose,” “Reynard the Fox,” and the “Legenda Aurea, or Golden Legend.” The first presents us with pictures of mediæval everyday life that we shall look for in vain elsewhere, till in the next century the lanterns of Froissart, Chaucer, and William Langland illumine the

darkness. The second presents us with a scathing political satire applicable to all time ; and though the key to its special purpose and object has been irrecoverably lost, its brilliant humour and keen sarcasm on the follies of human nature are imperishable. The third, no one who cares to understand the spiritual atmosphere in which our ancestors lived and breathed can afford to neglect.

It has fallen to the lot of the writer of the present notice to have no small share in bringing "Reynard the Fox" and the "Golden Legend" under the notice of the reading public of to-day, and he has now the gratification of presenting the "Romance of the Rose" in such form as he hopes may find acceptance.

He is but too well aware that to produce an ideal translation of such a book would demand a knowledge of old French approaching that possessed by a Gaston Paris, or a Langlois ; as intimate an acquaintance with mediæval lore as might be expected from the combined knowledge of a Skeat, a Furnivall, and a Gollancz, and the poetic capacity of a William Morris ; while he is fully conscious of the degree to which he falls short of the requirements he has indicated. But the task having been proposed to him by two of the scholars above named, he became, on looking into the book, so greatly interested and fascinated by it, that he determined to undertake the

work, or he would rather say the pleasurable pastime; for he is fain to acknowledge that the eighteen months which were occupied by the actual translation embraced some of the most agreeably spent hours of a long life.

The task of translating the "Romance of the Rose" in its entirety has often been referred to as a gigantic undertaking, but it contains only eight thousand lines more than the "Divina Commedia," which has been translated into English innumerable times. The file of a newspaper for eighteen months, set ahead, would be an appalling task indeed to peruse with moderate attention; but taken in daily portions, one makes little of the business, dreary though it be—so has it been that the two-and-twenty thousand six hundred and eight lines of "The Romance of the Rose" have melted imperceptibly as the days followed on, the work of each presenting some pleasant variety.

The extreme popularity enjoyed by this famous book from the last quarter of the thirteenth to the close of the fifteenth century is attested by the fact that not less than two hundred manuscript copies of it have survived the waste of centuries (while of the "Canterbury Tales" no more than fifty-nine are known), and printed editions followed in rapid succession from about 1480 till 1538. But, strange to say, except the translation made by Chaucer, and

either one or two other contemporary hands, of seven thousand six hundred and ninety-eight lines, no attempt has been made to present it in any other European language, with the single exception of a German rendering into verse of the first part, by H. Fährmann, printed in 1839.

The new literature which arose in France, when once the renaissance had taken firm hold, effectually clouded the fame of the "Romance of the Rose" for close upon two hundred years; but in 1735 a new edition was given by L. du Fresnoy, followed in 1737 by a volume of notes by M. Lantin de Damerey. In 1798 appeared a second edition of Du Fresnoy's text accompanied by the notes, and in 1814 M. Méon published a new text from better MSS. in four volumes, which was reproduced in 1865 under the editorship of M. Francisque Michel. In 1878-80 Mons. Croissandeau (under the pseudonym of Pierre Marteau) put forth an edition at Orleans, accompanied by a translation into modern French, in five volumes. Now happily we may look forward to the critical edition which is to be published in 1901 under the able editorship of M. Ernest Langlois.

Mr. Hallam in his "History of the Literature of Europe" has no more to say of so great a landmark in the field he is earing than that "a very celebrated poem, the 'Roman de la

Rose,' had introduced an unfortunate taste for allegory into verse, from which France did not extricate herself for several generations." The reproach of allegory might with equal justice be applied to all the romantic and religious poetry of the Middle Ages, including the "Divina Commedia," the author of which can scarcely be supposed to have been influenced by Jean de Meun, who in truth merely adopted the style already in vogue. It is probable that the learned historian did not trouble himself to look at the book he so curtly condemned. He appears but to echo in one short sentence the dictum of Sismondi, in whose day the revival of interest in mediæval literature had hardly begun. The charge of dulness once made against this highly imaginative and brilliant book, successive English writers, until quite recent times, have been content to accept the verdict, though Professor Morley and others have of late ably repelled the charge. If further testimony were necessary as to the falsity of the accusation, and the opinion of one who has found a grateful pastime in translating it might be considered of any weight, he would not hesitate to traverse the attribution of dulness, and to assert that it is a poem of extreme interest, written as to the first part with delicate fancy, sweet appreciation of natural beauty, clear insight, and skilful invention, while J. de Meun's continuation is distinguished by vigour, brilliant invention, and

close observation of human nature. The thirteenth century lives before us.

How greatly Chaucer was indebted to his French predecessor can only be appreciated by those who will be at the pleasurable pains of studying the work of both poets; but as we read the earlier of the two, the conclusion forces itself upon us that Chaucer's mind was, so to speak, permeated with the "Romance of the Rose." It must not, however, be forgotten that both Chaucer and Jean de Meun were diligent students of Boethius "De Consolatione Philosophiae" and Alanus de Insulis "De Planctu Naturae." Here and there Chaucer has appropriated passages from the "Romance"; notably in the description of the refined and dainty manners of the lady prioress, which is found under another guise in Chapter LXXIII. of the "Romance." Nor is it easy to read Jean de Meun's dramatic picture of the jealous husband without feeling that it suggested to Chaucer the prologue to the wife of Bath's tale by way of a counterblast.

In considering the remarkable place that the "Romance of the Rose" holds in European literature, it is well to bear in mind that the first part was written more than a hundred years, and the second part seventy years, before Chaucer was born. When we turn to English literature contemporary with the work of Guillaume de

Lorris and Jean de Meun we cannot but be struck with a sense of humility at the wide gulf in human interest that lies between the two. A doubt steals over one whether there is not ground for the assertion sometimes heard made, that we were indebted to the inspiration of northern French architects and artists for the glories of our architecture, glass painting, and miniature painting in the thirteenth century.

Though the "Romance of the Rose" is commonly described and spoken of as one book, its two parts are in truth only nominally linked together by the names of the characters being carried on from the one to the other. The two parts are, in fact, the outcome of two widely differing minds, and though Jean de Meun professes to continue the work of his forerunner, his portion is altogether different from it, both as to style and purpose. Guillaume de Lorris sets out to write a love pastoral or idyll, and Jean de Meun, seeing its popularity, takes advantage thereof to give expression to the heterogeneous thought with which his brain teems.

Of the history of Guillaume de Lorris we know no more than the slight indications given by his continuator (Cap. LX. ll. 10991-11158). All that is known of Jean de Meun is likewise derived from the passage indicated above—namely, that he was born at Meun sur Loire, and was surnamed Clopinel (the Halt)

—except that, as I learn through an obliging communication from M. Ernest Langlois, it has now been ascertained that he died at Paris in the Rue S. Jacques.

The work of G. de Lorris ends somewhat abruptly at line 4202. It will be seen that it is a simple allegory of the love of a young man for a beautiful girl, and while the poet introduces some charming descriptions of the country in spring-time, redolent of fresh air and sunshine, and gives some forcible characterisations of human passions and vices, he keeps within the plan of a romance, conjoined with instructions in the art of love, drawn from Ovid's poem "De Arte Amandi," in accordance with the title of his book.

The question whether the earlier author completed his work or not is left an open one by Mons. E. Langlois, who has fully discussed it in his masterly account of the whole work printed in the second volume of "Histoire de la langue et de la littérature Française," edited by M. Petit de Julleville. *Paris, 1878-1900.* He notes that among the two hundred manuscripts of the book that have come down to us, two only give the eighty lines, manifestly spurious, which round off the story, but he hesitates to say that it may not have had an ending which the continuator suppressed.

The work of Jean de Meun or Clopinel is

widely different from that to which it professes to be a complement. Leaving the idyllic strain, the author takes occasion to introduce a variety of episodes which afford him the opportunity of disburdening his mind of his views on most subjects which occupy the attention of men, while he brings the story to a conclusion, after a fashion which would have amazed his predecessor, could he have foreseen it.

But if he wanders again and again into by-paths apart from the main road of the story, it is to these digressions that we owe the lifelike pictures which throw light on his surroundings, in the dramatic episodes of the jealous husband (Chapters XLVIII.—LII.), the duenna's tale of her own wasted life (Chap. LXXII.), and elsewhere.

Jean de Meun is commonly censured for his depreciation and abuse of women; but may not that censure have been too freely applied from the reading of isolated passages, without taking into account the fact that he is writing dramatically, and is in truth rather representing the views of a jealous and angry husband than expressing deliberately his own? What can be more tenderly pathetic than the picture he draws in Chap. LII. ll. 9901—9948 of a woman's position before and after marriage?

In the same way, might not the communistic doctrines charged against our author with equal

or greater justice be laid at the door of Boëthius, from whom he derives his picture of the Golden Age, when all things were common and laws needless, or at that of Geoffrey Chaucer, for his charming poem of "The Former Age," drawn from the same source?

That Jean de Meun's utterances in this regard were taken by his contemporaries rather poetically than didactically may fairly be inferred from the favour with which the book was certainly received by persons of royal and of noble estate.

In considering the latter part of the "Romance of the Rose," and what it was that spurred its author on to give expression to the exhortations contained in it, it will not be beside the purpose to keep in view another popular book of the day which can scarcely have failed to come under his notice.

Towards the conclusion of the "Romance" it will be seen how Nature introduces her high-priest Genius, who holds forth at considerable length in praise of fecundity, assuring those who follow and carry out Nature's laws thereon, of a participation in the joys of heaven, in a manner somewhat startling.

But it seems by no means improbable that Jean de Meun intended this as a counterpoison to the doctrines which had just then been specially brought forward and enforced by the

Dominican monk Jacobus de Voragine, in his "Legenda Aurea, or Golden Legend." Not only is celibacy exalted as being in itself a virtue, but the example is held up to special admiration of wedded couples who lived as celibates in despite of the laws of God and Nature.

M. Langlois, while pointing out certain defects that attach to the work, thus sums up the merits of its author: "Jean de Meun is not only a scholar and a man of letters, he is also a poet, the greatest perhaps of the thirteenth century. In this respect he has commonly been too little considered, inasmuch as other more strikingly brilliant qualities of his mind have absorbed the attention of the critics who have occupied themselves with him, and because, moreover, the numerous poems embedded in his 'Romance' are somewhat obscured by the setting. How fine a passage is that (Chapter XXXV.) in which he contrasts the careless happiness enjoyed by the labourer with the perpetual anxieties of the banker or money-dealer, who never knows when he is rich enough; of the merchant whose desire for gain is likened to the thirst of a man who fain would drink up the volume of the Seine; of the lawyer or physician each desirous only of selling his services for filthy lucre; of the divine who preaches but for money, and of those heapers up of riches who are mere

slaves to the wealth that they imprison in their coffers. . . . In a manner altogether different, we may remark, among other passages which bear the impress of real poetry, a magnificent description of a storm, with the return of fair weather (Chap. XCVIII.). . . . The parables, piled one upon another by the author to justify his attacks on the servitude of marriage and the isolation of the cloister, which represent in admirably natural and graceful miniatures the bird in the cage, the fish snared in a bag-net, the kitten that sees a mouse for the first time, and the filly that first catches sight of a horse (Chap. LXXV.).

“The episodes also of Venus and Adonis (Chapters LXXXVII.—VIII.) and of Pygmalion (Chapter CVI.) are charming idylls, which may worthily hold comparison with the pages of Ovid, whence they are imitated. We may further remark that no other author of the thirteenth century writes with such ease as Jean de Meun, his style being invariably on a level with the ideas he desires to express, now powerful and rugged, now graceful and gentle, but always clear, elegant, and picturesque; his verse is flowing and easy, and many of his couplets have become proverbial.”

But one of the finest qualities of the author is his quiet humour, which peeps out as continually and as delightfully as it does in the verse

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS IN VOLUME I

Though the old English version takes no account of chapters or sections, it is deemed better for the sake of clearness to summarise the 108 sections of which the work consists in their separate sequence, as they are given in the original text.

For convenience of reference, the lines of the French text are marked F. in the margin according to the text of the edition printed in the "Bibliothèque Elzevirienne," Orléans, 1878. C. represents the lines of the old English version as far as it goes, though a portion only is Chaucer's.

The question is raised as to the truth or falsity of dreams. The author affirms his belief in their fulfilment, and expresses his intention of relating a vision that befell him in the twentieth year of his age.

Cap. I.
F. 1-130.
C. 1-134.

He entitles his narrative the "Romance of the Rose," out of compliment to a lady, who worthily bears the name of that fragrant flower, and with whom he is deeply in love.

Five years ago, as he lay on his bed on a May morning, he dreamed that he leapt from his couch, washed his hands and face, and issued forth into the fresh air, that he might enjoy the matin song of the birds. He wanders

over flower-besprinkled meadows beside a river, basting his sleeves with a bodkin as he goes.

Cap. II.
F. 131-530.
C. 135-530.

When he has traversed some distance, he perceives before him a spacious garden enclosed by high embattled walls, whereon, as he comes anigh, he beholds, painted in bright colours illumined with gold, ten hideous figures, which represent respectively: Hatred, Felony, Villainy, Covetousness, Avarice, Envy, Sorrow, Old Age, Hypocrisy, and Poverty.

The characteristics of these various figures are set forth with marvellous force and insight.

Having carefully studied these paintings, and listened with delight to the singing of the birds in the trees that overtop the wall of the garden, the Dreamer becomes possessd by extreme longing to gain access to the place, and carefully seeks around in the hope of finding some means of entrance, or a ladder by means of which he may scale the barrier. He at last discovers a small and narrow hornbeam wicket.

Cap. III.
F. 531-742.
C. 535-742.

On this wicket he smites boldly several times, and then listens anxiously for a footstep. The gate is opened to him by a beautiful damsel richly habited. In reply to his inquiry she tells him that she is called Idleness, and that her sole occupation is the tiring of her hair and the adornment of her person. She is the friend of Sir Mirth, to whom this pleasance belongs. He it was, she says, who built the wall and caused the hideous figures to be painted on the outside

of it; and that the fair trees with which it is planted had by him been brought from the land of the Saracens. Passing the gate, at the invitation of Idleness, the Dreamer listens with delight to the many-voiced birds, and is so entranced with the beauty of the place, that he deems forsooth he must have hopped upon the Earthly Paradise. His new-found acquaintance tells him, moreover, that the lord of the fair spot is just now present, having come thither to listen to the melody of the birds and enjoy the varied beauties of the garden in company with his friends. He wanders through shady alleys till he comes on a secluded spot where he discovers Mirth surrounded by a merry company.

He beholds these joyous folk join the dance, while a damsel named Gladness sings entrancingly. A description is given of the dancers, and of the minstrels who make melody with voice, pipe, and string.

Cap. IV.
F. 743-96.
C. 743-92.

After a while the Dreamer is approached by Courtesy, who takes him by the hand and invites him to join the dance as her companion. He describes at full the persons and attire of Mirth and Gladness.

Cap. V.
F. 797-890.
C. 793-876.

Ere long he perceives the God of Love coming towards him, accompanied by Sweet-Looks, who carries two bows, the one gnarled, knotted, and hideous; the other flexible and

Cap. VI.
F. 891-1044.
C. 877-1032.

beautiful, and adorned with fair paintings. He carries also two quivers, each one containing five arrows. Those borne in his right hand are beautiful of aspect, and sharply barbed with gold. They are named Beauty, Simplicity, Franchise, Companionship, and Fair-Seeming. The arrows borne in his left hand are hideous of aspect, and are named Pride, Villainy, Shame, Despair, and Fickleness. The Dreamer notices that the special companion of the God of Love is a lady named Beauty. Her form and appearance are fully set forth.

Cap. VII. RICHESSE, who keeps close beside Beauty, is described in careful detail. Beside her sits Largesse, and not far from her is seen the damsel hight Franchise.

F. 1045-1264.
C. 1033-1250.

Cap. VIII. The Dreamer sings the praises of Dame Courtesy and the Lady Idleness, to whom he owed his entry into the garden.

F. 1265-1300.
C. 1251-1280.

Cap. IX. Herein is told of Youth and her Lover, and their inexperience of the ways of life.

F. 1301-1320.
C. 1281-1308.

Cap. X. Having watched the dance to its end and seen the different couples retire to repose themselves in shady bowers, the Dreamer marks how the God of Love calls Sweet-Looks towards him, and takes from his hand the fair-made bow and the five beautiful arrows. He is overwhelmed with fear lest the darts should be destined for him, and notes that Cupid watches him and

F. 1320-1486.
C. 1309-1468.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS xxiii

follows his footsteps, but he nevertheless pursues his way through the pleasaunce and describes the great variety of beautiful trees that meet his gaze. Rabbits bound over the flower-decked turf, and squirrels spring from branch to branch among the trees. The grass is kept evergreen by little runlets of water which intersect the lawns. At last he comes upon a marble fountain beneath a gigantic pine-tree, on which he sees an inscription declaring it to be the fountain in which Narcissus wept himself away.

The opening of the story of Narcissus and Echo. Cap. XI.
F. 1437-1538.
C. 1469-1516.

The story of Narcissus concluded. The Dreamer's first impulse was flight when he recognised the fountain of Narcissus, but second thoughts induced him to stay and examine it carefully. Gazing into its crystal waters he perceives that from either side of the fountain may be seen reflected one-half of the garden and the wonders contained therein. But that which attracts him more than all else that he sees reflected in the water is a Rose-tree charged with buds. Cap. XII.
F. 1539-1740.
C. 1517-1714. So greatly desirous does he feel to approach this tree, and if he may not possess himself of a bud, at least to enjoy the sweet savour of the blooms, that the offer of the city of Paris or of Pavia would not induce him to forego his desire. But, alas! the Rose-tree is surrounded by a thick hedge of thorns, briars, and thistles.

Cap. XIII. But while the Dreamer is occupied with the fountain and the Rose-tree, the God of Love has been upon his track, and now, approaching within a short distance of his quarry, draws the bowstring to his ear and lets fly the arrow named Beauty, which pierces him through the eye. So sharply is it barbed that all his efforts to withdraw it are unavailing. He tries to drag himself towards the Rose, but Cupid again draws upon him and he is pierced with the arrow named Simplicity, and successively with those high Franchise, Companionship, and Fair-Seeming. The God of Love then anoints his victim with an unguent which allays the extreme anguish caused by the wounds.

Cap. XIV. The God now approaches him as he lies supine on the turf, tells him that all resistance is vain, and that he will do well to give himself up and acknowledge his conqueror for his lord and master.

Cap. XV. To this the Dreamer agrees, and becomes Love's vassal. [Henceforward he is called the Lover.] The God kisses the Lover's lips, as token and seal that hereafter he claims him for his vassal and slave, and receives from his captive assurance of submission and devotion.

Cap. XVI. Cupid takes from his purse a golden key, wherewith he locks the heart of the Lover, and expresses his willingness to make known to him all such lore as pertains to his service, if he has

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS xxv

desire for instruction. He in turn entreats his master to teach him all the mysteries of the art of love.

The God then essays to instruct his disciple, and lays his commands upon him, informing him, moreover, of the joys, sorrows, and perils that are inseparable from his service.

Cap. XVII.
F. 2159-2852.
C. 2175-2950.

Love disappears, leaving his servant torn with conflicting emotions, but desirous above all things of overcoming the formidable hedge that surrounds the Rose-tree, and of possessing himself of the particular Rosebud on which he has set his heart.

Cap. XVIII.
F. 2853-2876.
C. 2951-78.

While debating with himself whether he shall attempt to pass the formidable barrier, he sees coming towards him a gentle youth, who proves to be Fair-Welcome. He frankly offers to assist the Lover in overcoming the obstacle that separates him from the object of his passion. He promptly accepts the kind and generous offer. But, alas! he perceives Danger lurking beside the Rose-tree, and with him Evil-Tongue, Shame, and Fear, who are there to assist him as guardians of the Roses and Rosebuds. Fair-Welcome encourages the Lover to pluck a rose, and, in earnest of his happiness, presents him with a green leaf from off the tree, wherewith he decks his vestment. But when he proposes to pluck the Rosebud that he so greatly longs for, his

Cap. XIX.
F. 2877-3028.
C. 2979-3148.

xxvi SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

companion is much alarmed at his temerity. While they are discussing the subject, Danger suddenly awakes, and roundly rates Fair-Welcome for bringing the Lover within reach of the Rose-tree.

Cap. XX. Danger chases Fair-Welcome and the Lover from out the close.
F. 3029-40.
C. 3149-58.

Cap. XXI. The Lover bitterly laments his hard lot, and declares that only those who have felt the pangs of disappointed love can understand and sympathise with his sufferings.
F. 3041-72.
C. 3159-88.

Cap. XXII. Wandering about the garden, a victim to despair, he is perceived by Reason from her high-built tower. She descends, and approaching him, asks the cause of his misery, tells him that Idleness did him but an ill turn when she admitted him to the garden, and counsels him to tear his mind away from the folly of love.
F. 3073-3178.
C. 3189-3304.

Cap. XXIII. The Lover replies that he has made over his heart to the God of Love as his lord and master, who has locked and secured it. He then remembers that his master had counselled him to confide in a friend, and that he has one who is loyal and true of heart.
F. 3179-3218.
C. 3305-47.

Cap. XXIV. He seeks out his friend forthwith, and opens his grief to him.
F. 3219-36.
C. 3348-68.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS xxvii

His friend reassures him, declaring that Danger is not nearly so formidable as he appears to be, and his best course is to caress and flatter his enemy. Hereat he feels his courage and confidence restored.

Cap. XXV.
F. 3237-64.
C. 3369-94.

He approaches Danger, and explains to him that albeit he is the bounden servant of Love, he would not for his own weight in silver have willingly given him offence, or done anything to excite his wrath. Danger is somewhat appeased, and bids him serve Love if he will, but unless he desires to feel the weight of his club, he will do well to keep clear of the enclosure where the Roses flourish.

Cap. XXVI.
F. 3265-3364.
C. 3395-3498.

His friend advises patience, and again reminds him that if he is courteous and polite to Danger he will find him less ferocious than he seems. Nevertheless the Lover remains oppressed with grief and misery.

While in this unhappy condition of mind the God of Love sends to him Franchise and Pity. They reason with Danger, who consents that Fair-Welcome may return to the disconsolate Lover. He reappears, takes the Lover by the hand, and leads him within the enclosure.

Cap.
XXVII.
F. 3365-3474.
C. 3499-3620.

At once he finds himself transported from hell to paradise. Approaching the Rose, he finds it more beautiful and attractive than ever. Fair-Welcome refuses to assent to his earnest

Cap.
XXVIII.
F. 3475-3596.
C. 3621-3752.

xxviii SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

prayer that he may be permitted to kiss it, greatly fearing what Chastity may say thereto. Then Venus appears, and, reproaching Fair-Welcome for his hard-heartedness, desires that at least he will permit the Lover to kiss the Rose.

Cap. XXIX. Overcome by the perfume of the torch borne
F. 3597-3662. by Venus, Fair-Welcome accords the longed-
C. 3753-3826. for boon. But he is straightway set upon by
Shame and Evil-Tongue, the latter of whom
awakes Jealousy, who, leaping to her feet, rates
Fair-Welcome roundly.

Cap. XXX. Jealousy continues her attack upon Fair-
F. 3663-3800. Welcome, and a colloquy ensues between her
C. 3827-3998. and Shame. Lastly, Fear intervenes, and pro-
poses to Shame that they shall, in company, seek
out Danger and reproach him for the negligence
he has displayed in keeping guard over the Rose.

Cap. XXXI. They accordingly proceed together to the
F. 3801-3932. haunt of Danger, and successively express to him
C. 3999-4144. their surprise and displeasure that he had not
better understood his duty. Danger rouses him-
self from his lair, brandishes his club, and vows
vengeance against all who shall in future dare
to invade the precincts of which he is the
guardian.

Cap. Jealousy builds a high tower, with intent to
XX XII. confine Fair-Welcome as a prisoner therein.
F. 3933-4202. The form and fashion of the tower, and the
C. 4145-4432.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS xxix

manner of its building, are fully set forth. The doors are guarded by Fear, Shame, Danger, and Evil-Tongue. The Lover bemoans his hard fate in being cut off from the society of one he loves so well.

[Here the tale, as told by William Morris, F. 4203-82. breaks off abruptly. A later hand has put a summary conclusion to the story, relating how the Lover overcomes Fear, Shame, Evil-Tongue, and Danger by the aid of Venus, and possesses himself of the Rose.]

Here begins the Work of Jean de Meun.

The Lover bemoans his unhappy state. He recalls Love's promises to give him help and comfort, but how shall he put faith in him who has deceived so many? If he should die, at least he hopes that the God of Love will take Fair-Welcome under his protection, to whom he leaves by will all that he can call his own, namely, his heart.

Cap.
XXXIII.
F. 4283-4450.
C. 4433-4614.

While in this forlorn frame of mind he suddenly sees Reason approach him once more. She asks him whether he is not by this time weary of Love's bondage. Surely not, he replies. Reason then undertakes to instruct him as to the true nature of love, affirming it to be but a mass of contradictions and contrarities. With this the Lover declares himself but ill content, and asks Reason to explain the matter further. When

Cap.
XXXIV.
F. 4451-4952.
C. 4615-5238.

she has finished her discourse the Lover vows that it is to little purpose, for that Love has had his heart under his wing the while, and Reason's fair arguments but went in at one ear and out at the other.

Cap.
XXXV.
F.4953-5838.
C.5239-5810.

Reason continues to instruct the Lover as to the different kinds of love and friendship that exist in the world, contemns the folly of avarice, and of those who set their minds on the gifts and favours of Fortune, and teaches before all else the love of one's neighbour. If there were true love among men, she contends, there would be no need for kings or judges, who are but tyrants and oppressors.

[The old English translation breaks off abruptly at 5396 of the French text.]

Cap.
XXXVI.
F.5839-5888.

Reason illustrates the evils of judges by the story of Appius and Virginus.

Cap.
XXXVII.
F.5889-6162.

Reason continues her tirade on the folly of love and the fickleness of Fortune, interrupted and contested in her discourse by the Lover from time to time.

Cap.
XXXVIII.
F.6163-6440.

Reason illustrates her argument by somewhat intricate allegories or parables of two rivers, the one bright and clear, the other foul and turbid; and of the palace of Fortune, the one half of which is beautiful and resplendent, while the other is ruinous and wretched.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS xxxi

The caprice of Fortune is illustrated by the histories of Nero, Emperor of Rome, Cræsus, King of Lydia, and the contemporary history of the destruction of Conradin and Manfred in Sicily by Charles of Anjou. The latter story is related under the allegory of a game at chess.

Cap.
XXXIX.-
XLII.
F.6441-7526.

The Lover has complained in a former chapter of the freedom of speech used by Reason, who after a digression of several hundred lines now defends herself from the accusation.

The Lover once more declares himself the servant of Love, and says that if he were to submit himself to the dictates of Reason he must prove unfaithful to his master and to the Rose, which he is resolved shall never be, and tells her that if she pushes her argument further he shall take to flight.

For table of chapters and lines of the present version see the end of each volume.

THOUGH commonly regarded as a narrative poem, may not the "Romance of the Rose" be more properly described as an allegorical drama? It is in truth written much after the manner of the sacred dramas known as "Mysteries," but deals with secular instead of sacred matters. In this respect it appears to stand alone in mediæval literature.

The principal characters in the drama are:—

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. The Dreamer,
afterwards called
the Lover. | 7. Franchise. |
| 2. The God of
Love. | 8. Pity. |
| 3. Fair-Welcome. | 9. Courtesy. |
| 4. The Friend. | 10. Shame. |
| 5. Danger. | 11. Fear. |
| 6. Reason. | 12. Idleness. |
| | 13. Jealousy. |
| | 14. Wicked-Tongue. |
| | 15. Venus. |

The second part introduces the characters of:—

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 16. Richesse. | The author acts as a
sort of chorus, ex-
plaining the action
from time to time in
both parts. |
| 17. False-Seeming. | |
| 18. Hypocrisy. | |
| 19. Nature. | |
| 20. Genius. | |

THE
ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

I

The famed Romance that hight the Rose,
Behold! love's art its leaves enclose.

FULL many a man hath cried amain
That dreams and visions are but vain
Imaginings and lies, but I
Believe that they may truthfully
Forecast the future; and full clear
And plain this matter doth appear
By that famed dream of Scipio,
Whereof Macrobius long ago 10
The story wrote, and stoutly he
Affirmeth dreams for verity.
Moreover, if one think or say
That fond and foolish 'tis to pay
Respect to visions, seeing that ne'er
They prove them true, that man may dare
To call me fool, for I avow
That I dim night-tide's warnings trow
Sincerely, and believe that they,
Of good and ill, to men betray 20
The shadow, showing darkly all
That shall in day's clear light befall.

Are
dreams
false or
true?

2 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

A dream 'Twas in my twentieth year of age,
 befell the When Love doth all young hearts engage
 author To pay him toll, that on my bed
 I lay one night, as custom led,
 Asleep, when o'er my spirit fell
 A wondrous pleasant dream that well
 Delighted me, and nought therein
 I saw but what did later win 30
 Fulfilment, and I now in rhyme
 Set forth the tale, to while your time
 And glad young hearts, by Love's command.
 And should or swain or maid demand
 How that is called which now I write,
 I answer "The Romance" it hight,
 For lovers written, "of the Rose,"
 Which doth Love's gentle art enclose.
 Good is the matter, fair and true,
 God grant that grace it find in view 40
 Of her for whose behoof 'twas writ;
 Worthy of love is she, and fit,
 Before all other maids I swear,
 The fragrant name of Rose to bear.

Five years have rolled their suns away,
 Since in the amorous month of May
 I dreamed this dream: O month of joy
 That knows all nature to decoy
 To mirth and pleasure; bush and brake
 Alike their fresh spring raiment take 50
 Of leaves that long in swaddlings lay
 Close shrouded from the light of day,
 While woods and thickets don their green
 Rich mantling of resplendent sheen.

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 3

Then earth, though old, once more grows vain, **The**
 And, cheered by balmy dews and rain, **sweet-**
 Forgets her poverished drear estate **ness of**
 'Neath winter stern and obdurate ; **spring-**
 For pride awaketh new desire **tide**
 To dizen her in bright attire, 60
 And thereto doth she fashion quaint
 And fair habiliments, and paint
 Them o'er with tints of varying hue,
 Green herb, and flowers, white, red, and blue ;
 And tricked in such gay robes I ween
 Old Earth loves dearly to be seen.
 The merry birds that silence kept
 While all the world 'neath winter slept,
 And wild winds roared, and skies were grey
 With rain, break forth, when cometh May, 70
 In lusty note, and let sweet song
 Proclaim their joy that winter's wrong
 Is past, and now once more doth reign
 Sweet spring-tide o'er old earth's domain.
 Then nightingales with new-born voice
 Through day and night make dulcet noise,
 While larks on high, and in the brake
 The woodwales, heavenly music wake ;
 And hearkening such sweet clamour, soon
 Young hearts respond the amorous tune 80
 In this sweet season of fair spring.
 O dull the soul that carolling
 Of birds delighteth not when they
 The echoes wake in joyous May.

'Twas in this season of delight,
 When all things love as if of right,

4 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

The That, lying on my bed, I dreamed
 Dreamer Dull night was passed and dawning
 wanders beamed,
 forth And, leaping from the couch, my face
 I washed in haste, the night to chase, 90
 Put on my shoes, then straightway took
 A silver bodkin from a book
 Or bodkin-case, and with a thread
 Engarnished it, then forthwith sped
 From out the town, with will to hear
 The woodland fowl with piping clear
 Give welcome to the season new.
 And as I went the cords I drew
 Basting my sleeves, all joyous I
 To hear the birds sing merrily 100
 Among the spring-tide's burgeoning trees,
 Moved gently by the fragrant breeze.
 So to a river came I near
 Whose pleasant murmur struck mine ear,
 And soothing, past all words, did seem
 The rippling music of the stream.
 From out a moss-grown rocky bank
 In bubbling waves, that rose and sank
 With changing force, the water cool
 Fell clear and bright, until a pool 110
 It formed, meandering o'er the plain
 In volume less than rolls the Seine,
 But broader spreading as I ween.
 Never the eye of man hath seen
 A fairer sight than that which I
 Now gazed upon so rapturously.
 Awhile I stood, then in the wave,
 Glistening and fresh, I stooped to lave

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 5

My face, and saw the river-bed
With smooth bright gravel stones bespread, 120
And all around, the meadows wide
Were freshened by the lapping tide.
Calm and serene, and bright and sweet,
Was that spring morning, as my feet
Along the river bank I bent,
Light-hearted, heedless where I went,
And hearkening, as it rolled along,
The stream's unending murmur-song.

He
comes to
a walled
garden

II

The Lover here essays to draw
The wondrous counterfeits he saw 130
Painted along the garden wall.
Before our eyes doth he recall,
Lifelike, the semblance, form and fame,
Of each, and tells thereof the name,
And first, with lively pen, portrays
Of Hate the direful works and ways.

SHORT space my feet had traversed ere
A garden spied I, great and fair,
The which a castled wall hemmed round,
And pictured thereupon I found 140
Full many a figure rich and bright
Of colour, and how each one hight
Clear writ beneath it; now will I
To you declare from memory
The semblance and the name of each,
And somewhat of their natures teach.

6 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

Hate.

Hate
described Amidmost stood Hell's daughter, Hate,
Malignant, base, and desolate
Of countenance; prime mover she
Of quarrel, strife, and jealousy. 150
Her very being, as meseemed,
With black and treacherous poison teemed
Of evil passion, while her dark
And frowning visage bore the mark
Of frenzied madness. Heavenward rose,
As if in scorn, her camus nose,
And round her head, as if with will
To make her foulness fouler still,
A filthy clout had she enwrapped.

Felony.

Left of her stood a figure, capped 160
And branded with a legend writ
Full large, which well her face did fit.
It said: "Behold foul Felony."

Villainy.

And on her right hand Villainy
Stood pictured, and I soothly wot
That 'twixt this evil pair is not
Disparity of one poor hair.
A creature looked she born to bear
Within her bosom rancorous pride;
Her mouth thin lipped, as formed to chide. 170

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 7

A master 'twas whose pencil drew
 These portraitures, and throughly knew
 His hand this face and form to dight
 As one who little recked of right,
 A woman who would scorn to do
 Honour to those to whom 'twas due.

A picture
 of Covet-
 ousness

Covetousness.

Next her was painted Covetise,
 Who eggs men on, for their misease,
 To gather but to scatter not,
 And store, when nought they need, God wot ! 180
 She 'tis the usurer doth cause
 To press, unstayed by pity's laws,
 For gain relentlessly. 'Tis she
 Doth urge to deeds of felony
 Poor thieves, who, when they fall beneath
 The hand of Justice, find swift death.
 'Tis she that causeth men to take
 Their neighbours' goods, and doth awake
 Desire to rob, deceive, and steal ;
 And 'tis through her that tricksters feel 190
 Impelled to fraud ; 'tis she doth make
 False pleaders, who, for lucre's sake,
 Full many an innocent youth or maid
 Strip bare, by their unholy trade,
 Of patrimony. Crooked and bent
 Her fingers grew, as they were meant
 By nature all to grip and seize
 That came anigh her. Covetise
 Careth for nought except to get
 Her neighbours' goods within her net. 200

Avarice.

The foul-
ness of
Avarice

Another image close allied
To Covetise stood side by side
With her. 'Twas Avarice, and she
Looked foul, and stooped most wretchedly.
Her wasted figure, lean and weak,
Was wan and pale as garden leek,
The while her visage, void of blood,
Bespoke her languorous wearihood.
Her corpse-like body looked as fed
On crusts of sour and mouldy bread 210
Kneaded with leaven thin and eager ;
And with intent to hide her meagre
Shrunken limbs she'd o'er them cast
A tattered threadbare garment, past
All hope of mendment, torn and slit,
As though fierce dogs had worried it.
In such poor wretched rags was she
Arrayed, God wot ! right beggarly.
Hard by, upon a crazy pin,
Was hung her cloak, outworn and thin : 220
Wrought of good brunette cloth, once fair
And soft, but now of ermine bare ;
And, in the place of costly fur,
Poor Avarice contenteth her
With heavy lambskin, shag and black ;
Full twenty years her skinny back
Hath borne its cumbrous weight, for shy
Is Avarice new clothes to buy,
But findeth ever some excuse
To spare her clouts due wear and use ; 230

And when outworn, her soul doth rue,
 Sorely, the cost to purchase new,
 But grievously the pinch of cold
 Will suffer ere she spends her gold. Envy
por-
trayed
 With greedy clutch doth Avarice hide
 Her purse, which ne'er she openeth wide,
 But keeps the strings drawn close and tight,
 Consumed with jealous fear lest light
 Her coin should see. Alas! but small
 Delight doth hence to her befall, 240
 For ne'er from out that purse would she
 Spend one poor penny willingly.

Envy.

Beside her, sad-eyed Envy stood,
 Who smileth never. Nothing good
 To her doth seem, and nought can cheer
 Her soul to joy, or please her ear,
 Except it be some evil hap
 Befalls, the happiness to sap
 Of worthy men, that only she
 Hearth or looks on joyfully. 250
 But if perchance some lineage great
 Cast down should be from fair estate,
 Above all else such case I deem
 Would raise her soul to joy supreme.
 Should some good man perchance arise
 To honour great, within her dies
 Her heart; but marvellous delight
 Awakes therein when hate and spite
 Spur men to wrath. Such rancour grows
 Within her breast, that ne'er she shows 260

Envy Love to a friend, nor hath one good
 spareth Kind thought towards those who share her
 no man blood—

Yea, sorely 'twould her heart distress
 Her sire to see in happiness.
 Right cruel is the price she pays,
 Who walketh thus in devious ways,
 And through her cursed spirit she
 Suffers forsooth most bitterly ;
 For in her villain mind doth rage
 Torment more rude than thought can gauge 270
 Whene'er she hears of kindly deed
 Or worthy act ; and sore doth bleed
 Her venomous heart enduring this,
 Which God's most righteous vengeance is
 Upon her. Envy's evil tongue
 Spares no man, be he old or young.
 And if 'twas hers to know perchance
 The noblest knight who honours France,
 Or one whose fame lies over-sea,
 She'd deal them slander equally. 280
 And should their names so fair be found
 As made her villain words redound
 To eke their praise, then would she try
 By mean insinuating lie
 To undermine their fame some deal
 With venomous wound no balm could heal.
 I noted how she seemed to glance
 Sideways, with tortuous peep askance,
 And furtive leer turned all awry,
 Half-closed her slanting evil eye. 290
 Her habit seemed, forsooth, innate
 That she towards no man cast a straight

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 11

And honest gaze, but one eye closed
 She kept, as if forsooth she dozed ;
 Then suddenly 'twas lit with ire
 If some fair thing she saw, and fire
 Would burn therein, for loves she not
 Aught good or beauteous, as I wot.

Heavy-
 eyed
 Sorrow

Sorrow.

Then standing Envy close beside,
 Was fretful Sorrow, heavy-eyed 300
 And dismal. By her deadly hue
 'Twas clear her wretched spirit knew
 Unending grief, and thus jaundice
 Paled all her blood. E'en Avarice
 Than she doth look less poor and lean,
 For care and misery, well I ween,
 And cruel chagrin and distress,
 That day nor night know never cess,
 She suffers, and through sickly woe
 More lean and pale doth daily grow. 310
 None suffereth martyrdom more dire
 Than she, and this begetteth ire
 Within her heart, as seemed to me,
 And much I doubt if aught could be
 Or said or done whereby to ease
 Her rooted grief, or calm or please
 Her cankered soul, or break the round
 Of care wherein her life is bound !
 Alike her face and garments wore
 Marks of the cruel rage that tore 320
 Her woeful heart. Her nails had scratched
 Her cheeks, the while her hands had snatched

The woes Her robe to rags, and plainly spake
 of Age What cruel passion was awake
 Within her miserable breast,
 Outworn with rage, with grief opprest,
 Sad token both of spleen and hate,
 That left her thus disconsolate.
 Around her head hung ragged shocks
 Of hair in wild disordered locks, 230
 The which her angry hands had torn,
 The while she wept her state forlorn,
 Till every eye that saw her grew
 Bedewed with tears of pitying rue,
 For ceased she not to beat her breast
 As though with madness dire possessed.
 Her body and soul both seemed to be
 Encompassed round with misery ;
 No pastime sought she, and the bliss
 Her mouth ne'er knew of amorous kiss. 240
 The wight whose being is in woe
 Immersed hath little will to go
 Where merry folk dance, laugh, and sing,
 But closely hugs her sorrowing ;
 For Joy and Sorrow know not how
 To dwell in fellowship, I trow.

Eld.

To Sorrow next was pictured Eld :
 Time's hand all care for food had quelled
 Within her, and a foot was she
 Less than in youth she woned to be, 250
 Bowed down by toil and drearihead.
 Her beauty, years long past, had fled,

And foul of face was she become. Age and
 And though old Time had left her some Time
 Sparse, straggling locks, her head was white
 As though 'twere floured : the loss were light
 If that poor body, worn and waste,
 The doubtful woe of death should taste ;
 For shrivelled were her limbs, and dry.
 Faded her once bright lustrous eye ; 360
 Wrinkled the cheeks once soft and smooth ;
 And those once pink-shell ears, forsooth,
 Now pendent hung ; her pearl-like teeth,
 Alas ! had long since left their sheath,
 And barely could she walk as much
 As fathoms four without her crutch.

Time speedeth over night and day,
 No rest he taketh nor delay
 Of briefest movement makes, but steals
 So warily along, man feels 370
 His going nought, but fondly deems
 Time standeth still ; but while he dreams,
 Half-waked, Time's foot hath passed, I trow,
 For none can say that time is—now !
 Ask thou some learnèd clerk, while he
 Maketh response, the time shall be
 Gone and departed three times o'er,
 For Time aye passeth, but no more
 Returneth : e'en as water flows
 For ever onward, but ne'er goes 380
 Back to its source. No thing can 'dure
 Against the force of time, though sure
 As adamant or iron. Time
 Each thing devoureth when its prime

14 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

Eld once
was fair

Is reached. 'Tis Time that maketh grow
 All new-born things, and Time doth show
 How all things change, and wear and waste ;
 'Tis he that hath our fathers chased
 From off the earth. Of mighty kings
 And emperors the dirge he sings, 390
 And all, through Time, must pass away,
 For he 'tis marks our dooming day.
 And Time, who ne'er forgetteth aught,
 Hath Eld forgotten not, but brought
 His hand to bear upon her so
 That feebler doth she surely grow
 From day to day, until no more
 She hath of strength, or notes of lore,
 Than child that on its mother's knee
 Or laughs or smiles unconsciously. 400

Yet nathless had Eld been in youth
 A damsel fair, and sweet forsooth
 To my sure knowledge, but I trow
 Is sadly metamorphosed now—
 Changed to a world-worn doting thing.
 A great fur cloak for wrapping
 She wore (methinks around her form
 I see it yet) to keep her warm,
 For agèd folk still dread the cold,
 By nature's law, through many a fold. 410

Hypocrisy.

The image standing next was fit
 To show right well a hypocrite.

P^op^eh^oly was the name she bore,
 And on her face a mask she wore
 Of righteousness, for her great care
 It is to take men unaware,
 And play them some base, shameful trick.
 On first acquaintance is she quick
 To waken pity by her sad
 And simple piteous look, beclad 420
 With simple, sweet, and saintly seeming ;
 But in this world no evil deeming
 Exists, that rolls not through her brain.
 The painting gave to her amain,
 Kind, gentle semblance ; debonair
 And simple all her features were,
 And both her pose and raiment done
 In guise of some good convent nun.
 A psalter held she in her hand,
 As though the throne of God she fanned 480
 With holy prayers, and saints invoked :
 But never laughed she, smiled nor joked.
 Good works pretendeth she to do,
 As though nought else did she pursue
 Since first she donned the shirt of hair.
 Her wretched body, lean and spare,
 All bloodless looked and deadly white,
 Through daily fast and sleepless night.
 For her, and those who share her lot,
 The gate of Paradise I wot 440
 Ne'er openeth, for the Gospel says :
 They fast and make long prayers for
 praise
 Of men, and thus they cast away
 God's Kingdom at the dooming day.

The
 falseness
 of Hypo-
 crisy

Poverty.

The sad
estate of
Poverty

Last Poverty, of whom I vouch,
 No penny lay within her pouch,
 Nor coat had she to sell for pelf
 And buy a rope to hang herself.
 Naked as any wretched worm,
 She oft, in direful winter's term, 450
 Nigh dies with misery and cold.
 Nought else her body did enfold
 Except a sack, from whence hung torn
 Foul rags, for robe and mantle worn ;
 Therewith alone did she dissemble
 Her nakedness, her limbs a-tremble,
 Down in a corner, on the ground
 Couched, like a beaten, shamefaced hound.
 Alas ! a dolorous fate hath she,
 Cast out from all men's company. 460
 Accursed the hour when man is born
 To live in poverty forlorn :
 Far better had he never been
 Than naked, houseless, friendless seen.

Before these images I stayed
 Some space ; each one was well arrayed
 In dazzling gold and azure bright,
 By skilful limner deftly dight.
 The wall was high, and built of hard
 Rough stone, close shut, and strongly barred, 470
 Enclosing round a garden vast,
 Wherein no swain had ever passed ;
 Beyond all doubt a place most fair.
 And I most gladly entry there

Had made, and plenteous measure he
 Of thanks had won who showed to me
 How, helped by steps or ladder tall,
 My feet might scale the high-built wall.
 O joy of joys! O dear delight,
 If 'twere but given to me that height 480
 To climb, and such sweet joyance win
 As surely might be found therein.
 This garden was a safe retreat
 For hosts of nesting birds, and sweet
 Their piping sounded from the trees,
 The glory of the place; the breeze
 Was redolent of woodland song,
 Nor shall I be convict of wrong
 In saying that it shields perchance
 Three times as many birds as France 490
 Contains elsewhere. The harmony
 Thereof could scarcely fail to be
 Such as would cheer the saddest wight,
 And wake his soul to sweet delight.
 To me more boundless was the pleasure
 To hear those songs than words may mea-
 sure,
 And fain had I an hundred pounds
 Paid straight to win within the bounds,
 And see the gathered cloud of these
 Sweet birds (God save them!) in the trees, 500
 And list their tireless minstrelsy,
 Which e'en love's dancing tunes outvie,
 All piping clear, from untaught throats,
 In ever varying wilding notes.
 While hearkening to the matin chant
 The small fowl sang, my soul a-pant

The
birds'
matin
song

The Dreamer
 spies a
 gate

Became with longing for some mode
 To win within this blest abode,
 And searched, but vainly searched, alas!
 For means, or fair or foul, to pass 510
 The wall, but nought to help me found;
 And then I vainly gazed around
 For one who might, for love or meed,
 Within that longed-for haven lead
 My eager footsteps. Thus I stood,
 With dire vexation well-nigh wood,
 Until the thought possessed my mind,
 That never yet was wall so blind
 That careful diligence should fail
 To find some door, or means to scale. 520
 Hot-foot, the boundary's full extent
 I traversed, heart and soul intent
 Some aperture to spy; at last
 Mine eye with eager joy I cast
 Upon a wicket, straight and small,
 Worked in the stern, forbidding wall,
 And forthwith set myself to get
 An entry there, whate'er might let.

III

Here is described how Idleness
 Unto the Dreamer gave ingress.

580

FULL many a time with sounding blow
 I struck the door, and, head bent low,
 Stood hearkening who might make reply.
 The horn-beam wicket presently
 Was opened by a dame of air
 Most gracious, and of beauty rare:

Her flesh as tender chicken's was ;		The fair
Her blond locks bright as bowl of brass ;		dame
Radiant her brow ; of arching due		Idleness
Her eyebrows ; and well spaced the two ;	540	
Neither too small, nor yet too great		
Her nose, but straight and delicate.		
No falcon, I would boldly swear,		
Hath eyes that could with hers compare.		
Her breath was sweet as breeze, thyme fed ;		
Her cheeks, commingled white and red ;		
Her mouth a rosebud, and her chin		
Well rounded, with sweet cleft therein.		
Her tower-like neck, of measure meet,		
The purest lily well might beat	550	
For fairness, free of spot or wem.		
'Twixt this and far Jerusalem		
I trow were found none other such,		
So fair to sight, so soft to touch.		
Her bosom would outshine the snow		
New-fallen, ere it soil doth show ;		
And all her body formed and knit		
So well, as nought might equal it.		
Much doubt I, if since Time had birth,		
A fairer dame hath trod dull earth.	560	

A chaplet on her brow was set
 Of orfreys ; never maiden yet
 More lovesome looked, and though my days
 I spent to sing her beauty's praise,
 'Twere done but insufficiently.
 A graceful silken robe wore she,
 And on her head a garland bare
 Of roses, which the orfreys fair

The sole Surmounted ; in her gentle hand
 care of She grasped a mirror, and a grand 870
 Idleness Quaint carven comb her tresses held,
 While gloves of spotless white repelled
 The sun, which fain would kiss her skin.
 And lastly, she had 'tired her in
 A costly coat of cloth of Ghent,
 On which much labour had been spent
 In broidering, while her sleeves around
 With silken cords were laced and bound.
 And when that she her raiment fair
 Had donned, and 'tired her golden hair, 580
 The day for her was worn and done,
 Nought else had she to think upon.
 A joyful time, a pleasant May
 Was hers, for care she drove away
 And dreamed of nothing, night and morn,
 But how her body to adorn.
 When thus I saw the garden gate
 Unlocked by this most delicate
 And winsome dame, her goodlihead
 Abashed me, and I gently said 590
 My thanks, and dared to ask her name,
 And who she was, and whence she came.

With pleasant mien, in nowise high
 Or haughty, made she quick reply :
 " My dear companions well express
 My name, who call me Idleness,
 A rich and puissant woman I,
 Passing the time right gleefully ;
 Nought else have I to think upon
 Save what fair raiment I shall don, 600

What rich and costly jewels wear,
 How deck my head, and 'tire my hair.
 When this is finished then my day
 Is ended, and to mirth and play
 I give myself. My dearest friend
 Is Mirth, and by his side I spend
 Long pleasant hours. The Lord is he
 Of this fair garden; every tree
 From out the land of Saracens
 He brought, for well the art he kens 610
 To make his garden a delight,
 And as the trees grew strong he dight
 The wall around, and caused thereon
 Those dreadful paintings to be done,
 Of Sorrow, Hatred, Eld, and Spleen,
 Which wending hither thou hast seen.
 He cometh here full oft to seek
 The pleasant leafy shade, and eke
 His followers join him in these bowers,
 'Mid mirth and joy to spend long hours 620
 Untouched by care. E'en now I wot
 Mirth lounging in cool shade or grot
 Listeth the sweet-voiced nightingale,
 Merle, laverock, mavis, and wood-wale:
 Here with his friends, the long day through,
 Sweet solace finds he, for ne'er knew
 The world a place that would suffice
 Like this for loss of Paradise.
 No merrier folk were ever seen
 Through earth's broad borders, as I ween, 630
 Than those whom Mirth doth hither
 bring
 To spend bright days in revelling."

Her
 dearest
 friend is
 Mirth

The
Dreamer
enters the
garden

When thus this winsome dame had sped
Her tale, which I had hearkenèd
With right good will: "Dame Idleness,"
I cried, "words fail me to express
What great delight were mine to see
Sir Mirth and all his company
Of joyous folk assembled here,
So pleasant, blithe, and frank of cheer, 640
Nor would I tear myself away
Therefrom throughout the livelong day,
For doubt I nought they all will be
Fulfilled of gentle courtesy."

No more I spake, but thanked kind fate,
When Idleness the garden gate
Threw open wide, and unafraid
To that sweet spot quick entry made.
Then burst on my astonished eyes
A dream—an Earthly Paradise: 650
And suddenly my soul seemed riven
From earth, to dwell in highest heaven;
Yet doubt I much if heaven can give
A place where I so soon would live
As this sweet garden, sacred haunt
Of birds whose soft melodious chaunt
Ravished mine ears; the nightingales
Here sang, and there the green wood-wales;
The bullfinch piped beneath, above, 660
I heard the crooning turtle-dove,
Near by, the sweet-voiced tiny wren,
While high in air, beyond my ken,
The skylark soared; the titmouse shrilled
The fauvette's gentle treble trilled,

The merle and mavis seemed to shake
 The leaves in cadence, while each brake
 With small fowl rang, as they would try
 Their throats in choral rivalry.

The song
 of the
 birds

'Twould seem as all and each of these
 Sweet birds sang joyance to the breeze,
 And then, their hearts disburdened, flew
 To keep some loving rendezvous.

670

The sweet melodious harmony
 That winged its way from tree to tree,
 With such soft symphony did fall
 As concert 'twere celestial.

For never yet hath mortal ear
 Been tuned such heavenlike songs to hear,
 And past all thought it seemed that earth
 Could give such glorious music birth.

680

Then all at once it broke on me
 I heard the syrens of the sea,
 For they alone I trow can bring
 To ears of men such carolling.

I vow that when beneath the shade
 The birds such glorious music made,
 My spirit and soul were like to melt
 And fail with that delight I felt.

For ne'er ere this, my whole life through,
 Did joy so unalloyed bedew
 My every sense, and ecstasy
 Ran through the very soul of me.

690

Bethought I then what untold debt
 I owed Dame Idleness, who set
 My feet in this surpassing place,
 For 'twas alone through her good grace
 And kindness I entrance gained
 To this fair haunt wherein Mirth reigned

Sir Mirth and his company Supreme ; my best and truest friend
 I'll count her till my life-days end. 700
 Now will I set myself to tell
 The further tale of what befell
 In that fair spot.

What things Mirth did,
 And who the friends were that he bid
 To keep him company will I
 Declare all faithfully, and try
 To show and picture forth to you,
 What happed to me, in order due.

Set out the whole in little space
 Could no man, but if kindly grace 710
 You grant me, then shall be unrolled
 The tale complete, till all be told.

Within this garden, past compare,
 The birds sweet voicing filled the air
 With honeyed songs and roundelays,
 Discoursing in a thousand ways
 Their tales of tender woodland love.
 I listed how some sang above
 My head, perched high among the leaves,
 And others 'mid the fragrant sheaves 720
 Of blossom near the ground, and all,
 With melody most musical,
 Rejoiced my heart exceedingly:
 Then woke a new desire in me
 To look on Mirth's fair countenance
 And grasp his hand ; the radiance
 That flooded all my soul, I felt
 Would be redoubled if he dealt
 Me welcoming. I now forsook
 The open grassy space, and took 730

A shaded pathway, where my feet
 Bruised mint and fennel savouring sweet ;
 And following close my gracious guide,
 Found me ere long within a wide
 Secluded lawn, a sweet resort
 Where Mirth held joyously high court
 In care-spurned ease for full enjoyment
 Of life's glad gifts, undashed by cloyment
 Or surfeit or revolt. Amazed
 I stood awhile, mine eyesight dazed,
 For erst or since, ne'er men I ween
 So like winged angels, eyes have seen.

The song
 of Glad-
 ness

740

IV

Herein the Lover tells of Gladness :
 A dame is she who, casting sadness
 To the wild winds, doth nought but play
 And carol through the livelong day.

E'EN as I came within the close,
 A glorious burst of song uprose ;
 For one, whose name was Gladness, loud
 And clear-voiced sang amid the crowd
 Foregathered there ; full well she knew
 To modulate her tones with due
 And gentle cadence, now to fall
 And now to rise high over all.
 Her note was clear as silver bell,
 And, gently swaying, rose and fell
 Her supple form, the while her feet
 Kept measured time with perfect beat :

750

Dance 'Mid her companions ever first
 and Her voice was into song to burst, 760
 music For in that art divine did she
 Exceed all rivals facilely.
 Then through my frame I felt a throe
 Of joy to see them dancing go,
 As man and maid in measure trod
 With twinkling feet the springing sod.
 While minstrels sang, the tambourine
 Kept with the flute due time I ween,
 And rondelettes burst forth amain 770
 To merry tunes of old Lorraine
 So sweetly, that I doubt if e'er
 Was heard such music otherwhere,
 For that fair province doth excel
 In heaven-born music's tuneful spell.
 Then saw I cunning jugglers play,
 And girls cast tambourines away
 Aloft in air, then gaily trip
 Beneath them, and on finger-tip
 Catch them again, with skill so rare,
 That all men stood a-wondering there. 780
 Then came two damsels 'tired with taste
 That Venus' self had not disgraced,
 And suited well their dainty dresses
 The wondrous plaits that bound their
 tresses :
 Their kirtles thin but reached the knee,
 Through which their forms showed pleasantly.
 I saw the twain toward Mirth advance
 With agile leap and darting glance,
 Then both flew forward with a bound,
 Just missed a kiss, then flung them round 790

As though they feared some wrong they'd done, The salu-
tation of
Courtesy
 Then lovingly embraced anon,
 And then once more did they retreat,
 A-playing with their winsome feet
 A thousand antic turns; so quaint
 And strange they were, that I should paint
Their wonders feebly did I try
 To show the supple subtlety
 With which their lithe light bodies swayed;
 Such tumult in my breast it made 800
 As never dance and song I deem
 Had done before in sooth or dream.

V

Herein the Dreamer's pen doth draw
 The semblance of the dance he saw
 And joined in, and relates how she,
 Hight Courtesy, essays to be
 His guide, and gently tells him who
 Dance there, and all they say and do.

I STOOD awhile, as one entranced,
 To watch how wondrously they danced, 810
 Till tripped across the sward to me
 A winsome dame, hight Courtesy.
 Past power of words I found her fair,
 Bewitching, bright, and debonair,
 (May God preserve her life from harm)
 At once with voice that seemed to charm
 All fear away, she cried: Fair sir,
 Wilt thou not deign thy foot to stir
 In jocund dance?

Sir Mirth
por-
trayed

Without delay
I followed where she led the way 820
With right good will, for strong desire
To join the throng my heart 'gan fire ;
Yet scarce therewith to mingle dared
Till thus her welcome speech had bared
My mind of doubt. I then began
The glorious folk around to scan,
Their fashions, manners, style and seeming :
Now list, while forth I tell my deeming.

Erect Sir Mirth stood, straight and tall,
In all points such as one might call 830
A man well built ; a tinge of red
His white cheek lit, no vermeil thread
His mouth, but full and round, his eyes
Steel blue and gracious, whence did rise
Sweet smiles unceasingly, his nose
Was such as Grecian Phidias chose
For great Apollo, blond his hair,
Which fell adown his shoulders bare
In silken curls, his girdlestead
Was slight, yet lithesome lustihead 840
Its lines betrayed, while arms and knees
Were knit like mighty Hercules.
The glorious masterpiece did he
Of some great painter look to be,
And scarce need fear comparison
For beauty with Jove's godlike son :
Where beard would be, began to spring
Down, soft as that 'neath cushat's wing.

His noble limbs were richly clad
In samite, which about it had 850

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 29

Figures of beauteous birds enwrought	
In golden tissue: quaint past thought	
The slashings were with which 'twas slit	
And puffed in every part of it	
For fashion's sake, and gaily decked	
With jewels; nought of cost he recked.	
About his shapely legs and feet	
Were boots carved curiously. Oh sweet	
The roses were that well bested,	
For crown, his goodly golden head,	860
There set by gentle hands of her	
Who was his love and worshipper.	
And would ye wot who this might be	
Whose love enthralled him? soothfastly,	
'Twas Gladness who so blithely sang.	
When she but seven years knew, Love flang	
His net around her, and I ween	
Since then Mirth's sweetheart had she been.	
Then straightway did the pair enlace	
Their hands, and heart to heart embrace,	870
Joining in gladsome dance. Most fair	
Did Gladness look as stood they there,	
Like to a rose but newly blown	
Which nought of wind or storm hath	
known.	
<u>So tender was her flesh, that torn</u>	
<u>'T would be by frailest sapful thorn.</u>	
Beneath her forehead, void of frown,	
Were eyebrows arched, of sunny brown,	
And smiles would wreathe her eyes before	
Her mouth the rippling laughter bore,	880
And ever and anon the bliss	
Her lips invited of loving kiss;	

Sir
Mirth's
sweet-
heart

30 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

The God
of Love Her nose of delicate form, and white,
As well might show in wax' despite.
O brilliant was the sun-gold hair
That crowned her head, round which she ware
A fillet fine, its wealth to hold,
O'er which a chaplet worked with gold
Rode royally; two-score and nine
Fair orfreyed chaplets 'neath mine eyne 890
Have passed erewhile, but none were wrought
Of silk so well as this methought.
Her outer mantle was a rich
Bright robe of silken samite which,
Seeing that Mirth well loved it, she
Arrayed her in delightedly.

VI

The Dreamer hear ye now declare
What guise the God of Love doth bear.

HARD by this winsome pair did stand
The God of Love, whose mighty hand
Dealeth to lovers weal or woe 901
As seemeth good to him; alow
He casteth pride, and oft-time makes
High-minded men for ladies' sakes
Right humble, and proud dames to bow
With meekness 'neath his yoke, I trow.
The God of Love is dowered with grace
So richly, both in form and face,
That scarce, I deem, of his allure
My pen dare draw the portraiture. 910
Love's friends had woven from his bowers,
In scorn of silk, a robe of flowers,

All worked about with amorettes, And tied with dainty bandelets, Bedecked with lozenges and scutcheons, Leopards, strange outland beasts, and lions ; While blossoms of all colours were Besprinkled o'er it, here and there. 'Twere no light task some flower to name That was not found thereon, each came	The weapons of Sweet- Looks	920
To lend its beauty, blue perwinkle 'Twixt rose and yellow broom did twinkle, With violets, pansies, birdseye blue, And flowers untold of varied hue. Sweet scented roses, red and pale, (Round which flew many a nightingale) Festooned Love's head, and every sort Of bird seemed there to hold high court, The skylark, blue-tit, merle and dove, Sang in his ear sweet songs of love, Fluttering around his head, and he One of God's angels looked to be.		920

Anigh him stood Sweet-Looks, who glanced
With soft regard on those who danced :
A friend right well beloved was he
Of Cupid, and (bent readily
For use) a crook'd Turk's bow he bore
In either hand ; the first one wore
Most evil aspect, made of tree
Whose fruit I trow would nowise be
Of grateful savour ; gnarled and hoar
It was, and black as sun-scorched moor.
The second pliant, lithe, and white,
With quaint designs and figures dight

The five shafts of
 Sweet-Looks
 Of dames and knights of gentle mien.
 Moreover in his hands were seen
 Ten arrows, five of which were fair
 And beauteous; these his right hand bare,
 Brilliant the plumes, the notches made
 Of gold, the while like-precious blade 950
 Each shaft-end wore; though nought of steel
 Or iron knew they, hearts would feel
 Their wound-stroke sorely. Save the shaft
 And plumes, 'twas well-skilled goldsmiths'
 craft
 Had wrought these weapons; they were capped
 With cruel barbs, and whoso happed
 Within their murderous range to fall
 Would feel Love's wound and own his thrall.
 Of these five shafts, I trow the best
 And speediest, when it knew Love's hest, 960
 (And fairest eke for plumage reckoned)
 Had Beauty for its name; the second
 Was called Simplicity; the third
 Was Franchise, and another word
 Bedecked it, sweetest Courtesy:
 Companionship I saw to be
 The fourth, which if 'twere shot from far
 Would do small harm, but greatly mar
 If drawn anear: the fifth and last
 Fair-Seeming was, which, deftly cast, 970
 Doth sorely maim, but yet the wound
 Incurable is rarely found,
 But given due time may healèd be
 By means of Love's sweet surgery.
 Sweet-Looks five arrows held likewise
 Within his left hand, but of guise

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 33

Far different, formed of iron fell	
And black as he who rules dark hell.	
The first was called unlovely Pride,	
And Villainy lay hard beside, ✕	980
With Felony is he attaint,	
Portray the one—and both you paint.	
The third was Shame, of downcast air,	
The fourth, her fellow, dire Despair,	
The while the last one proved to be	
New-thought or Infidelity.	
These shafts, whose qualities I name,	
A close relationship may claim,	
And all moreover plainly show	
Near kin with that most hideous bow,	990
All knotted, gnarled, deformed and rough,	
Though soothly seemed it good enough	
To launch such villain shafts, which strive	
In all things 'gainst the fair-made five	
Whereof I've told : O scarce will you	
Their power and force give credence to ;	
But yet the simple truth shall be	
Hereafter plainly told by me ;	
And have a care lest you forget	
The drift and sense of what is set	1000
Before your eyes by this plain tale,	
For you shall find no small avail	
Therein ere yet the end is sped—	
Fair wit with wisdom closely wed.	

Beauty.

Now turn I to my tale amain :
And will of all Love's frolic train

A por-
 trayal of
 Beauty

Declare at full the countenances,
 Their joyous sports and graceful dances.
 Perceived I that the God of Love
 One noble lady sought above 1010
 All others gathered there; she hight
 Dame Beauty, as that arrow bright
 Which bore her name was she, and dowed
 With gentle grace, which freely showed
 In all her movements. As the moon
 Makes candles of the stars, her noon
 Paled all her fellows: as the dew
 Her flesh was tender, and ne'er new
 And blushing bride more simple seemed;
 Where'er her skin peeped forth it gleamed 1020
 As white as fleur-de-lis; her brow
 Was clear and fair as virgin snow,
 The while her form was tall and slight.
 No need had she her face to dight
 With paint or other vain disguise,
 As women somewhiles use; despise
 And scorn might she such false allure,
 In natures decking bright and pure.
 So plenteous grew her golden hair,
 That near her heels it reached I swear. 1080
 Her nose, her mouth, her beaming eyes,
 Were such that when their beauties rise
 (God help me) in my thought they seem
 To wake once more that glorious dream.
 Forsooth, so sweet she was and fair,
 With perfect rounded limbs, that ne'er
 Throughout the world's broad space, I
 ween,
 Aught could surpass her matchless sheen.

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 35

VII FITNESS OF THIS ALLEGORY OF PUNISHING ENVS
 CP. TO DANTE.
 IN DANTE.

Here tells the Dreamer of Richesse,
 Who counteth her of high noblesse, 1040
 But so consumed is she with pride.
 That all poor men she casts aside,
 And therefore less beloved by far
 Than those who sweet and courteous are.

DAME Richesse stood by Beauty's side,
 Haughty of mien, and puffed with pride,
 Rude arrogance and self-esteem.

The qualities of Dame Richesse

Right rash and hardy should I deem
 The man who hindrance dared to throw
 Across her path, for well doth know
 Richesse her foes to spoil and spill,
 But honours those who do her will.

1050 CP. DANTE'S USURERS.

Neither to-day nor yesterday
 'Twas learned that rich folk have their way,
 And oftentimes misuse their power
 'To raise men up in one short hour

VERY TRUE.

'To great estate, or make them fall
 'To misery dire. Both great and small
 To Dame Richesse full deference give,

1060

For 'neath her rule men love to live,
 And serving her will gladly die,
 Proud to have worn her livery;
 Yet not because they hold her dear,
 And love her, but for craven fear.

Mockers and flatterers much abound
 Within her courts, and there are found
 Traitors and envious folk who try
 To do those good men injury

The robe Whose worth deserveth laud and praise.
 of Dame Chiefest among their devious ways 1070
 Richesse Is this---with false oiled tongue to speak
 'Fore men on whom they long to wreak
 Their vengeance, but their poisonous clacks
 Sound loudly when they turn their backs,
 For noblest men would they abase,
 To miscreants giving power and place.
 Disloyal, they all loyalty
 Treat with contempt and scorn, but vie
 In persecuting good men, while
 They laud the vilest of the vile, 1080
 And many an upright man one sees
 Forth driven from courts by perfidies.
 But may these envious flatterers be
 By God brought down to misery.
 Alas! that e'er such folk were born!
 Their ways and works all good men scorn.

A purple robe did Richesse wear,
 Than which, 'fore heaven and earth I swear,
 Fearless to be convict of lie,
 None e'er was wrought more daintily; 1090
 The purple broidered with great store
 Of orfrees, rich with golden ore.
 With forms of mighty men it shone
 Renowned in ages past and gone,
 Great dukes and kings, and such as be
 Writ large in ancient history.
 The golden band around her neck
 Did many an orlèd shield bedeck,
 Silver, on ruddy gold annealed,
 Illumined each bright quartered shield; 1100

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 37

The whole enwrought most craftily,
 And great of price I warrant ye.
 Then o'er her robe, and round each hem
 Shone many a lustrous priceless gem,
 Which flashed and glittered in the light
 As heaven's bright stars on frost-clear night.

The gems
 worn by
 Dame
 Richesse

Richesse around her girdlestead
 Was gloriouswise encincturèd
 Above her purple robe. A stone
 Of magic power and virtue shone 1110
 Amidst thereof: the wight who bore
 This stone need poisons fear no more,
 For 'gainst all venoms which to man
 Bear danger, 'twas a talisman,
 And to a knight of gentle birth
 Above Rome's treasures was its worth.
 The mordant, of a gem was made
 That aching of the teeth allayed,
 And whoso looked on it ere yet
 He brake his morning's fast, should get 1120
 Long years of faultless sight. Of gold
 Without alloy was made the hold
 That clasped it, while each single tooth
 Was worth a bezant's weight forsooth.
 No silk or satin plaits she ware
 To hold her wealth of yellow hair,
 But golden circlets, thrice refined,
 The glory of her head confined.
 A subtle pen that scribe would own
 Who could at full describe each stone 1130
 And gem unvalued, richly set
 Within her gorgeous coronet,

38 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

The
minion
of Dame
Richesse

For not a man on earth can guess
Their untold worth and pricelessness.
Sky-shaming sapphires, rubies red
As pigeon's blood but newly shed,
Garnets and emeralds weighed not less
Than ounces ten; but profitless
It were that I should strive to paint
The great carbuncle's glory, faint 1140
And poor were any words of mine
To warrant how 'tis wont to shine
So clearly that on murkiest night,
Devoid of lamp, the wearer might
(So strongly shoots its brilliant ray)
For many a league pursue his way.

Such brightness sprang from forth this stone
That every part of Richesse shone
With glory, body, feet and face,
As though bright stars belit the place. 1150

Fast by the hand, Dame Richesse led
A youth of fairest goodlihead;
Her gallant past all doubt was he,
And gladly sought her company.
He loved fine mansions, castles fair,
And jewels rich, and vestments rare,
Grand stables, horses past all price,
And sooner were he charged with vice
Of theft or murder, than 'twere said
His stables harboured crock or jade. 1160
The friendship constantly he sought
Of Dame Richesse, for all his thought
Was how to scatter wealth, and she
Supplied his hands ungrudgingly.

Right recklessly he made display
 Of gorgeous splendour day by day,
 While she with free hand gave, as though
 Gold bezants did her barns o'erflow.

Largesse
 ruleth all

Largesse.

Then next to noble Richesse came
 Largesse, a free and generous dame, 1170
 No man on earth I trow doth live,
 Loves more to grasp than she to give
 Honour and wealth; to Alexander
 Is she akin, and loves to squander
 Her gifts if but for giving's sake,
 Crying to all who pass: Come, take!
 Poor pinching Avarice loves not more
 To heap and gather needless store,
 Than Largesse doth to scatter wide
 Her good, and still doth God provide 1180
 Her plenteous wise, for while 'tis spent
 Thus freely, still doth it augment.

Largesse aye keepeth 'neath her rule
 Alike the sage and drivelling fool,
 All bow to her and fain confess
 Her for their friend and patroness.
And if perchance she suffereth hate
Of any wight, 'tis dissipate,
Quick as hoar-frost, by some great gift,
 And therefore rich and poor uplift 1190
 Loud voice alike in Largesse' praise.

A fool is that great lord whose ways
 Are beggarlike! No other vice
 Degrades great men like avarice.

The knight of Dame Largesse
 The man of close, hard-gripping hand
 Ne'er wins high seigniorie or land,
 For few finds he of loving friends
 To spread his fame or work his ends.
 The man who fain would draw around
 Him friends, should let his hand about ✓ 1200
 In gifts free-given—for thus he earns
 ? Great love—and as the needle turns
 Towards the pole, e'en so shall he
 By gifts draw friends abundantly.

A purple garment, rich and cool,
 Enwoven in the Mawmet school
 Of Saracens did Largesse wear;
 Left open 'twas, with careless care,
 About the neck, for latterly
 Unto a dame hard by her she 1210
 Had lent the mordant; passing well
 I liked the fashion, made to tell
 The snowy whiteness of her throat,
 Which through thin gauze rapt eyes might note.

For knight, Dame Largesse did engage
 A youth who claimed the lineage
 Of Arthur, King of England; he
 Bore Valour's banner gloriously,
 And eke the gonfanon; right great
 And noble deeds by him relate 1220
 Minstrels, in courts of Counts and Kings,
 And hitherward he a trophy brings
 Fresh from a tourney which he lays
 Before his mistress's feet, whose praise
 Through many a joust hath he maintained
 In shattering helm and shield, and gained

Proud victory over many a knight
By virtue's power and strong-armed might.

The fair-
ness of
Franchise

Franchise.

Franchise stood next, on Largesse' right,
Of skin as delicate, pure, and white 1230
As hawthorn bloom or June-tide rose,
Not of the Orleans twist her nose,
But well formed, long and straight; her brow
Bore eyebrows arched like Cupid's bow,
O'er laughing eyes; her long locks blond,
Her mien as simple, sweet and fond
As turtle-dove; her tender heart
Rejoiced in joy, or bore its part
With others' sadness, and was fain
To keep her lips when speech woke pain. 1240
So piteous was she and so true,
She ne'er would suffer one to rue
His life for love of her, nay more,
Such sympathy towards all she bore,
That when she saw some man who sighed
For her, she'd hasten to his side,
To save his soul from misery dire.
Of finest woof was her attire,
And warrant I that never lass
Betwixt this place and far Arras 1250
Ware daintier raiment. It was sewed
And broidered in such skilful mode,
That doubt I much could seam or point
Have been more skilfully adjoint.
Grateful and charming to the eye,
Was Franchise' modest bravery;

The
praise of
Courtesy

For nothing ever suits so well
As simple frock for demoiselle,
And that in which Franchise was dight,
Linen of pure and spotless white, 1260
By dyes unstained, did well express
The maiden's inward loveliness.

Beside Franchise a stripling stood,
Of noble port and lustihood,
But how he named him knew I not,
Yet one so-fair of mien I wot,
And gaily clad as bird in spring,
Were well the son of Windsor's king.

VIII

Herein the author's pen essays
To show why Courtesy the praise 1270
Deserves of all men ; love she spreads
Around her wheresoe'er she treads.

AND next stood gracious Courtesy,
Who ne'er midst men can fail to be
Welcome : strangers to her are pride
And folly. Straightway to her side
She summoned me with kindly call
To join the gladsome dance withal.
Frank-eyed she was, and no deal shy
Or timid, but most graciously 1280
Spake forth to me in friendly wise,
With pleasant words and quaint replies,
Wherein one found no poison lurk.
Her form was nature's perfect work,
And e'en as stars like candles mean
Beside the moon's bright rays are seen,

So her companions showed beside
 Her dazzling beauty's winsome pride.
 Than this fair damsel who shall find
 A nobler face or gentler mind,
 Or one who would more worship gain
 Should she as Queen or Empress reign?

Idleness
 claims the
 Dreamer

1290

Beside her stood a valiant knight,
 Who knew to choose his words aright
 Whene'er he spake; well loved seemed he
 Of her who bare him company.
 Well skilled in feats of arms he was, his grace
 Showed forth alike in form and face.

Then, Idleness came near to me,
 Whose hand I took most willingly
 To join the dance. Erewhile I've said
 How fraught with grace and goodlihead
 She was, and she 'twas raised the pin
 That kept the wicket, and within
 The close through her I entrance gained,
 My trembling heart set free and fained.

1300

IX

And lastly here is told of Youth,
 Reckless, naïve, and wild forsooth.

THE last that lingers in my mind
 Is Youth, to all but pleasure blind.
 No more than twelve short years, I ween,
 This innocent maiden yet had seen
 Of good or ill, and looked to be
 Still in her first simplicity.

1310

44 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

The joy-
ance of
Youth

Of nought she dreamed from day to day
 But gladness, joy, and gleesome play,
 And only mirth and laughter sought,
 Without one care or afterthought.
 A lover had she, like in age
 To her sweet self, and no more sage 1320
 Than she. The simple pair would kiss
 From time to time, and nought amiss
 They deemed it all the dance should see
 When they embraced as lovingly
 As cooing turtle-doves. The boy,
 E'en as the girl, was nowise coy,
 But was in artlessness for her
 A fitting mate I dare aver.

Thus merrily this jovial throng
 Disported them with dance and song, 1330
 And many another knight and dame,
 Of gracious mien and goodly fame,
 Soon joined them to the light-heart crew,
 While through the air gay laughter flew.

X

The God of Love with care doth watch
 The Lover's steps, in hope to catch
 Him unawares, and so the five
 Bright arrows through his heart to drive.

WHEN dance and dancers I had seen
 To heart's content, across the green 1340
 I turned to wander at mine ease
 Beneath the burgeoning mulberry trees,

Laurels, lithe hazels, and dark pines,
 Throughout the garden's far confines.
 And when the swaying dance was ended,
 And, arms entwined, the partners wended
 To seek soft couches 'neath the shade
 That long lawn-kissing branches made,
 Lord God! such jolly lives they led
 As all must envy, by my head,
 Who are not fools; for nought I ween
 Is better than with one dear queen
 To pass soft hours in tender love—
 What more gives paradise above?

1350

The
 Dreamer
 tracked
 by Love

But straightway from the dance I went,
 And o'er the lawn my footsteps bent
 As fancy led, when suddenly
 The God of Love, who followed me,
 Signed to Sweet-Looks to bring his bow,
 And shafts that 'longed thereto, and lo!
 Without a word he claimed from him
 The weapon fair, choosing the trim
 And beauteous arrows from the ten
 He held to serve his use, and then
 Picked out the mighty God from thence
 One of swift flight and great potence,
 And, bow in hand, pursued me straight
 Unseen; O God! how nearly fate
 O'ertook me then.

1360

But unaware
 Of Love's intent I wandered where
 Green alleys led, the while that he,
 Whereso I sped, still followed me.

1370

The trees No thought had I to stay or rest,
 of the But roved north, south, and east and
 garden west,
 Desiring leisurely to view
 The close, and all that 'longed thereto.
 I noted that from side to side
 The garden was nigh broad as wide,
 And every angle duly squared.
 The careful planter had not spared 1380
 To set of every kind of tree
 That beareth fruit some two or three,
 Or more perchance, except some few
 Of evil sort. Among them grew
 Pomegranates filled with seeds and thick
 Of skin, most wholesome for the sick ;
 Strange nut trees, which in season bore
 Rich fragrant nutmegs, good for store,
 And nowise cursed with nauseous taste,
 But savouring well. Near by were placed 1390
 Almonds and gillyflower cloves,
 Brought hither from hot Ind's far groves,
 Dates, figs, and liquorice which deals
 Contentment while misease it heals,
 And wholesome aniseed's sweet spice,
 And much-prized grains of paradise,
 Nor must rare cinnamon be forgot,
 Nor zedoary, which I wot
 At end of great repasts men eat
 In hope 'twill bring digestion meet. 1400
 Moreover in this garden rare
 Grew many a tree familiar,
 As cherry, pear and knotted quince,
 'Neath which a tender tooth will wince,

Brown medlars, plums both black and white, The
 Apples and chestnuts, peaches bright ; fruits
 Sorb-apples, barberries, fruit of lote
 And many more of lesser note.
 And all around this pleasant close
 Holly, and laurel, and holm arose 1410
 With yew and hornbeam, fit I trow
 For flitting shaft, and speeding bow ;
 The cypress sad, and pines that sigh
 To soft south breezes mournfully,
 Beech, loved of squirrels, olive dark,
 And graceful birch with silvery bark ;
 The shimmering aspen, maple tall,
 And lofty ash that topped the wall,
 The limber hazel, oak trees hoar,
 But wherefore should I tell of more ? 1420
 For wearied would your heart be ere
 I numbered half that flourished there.
 But this I say, such skilful art
 Had planned the trees that each apart
 Six fathoms stood, yet like a net
 The interlacing branches met,
 Through which no scorching rays could
 pass
 To sear the sward, and thus the grass
 Kept ever tender, fresh and green,
 Beneath their cool and friendly screen. 1430

Roebuck and deer strayed up and down
 The mead, and troops of squirrels brown
 The tree-boles scoured, while conies grey
 Shot merrily in jocund play

48 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

The garden's well-springs
 Around their burrows on the fresh
 And fragrant greensward, void of mesh.

Within the glades sprang fountains clear :
 No frog or newt e'er came anear
 Their waters, but 'neath cooling shade
 They gently sourded. Mirth had made 1440
 Therefrom small channelled brooks to fling
 Their waves with pleasant murmuring
 In tiny tides. Bright green and lush,
 Around these sparkling streams, did push
 The sweetest grass. There might one lie
 Beside one's love, luxuriously
 As though 'twere bed of down. The earth,
 Made pregnant by the streams, gave birth
 To thymy herbage and gay flowers,
 And when drear winter frowns and lowers 1450
 In spots less genial, ever here
 Things bud and burgeon through the year.
 The violet, sweet of scent and hue,
 The periwinkle's star of blue,
 The golden kingcups burnished bright,
 Mingled with pink-rimmed daisies white,
 And varied flowers, blue, gold, and red,
 The alleys, lawns and groves o'erspread,
 As they by Nature's craft had been
 Enamelled deftly on the green, 1460
 And all around where'er I went
 Fresh blooms cast forth odorous scent.
 Small need there is to fabulate
 More fully of the fair estate
 Of this most comely garden, lest
 It wear your patience; nought expressed

Could all the glorious beauty be
 Of this most wondrous place by me,
 And therefore stay from words' increase
 Thereon, and henceforth hold my peace. 1470

The
 fount of
 Narcissus

Yet willing to explore each nook
 And secret spot, my way I took
 Hither and thither, left and right.

The God of Love still kept in sight
 My every movement, even as he
 Who tracks a quarry carefully
 Seeks for the moment when his prey
 Doth unawares his life betray.

So, wandering o'er this charmèd ground,
 I lastly came to where I found 1480
 A fountain 'neath a glorious pine.
 Ne'er since great Charles of Pepin's line
 Was born, hath mortal eye e'er seen,
 In any garden as I ween,
 A pine so tall, straight-grown, and fair.
 And in a stone of marble rare,
 Had Nature's hand most deftly made
 A fountain 'neath that pine tree's shade.
 And gazing on the side of it,
 Beheld I small clear letters writ, 1490
 Which said: "Here fair Narcissus lay
 And died, in tears dissolved away."

XI

The author here of fair Narcisse
 Doth tell the tale, who was, ywis,
 Drawn on to love his proper shade,
 Seen in a well, and thereby made
 His life so wretched, that at last
 He pined and wasted till he passed
 To nothingness. His soul doth sit
 Beside the fount and dream of it.

1500

Of Nar-
 cissus
 and Echo

NARCISSUS hight a youth beset
 By Love, and snared within his net ;
 Who thereby so great sufferance felt
 As lastly caused his soul to melt
 In tears, and render up the ghost :
 For him fair Echo's soul was lost
 In love that reason's voice defied,
 And she, o'ercome with passion, cried :
 " O shouldst thou disdain to give
 To me thy love, I scorn to live."
 Then he, (self-loving fool, and vain
 Of heart,) regarded nought her pain,
 But scoffed at every fond caress,
 And spurned her proffered tenderness ;
 Until, despairing, day by day
 She wasted, pined and waned away
 For love of him : but as in air
 Her spirit passed, she made her prayer
 To God, that this Narcissus' hard
 Unpitying heart might e'en be scarred,
 Like hers, with love unsatisfied,
 To recompense his cruel pride,

1510

1520

PUNISHED - OF
 A CRUEL
 LOVE
 VERY SENSITIVE

And thus at last he too might prove
 The pangs of unrequited love. Echo is
 The God, in pity, bowed his ear avenged
 To list his sweet petitioner,
 And caused Narcissus, tired and worn
 With hunting, through a summer's morn,
 O'er valley, lawn, and mountain's crown,
 Hither to come and cast him down, 1530
 Consumed by thirst, beside the cool
 And crystal waters of the pool
 To which the spreading pine tree gave
 Refreshing shade, then o'er its wave
 He bent him, driven by thirst, to drink
 The limpid wave that lapped its brink.

XII

This telleth how Narcissus sighed
 His soul away in tearful tide
 Through fond self-love; yet died he not,
 But lives within this fount, I wot. 1540

WHEN stooped he low to slake his drouth
 And saw his forehead, nose, and mouth,
 He started back in wonderment,
 For through his heart the vision sent
 A thrill, to see himself so fair,
 Matchless in form, of beauty rare.
 Then Love knew well his way to take
 Narcissus in his toils, and make
 Him suffer such-like cruel woe
 As he had dealt to fair Echo. 1550

A warn-
 ing to
 fair
 women

Beside the crystal fount he lay,
 Gazing enrapt, the live-long day,
 Enamoured of the shadow he
 Saw in the fount so perfectly,
 Until he sighed away his breath ;
 And lastly found thereby sweet death.
 Now hearken while the tale I tell,
 How on his heart Love's vengeance fell.
 When plain it was that he nowise
 Could gain that thing which in his eyes 1560
 Alone seemed good, and when he knew
 How hopeless all his longing grew
 Of sweet fulfilment, and that ne'er
 Could he in that he longed for share
 And have his joyance, then he lost
 In wrath his reason, and the frost
 Of death came o'er him. Thus was heard
 The prayer of that sweet nymph whose word
 Of love he rudely scorned. O fair
 And gentle ladies, be ye ware 1570
 By this example that your ears
 Ye shut not hardily, nor tears
 Despise of those who seek your love,
 Lest ye with vain remorse should prove,
 How God doth punish those who leave
 Kind swains to die, or vainly grieve.

Assured the fair inscription writ
 Above the fountain pointed it
 Most plainly for the self-same one
 Whereby Narcisse had been foredone, 1580
 My impulse was towards speedy flight,
 Without one glance within the bright

But treacherous wave ; the very thought
 Of sad Narcissus' dooming brought
 Fear to my heart. But soon I said :
 "Whereof, O man, art thou afraid ?
 'Twere madness didst thou not essay
 This fount wherein sweet sunbeams play."
 Forthwith then on my knees I sank,
 Pressing the verdant mossy bank,
 With wish more closely to behold
 The flood, and pebbles note (than gold
 More bright), that freely paved the floor
 Of that fair fount.

The
 beauty
 of the
 fountain

1590

Without the door
 Of paradise the blest, I ween
 No sight more beauteous may be seen
 Than this bright well. The gushing source
 Springs ever fresh and sweet. Its course
 It takes through runnels twain, full deep,
 And broadly trenched ; it knows no sleep 1600
 By day or night, for ne'er 'tis dried
 By wasting drought of summer tide,
 Nor hath stern winter's iron hand
 The power to make its waters stand
 Immovable, but out the ground
 Its babble calls, the whole year round,
 Close, tender herbage, which doth push
 Unceasingly, strong, thick and lush.
 Fast in the fountain's pavement shone
 Two sparkling spheres of crystal stone, 1610
 Whereon my gaze with wonder fell :
 And, when the tale thereof I tell,
 Your ears will tingle as I trow,
 And pleasure unto marvel grow.

Beware of the fate of Narcissus

When that the sun, which searcheth all
 The things that live on earth, lets fall
 His rays within this fount we see
 An hundred colours gorgeously
 Shine forth within the water bright,
 Vermilion, azure, silvery white, 1620
 And richest gold. Such virtuous power
 These crystals have that every flower
 And tree within this pleasaunce seen,
 Reflection finds in their sweet sheen;
 How this doth hap most clearly I
 Will by example testify.
 E'en as a mirror casteth back
 Each thing that fronts it, nor doth lack
 In working thus to give amain
 The form and colour once again, 1630
 So every crystal facet here
 Reflects each detail sharp and clear
 Of all that in this garden lies:
 For whosoever casts his eyes
 Thereon, one-half the garden sees,
 And if to turn, his fancy please,
 The other half is then revealed.
 Nor are the smallest objects sealed
 Or darkly hid, but all appear
 Pourtrayed within those crystals clear. 1640

Mirrored within this perilous place,
 Narcissus loved too well his face
 And lustrous eyes, with foolish pride,
 Thence came his fall, and thence he died.
 Alas! for him who doth admire
 Himself herein—for love's desire

Will seize his heart and nought can heal Cupid's
 His hopeless woe, nor aught anneal. toils
 This mirror valiant men hath cost
 Dear life; though fairly might they boast 1650
 Themselves for prudent, wise, and great,
 They here alas! have found their fate.
 Hence passion springs in man anew
 And to his life gives fresh purview,
 No measure, sense, or mode knows he,
 Love, love, alone, hath mastery
 Good counsel to the winds is cast,
 For Cupid, Venus' son, hath passed
 Around the fount to sow the grain
 Whereof all men are madly fain, 1660
 The seed of Love to wit, and set
 His springes there, and many a net
 For damsels fair, and gallants eke:—
 Such birds alone doth Cupid seek.

By reason of the seed there sown,
 This Fountain is to all men known
 As that of Love: thereof is told
 The tale full oft in many an old
 Romance and song, but ne'er before
 Hath any man so fully or 1670
 So truly set all forth as now
 'Tis writ within this book I trow.

Beside the fount awhile I stayed,
 Admiring how the crystals made
 Mirrors for all the lovesome things
 That filled the garden. Memory brings

The Rose-bush Before me that too long I let
 Their charms engross my mind. Ah! yet
 I feel these mirrors 'twas deceived
 My soul, and could I have believed 1680
 What sorrow to their sight was wed,
 Then had I turned my steps and fled,
 As flees a man the plague. Ah me!
 I fell—like others—woefully.
 O'er all things mirrored there I chose
 A rose bush, charged with many a rose,
 Encinctured by a thick grown hedge,
 And doubt ye not that though in pledge
 Paris and Pavia held I both,
 Mine heart in no degree were loth 1690
 To render up the twain so I
 Might gaze thereon unceasingly.
 Soon as I felt this passion seize
 My heart, which oft hath caused misaise
 To wisest men, my longing drew
 Me towards the rose-bush and then flew
 Through all my soul its savour sweet,
 Which set my heart and pulse abeat
 Like fire. And were it not for fear
 That I the scot might pay too dear, 1700
 I surely should have dared to seize
 A rosebud, seen nought else could please
 My senses equally, but dread
 Restrained my hand lest, angered
 Thereat, the guardian of the spot
 Might thrust me thence straightway, God wot!

Aheap were roses! none I ween
 Elsewhere 'neath Heaven's blue dome hath seen

Such rich profusion ; some as yet
 Mere buds, which therefore ne'er had met 1710
 Rude Boreas' kiss, while others were
 Half opened, and such beauty rare
 Displayed as no man would despise
 Who once thereon had cast his eyes,
 For roses which are broadly blown
 Ere long begin to cast adown
 Their petals, while the tender new
 Fresh buds, as yet untouched by dew,
 Will keep their beauty while the sun
 His race through three full days doth run. 1720
 What ardent longing in my breast
 These buds inspired ! Whoso possessed
 The power to pluck but one, right fain
 Must be such glorious prize to gain,
 And might I but secure a crown
 Thereof, I would forego renown
 And fortune fair. Amongst them all,
 My rapturous eyes on one did fall,
 Whose perfect loveliness outvied
 All those beside it. I espied 1730
 With joy its lovely petals, which
 Kind Nature's hand had dyed with rich
 Deep crimson hue. Its perfect leaves
 Were formed of two quadruple sheaves,
 Which side by side stood firm and fair,
 With stalk strong grown enough to bear
 The full-grown bloom which did not
 bend
 Or languish, but most sweetly spend
 Its fragrance on the air around,
 And wrapt my senses in profound 1740

One sur-
 passing
 Rose-bud

Love
speeds
a shaft

Yet soft delight. Whene'er I smelt
Its odour, strong desire I felt
Possess me wholly that I might
Snatch for mine own that dear delight.
But thorns and thistles grew so thick
Around the rose-bush, prone to prick
And wound the profanous hand that dared
Approach and grasp it, that I spared
To risk the rash attempt, afraid
My love might be with wounds apaid.

1750

XIII

Herein the Dreamer telleth how
He felt the shaft of Cupid's bow,
E'en as he sought his hand to close
Around the stem, and snatch the rose,
Whose fragrance through his soul had sent
Such madness and bewilderment.
But this, his fondest hope, denied
The God of Love, who him espied.

THE God of Love, whose bow was bent
With purpose fell, where'er I went 1760
Pursued my steps, and took his stand
Beneath a fig-tree, close at hand
To where, with arm upraised, I sought
To pluck the Rose whose beauty brought
Me thither; then he took a shaft
And nocking it, with bowman's craft,
Drew the string taut against his ear
With mighty arm, for well that gear

He knows to handle ; straightway flew
 The shaft therefrom, which right well knew 1770
 Its deadly billet ; through my heart
 Quick pierced the golden-headed dart,
 And on my forehead ice-cold sweat
 Burst forth, and ne'er can I forget
 How 'neath my fur-trimmed doublet spread
 Chill shuddering as my life were sped.
 Pierced by the fatal shaft I fell
 Supine to earth ; ah ! woe to tell
 How sudden faintness seemed to seize
 My heart, the while I felt my knees 1780
 Give way, and when from out the swoon
 I woke, felt feeble as the moon
 Looketh in glare of day. I thought
 To see blood flow, but when I sought
 The wounded spot 'twas clear and dry.
 Thereto both hands did I apply,
 And strove, 'mid sighs and groans, to draw
 The shaft from out the cruel flaw :
 But, misery me, although the bole
 I drew from out the fatal hole, 1790
 The iron barb, which Beauty hight,
 Remained therein, fast-fixed, and tight
 Past power to move it, yet no gout
 Of crimson life-blood welled thereout.

The
 Dreamer
 pierced by
 Beauty

Ah ! then what anguish and distress,
 What grief twice told, what heaviness,
 I suffered : reft of speech I stood
 Distrustful where or how I could
 Some leech discover, or what herb
 To seek that might or cure or curb 1800
 My grievous hurt.

The
shaft
hight
Simple-
ness

The Rosebud still
My heart desired : that seemed to fill
My being only ; and the gain
Of that dear treasure all my pain
Had eased straightway, and given to me
New life, from grief and sorrow free.
For even to see it and inhale
Its fragrance made the bitter bale
Of life seem lighter, and though death
Drew near, I strove to catch its breath. 1810
But even then beheld that Love
Another arrow raised above
My trembling body.

Simpleness

This second shaft was called, nor less
Of might it hath than Beauty ; oft
Have men and maidens felt its soft
But potent stroke. All suddenly
The God, without once warning me,
This golden arrow nocked and sped, 1820
With mighty twang, against my head
Its cruel barb, which through the eye
Pierced to my soul ; and verily
I fear no man of woman born
Can e'er from out my breast that thorn
Pull forth, for though one might release
The shaft, yet must the barb unpeace
For ever give to me, and lo !
Therewith desire began to grow
Fiercer within me than before
To win the rosebud ; more and more 1830
Increased it as the more I felt
Love's second shaft, till seemed to melt

My inmost soul. Oh sweeter far
 That rose to me, than violets are
 When spring awakes; it drew me on,
 Though wiser 'twere if I had gone
 Swiftfooted thence in hasty flight;
 But oft it haps that folly's might
 Prevails o'er reason, and I bent
 My steps towards the rose whose scent 1840
 Subdued my will.

The
 shaft
 hight
 Courtesy

A careful watch
 This while the archer kept to snatch
 Fair field against me as I strove
 To reach the fragrant flower, whose love
 Entranced my soul.

Now thirdly flew
 The shaft hight Courtesy, which through
 My heart pierced once again. Adown
 I fell at once in deadly swoon,
 Stretched out beneath the sombre shade
 An olive tree's broad branches made. 1850

The wound this time was wide and deep,
 And when I woke from swooning sleep,
 And strove with all my strength and
 craft

To pluck the weapon forth, the haft,
 Alas! was all therefrom I gained,
 Fast fixed the jagged barb remained.

Then sitting on the sward upright,
 My painful anguish as I might
 Brooking, I saw that woe must be
 My lot, for this last wound to me 1860
 Brought new desire to gain the rose.
 And yet again the archer chose

The shaft high Generosity
 Another bolt of beauty rare,
 Gold wrought and winged with plumage fair :
 Ah ! well might I then fear my fate,
 For scalded man doth water hate,
 Though but lukewarm or cold it be.
 Franchise or Generosity
 This shaft was named ; yet nought dismayed
 Would be though arrows round me played, 1870
 And swords and stones were showered pell-
 mell,

One word alone my tongue could spell :
 "Give me my rose."

Almighty Love,
 Whose influence reigneth far above
 All else, to me such courage gave
 As dared his worst assault to brave.
 Wounded and weak I gained my feet
 And staggered on, prepared to meet
 The archer, towards that rose-grown brake,
 But found strong spines and thistles make 1880
 A barrier none could pass. Ah ! vain
 All efforts proved the prize to gain.
 Yet near the hedge I stood, and might
 Freely enjoy the gladsome sight
 Of those sweet roses hedged by thorns,
 Nought recking of or pains or scorns
 If only I might snuff the air
 With fragrance laden, and the fair
 Sweet rosebuds gaze on, free from let
 Or hindrance.

Then did I forget 1890
 All pain and suffering, lost in joy
 That nought could 'minish, nought destroy ;

So long as I might rest anear
 The rose, o'erpast was all my fear,
 Healed were my wounds, what more could I
 Desire, than thus to live and die ?

Company
 and Fair-
 Seeming

Some while remained I resting there,
 When came the God of Love, (whose care
 Alonely seemed my heart to rack)
 As though his mind was to attack 1900
 Me once again. With fell intent,
 His bright and beauteous bow he bent,
 Driving an arrow 'neath my breast,
 Which found my heart—its destined quest.
 This arrow's name was Company,
 The which is known 'fore all to be
 Potent in curing maid or dame
 Of foolish coyness, pride, or shame.
 It suddenly within me wrought
 Renewed distress, and o'er me brought 1910
 Three swoons, and when from them I woke,
 More barely my forlornness broke
 Upon me, and all hope had fled
 Of cure or bettering. Then I said :
 More welcome death were, than to lead
 A life so vile, where troubles breed
 New troubles still, for Cupid now
 Hath will to make of me, I trow,
 A martyr ; fain were I to flit
 Me hence ; but how to compass it ? 1920
 Meanwhile the God against me aimed
 Another arrow, which was named
 Fair-Seeming. Dangerous it is,
 Yet he who feels its force, ywis,

Love's Blesseth the pain it brings. Its point
balsam Is keen and pierces thow and joint
 Like steel-wrought razor. But the head
 With unguent is by Cupid spread
 To dull the pain, for wills he not
 The death of those whom he hath got 1930
 Within his toils, but betterment
 Delights to give them ; oft is sent
 To all his lieges fragrant balm,
 Wrought by his hands, their griefs to calm.
 Lovers in him great comfort find ;
 Sores doth he heal and woundings bind.
 This arrow Love against me drew,
 Tearing my heart, but like a dew
 Of sweet effect this unguent spread
 Through all my frame, from heel to head, 1940
 My senses cleared, and gave me back
 That strength whereof my limbs had lack.
 And through that precious balsam death
 Was cheated—Love renewed my breath.

Enough of strength I had to draw
 The arrow forth, but like a claw
 The barb held fast, so all the five
 Fair shafts did Cupid thus contrive
 To lodge within my frame, which ne'er
 Can force remove or time outwear. 1950
 And though the ointment helped me much,
 The pains I still endured were such,
 That of my countenance the hue
 Was altered, and right well I knew
 That this last shaft both marred and made,
 For anguish tipped its pointed blade ;

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 65

The while the unguent, soft and suave,
To all my wounds sweet comfort gave.
At once it hurt and yet it healed,
Awaked new pains, yet old annealed.

Love
claims his
victim

1960

XIV

Herein is told how Love amain
The Dreamer claims his prisoner—fain
Is he to yield him at command,
As liegeman 'neath his master-hand.

WITH bounding step the God of Love
Towards me ran, and stood above
My prostrate form, then gaily cried:
“Vassal! 'twere vain that thou denied
Thyself my prisoner, nought to fear
Hast thou, amend thy mournful cheer. 1970
The readier thou to do my will,
> The quicker shall I be to fill
Thy heart with joyance. Mad wert thou
To fear him whom thou ought'st to know
For kindly friend; 'twere thine to seek
From him benevolence; all too weak
Art thou for contest. Learn of me
That pride and foolish vanity
Can serve thee nought. Thy will submit
To mine and thou shalt joy in it.” 1980

I answered: “Sire, to you I give
Me wholly while 'tis mine to live:
'Fore God! no will have I to make
Rebellion 'gainst you; freely take

The
Dreamer
becomes
Love's
liege

My life away. Whatso you deem
Most fitting, e'en though good it seem
To you to prison me or slay,
Speak but the word, and I obey.
My life is yours to waste or save,
I render me your bounden slave.

1990

'Tis you alone have power to give
Or joy or penance while I live.
If your strong hand, which hath but late
Betrayed my soul to hardest fate,
Refuseth now its woes to cure,
Or prisons me,—O be you sure
I shall not murmur nor complain,
Of your decree my heart is fain.
For if with yours my heart is whole,
I nought need reckon of shame or dole :
But trust you will in due time grant
That grace for which my soul doth pant.”
This said, I dropped upon my knee,
With will to kiss his foot ; but he,
His hand in mine, said : “ Well content
Am I with thee ; such words ne'er went
From out a rebel's mouth, and thou,
For that fair speech, shalt win thee now
Great honour. Homage unto me
'Tis thine to do, and grant I thee
This boon—my very mouth to kiss ;
Such favour ne'er permitted is
To villains, churls, or such as be
Mere striplings ; 'tis a warranty
Of Love's sweet mercy, and alone
Permitted those whose hearts are known

2000

2010

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 67

For courteous, honest, leal and true ;
Ready and ripe for service due.
My bondage weighty is, but I
Reward good servants plenteously. 2020
Thou well may'st feel elate and proud
To be Love's liegeman, and allowed
His livery from this day to wear.
Love doth the noble banner bear
Of Courtesy, and ever shows
Him sweetly gentle unto those
Who love him, and upon them take
His lordship. He will surely make
From out their hearts to disappear
All base desire, all servile fear. 2030

The
Dreamer
becomes
the Lover

XV

From Youth, which had deceived his heart,
The Lover tears himself apart,
And to the God of Love doth now
In homage, as his liegeman, bow.

WITH clasped, uplifted hands I cried :
" Behold your bondsman." Love replied
By pressing ruby lips to mine,
Oh, heaven of bliss! Oh, joy divine !
For hostage then he took me straight.

Love speaks.

" Good friend," quoth he, " full oft my
fate 2040
Hath been false homage to receive
From men who swear but to deceive.

The
 Lover's
 full sur-
 render

Base rebels have, with many a wile,
 My courtesy repaid by guile
 And villain strife, but they shall know
 My wrath if ever chance should throw
 Them 'neath my hand; they dear shall buy
 The fruits of vile hypocrisy.
 But I such fond affection feel
 For thee, that surely would I seal 2050
 Thy heart to mine, and hold it fast
 In such firm wise that ne'er o'erpast
 My vigilance shall be, but still
 True faithfulness thy mind fulfil.
 Deception were a grievous crime
 Towards one whose heart with thine doth chime.

The Lover answers.

I answered: "Hear me, gentle sire,
 And tell me why should you require
 Pledge or assurance? You must know
 By past experience, as I trow, 2060
 That in suchwise my heart hath been
 Sore handled, that no more I ween
 It hath desire to say or do
 Aught else but that which pleasurth you.
 This heart is yours that once was mine,
 And now is bound, without repine,
 To follow your command. Therein
 You have a garrison will win
 The victory 'gainst all comers. But
 If thou hast doubt thereof, then shut 2070
 And lock it close, and guard the key."

Love.

“Now, by my head! that seems to me
Well said,” quoth Love, “and I accept
Thy word; that body safe is kept
By him who under lock hath got
His captive’s very heart, God wot!”

The
Lover's
heart is
locked

XVI

This tells how Cupid skilfully
The Lover's heart with golden key
Locked in such wise, that though his breast
It entered, nought it harmed his vest.

2080

LOVE then from forth his alm'ner drew
A little key, well-wrought anew
Of thrice refinèd gold, and said:
“This to thy heart my hand must wed;
To its safe keeping I confide
My jewels; ne'er hath it belied
My perfect trust. It doth possess
Great virtue, and in size though less
Than thy small finger, wondrous strong;
The name that to it doth belong
Is: Mistress of my jewels rare.”

2090

The Lover speaks.

Forthwith Love touched my side with care,
And so adroitly turned the key,
That scarce its path was known to me.
His utter will he thus worked out,
And when I felt 'twas done past doubt,

Love's I cried: "But one desire doth fill
 guerison My heart, which is to work thy will,
 And humbly beg my homage due
 Thou wilt accept for loyal and true. 2100
 My words proceed not from a heart
 Wherein disloyalty hath part,
 For every servant's work is vain,
 Whose master treateth with disdain
 The service offered, though it be
 Tendered with loving loyalty."

Love speaks.

Then Love replied: "Cast fear away:
 Since thou hast given thyself to-day
 To me, most willingly I take 2110
 Thee to my service, and will make
 Thy name renowned therein, if ye
 Miso do not; yet but leisurely
 Good gifts oft come, and many a pain
 Must ye endure before ye gain
 Relief. With faithful patience wait,
 And I from out thy hard estate
 Will bring thee; well to me is known
 That which will work thy guerison.
 If loyal and true thou dost remain,
 Such sovereign balm thy heart shall fain, 2120
 As all thy wounds shall quickly heal.
 Soon shall I see if thou dost deal
 Me faithful service, by my head!
 And if thou day and night hast sped
 All those commandments faithfully
 Which true hearts only have from me."

The Lover speaks.

“Great Sire,” I cried, “for love of God, Before your foot forsakes this sod, I pray you all your high behest Set forth, for here I stand confessed Your humble servitor, whose great Desire it is, both rathe and late, To do your will, and fain would learn Each point, nor thence hereafter turn.”	Instruction tion claimed	2130
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Love speaks.

Then answered Love : “Thou speakest well : But little boots good wit to tell To those who heed not, masters lose Their pains unless their scholars choose Within their memories fast to hold The counsel wisdom’s lips unfold.”	2140
--	------

The Lover speaks.

Then Cupid set himself to teach
Me, word for word, such things as reach
The very pith of his commands.
In this Romance each precept stands
Plain writ, and those who inly yearn
For love may all its mystery learn
From out its page. ’Tis ever well
To list that man who knows to tell
His story thoroughly. Many a new
And wondrous thing, though strange yet true, 2150
This dream sets forth, and he who hears
The end thereof, the hopes and fears

Love's And joys of love may learn, and grow
 precepts The deep significance to know
 The tale containeth. Now is hid
 The truth, which all uncoverèd
 Shall be when you have read throughout
 The story—clear of lies or doubt.

XVII

Herein the God of Love doth teach
 The Lover, and against the breach 2160
 Of laws contained in this Romance
 He warns him, lest he err perchance.

“**F**ORE all beware of Villainy,”
 Quoth Love, “and utterly deny
 All knowledge of her, under pain
 That all thy vows I count but vain.
 Those who love Villainy I hate,
 And count them excommunicate.
 ’Tis Villainy doth villains breed,
 I hate her every thought and deed, 2170
 For fell is Villainy, and none
 From her hath love or pity won.
 Keep guard upon thy mouth lest leak
 Therefrom such things as none should
 speak,

But labour to forget. Both base
 And mean are slanderous tongues. The case
 Of Arthur’s seneschal, Sir Kay,
 Remember; loved he to missay,
 Fulfilled of hatred, spite and spleen.
 Right well was Gawain loved, I ween, 2180

For courtesy, while Kay was blamed
 For ribald speech, and evil famed
 Among all knights for boorishness.

Courtesy
 to women

But be thou careful to possess
 Thy soul in gentleness and grace,
 Kindly of heart and bright of face
 Towards all men, be they great or small.
 And when thou passest from the hall
 Along the street, have care that thou
 Salute men first with courteous bow,
 Or if some one take precedence
 Of thee therein, have thou the sense
 To make reply without delay,
 Returning his salute straightway.

2190

Watch well thy lips, that they may be
 Ne'er stained with ill-timed ribaldry.
 Nor let from out thy mouth be heard
 Foul talk, or unbecoming word,
 For courteous knight I hold him not
 Who suffereth hideous words to blot
 And mar his speech.

2200

Have special care
 To honour dames as thou dost fare
 Thy worldly ways, and shouldst thou hear
 Calumnious speech of them, no fear
 Have thou to bid men hold their peace.
 Most richly shalt thou gain increase
 Of glory, if to maid and dame
 Thou givest ready aid ; thy fame
 Their tongues shall spread both far and wide.

Above all else, beware of pride,
 For all men taking note may see
 That 'tis but vaporous vanity,

2210

74 THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

Cast off And into folly linked with sin
 pride Man falls when once immersed therein ;
 For every man whose soul is stained
 With pride is past all hope enchained
 To actions, thoughts, and words that prove
 Him alien to the House of Love,
 Nor shall he know his heart to bend
 In suchwise as to gain love's end. 2220
 Let him who would in love succeed,
 To courteous word wed noble deed ;
 For he who is in mode and mien
 Gentle and affable, I ween,
 Around him gathereth meed and praise,
 While foolish vanity betrays
 A man blunt-witted.

Thou shouldst wear
 Rich habit as thy purse can bear,
 Well formed and fashioned ; fair attire
 Is oft good fuel for love's fire. 2230
 Employ no tailor who doth cut
 The cloth askew to wasting, but
 One who hath skill to join each sleeve
 And seam with neatness. Do not leave
 Thy shoes half laced, but have them new
 And sprucely made, fitting to true
 And perfect measure, then wilt thou
 See envious whisperers wondering how
 Ye put them on and take them off,
 But nought need fear their gibe or scoff ; 2240
 Wear gloves well made ; thy purse should be
 Of satin, and, tied daintily
 About thy waist, wear sash. If thou
 For such gear hast not wealth enow,

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 75

Then of its bravery abate Give heed
 Somewhat to suit thy lesser state : to purity
 But let thy 'tiring be no worse
 Than fits the coin that lines thy purse.
 A wildflower chaplet mayst thou boast,
 Or roses blown at Pentecost, 2250
 At modest charge. Sweet cleanliness
 Use thou as part of gentleness.
 Wash oft thine hands, and ne'er forget
 Thy teeth to whiten, nor e'er let
 Thy finger nails untended be,
 But pare and keep them carefully.
 Lace well thy sleeves, and comb thine hair,
 But painted face and leering stare
 Disdain, it suits but women or
 Vile men, who get due scorn therefor. 2260

And next remember that, above
 All else, gay heart inspireth love. 2270
 A laughing mouth and merry smile
 May oft a lady's heart beguile ;
 A sweet disease that casteth care
 Is love, and many a joy doth bear ;
 Yet oft-times lovers undergo
 Immingled hours of joy and woe ;
 One day consumed in sweet delight,
 The next involved in sorrow's night ;
 For love goes ever in extremes ;
 Sometimes enwrapt in pleasant dreams
 The lover is, then lost in tears,
 A medley strange of hopes and fears.

If thou shouldst know some cheerful play
 Or game to wile dull hours away,

Avoid the name of miser
 My counsel is, neglect it not,
 For praise and thanks may thence be got,
 And every man in time and place
 Should practise that which brings him
 grace. 2280

If lithe and strong of limb thou art,
 Fear not, but boldly act thy part,
 And canst thou well a-horseback sit,
 Prick high and low in pride of it ;
 And much with ladies 'twill advance
 Thy suit, if well thou break'st a lance,
 For who in arms his own doth hold,
 Winneth acceptance manifold.
 And if a voice strong, sweet and clear
 Thou hast, and dames desire to hear 2290
 Thee sing, seek not to make excuse,
 But straightway from thy memory loose
 Some ditty soft ; and shouldst thou know
 To wake the viol's voice with bow,
 Or tune the flute, or deftly dance,
 Such things thy suit will much advance.

With diligence avoid the name
 Of miser ; obloquy and shame
 Belong thereto, and lovers should,
 Of all men, show a liberal mood 2300
 Of open-handed generousness,
 For he who doth deny largess,
 Knows not the alphabet of love.
 Therefore I counsel thee above
 All else no miser be, a mean
 And niggard soul hath never been
 My faithful servitor ; the swain
 Who, for his mistress' glance is fain

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 77

To risk dear life, and willingly	
Would die the death if only she	2310
Would give him one sweet smile, should ne'er,	Be gra- cious and merry withal
That gained, desire his purse to spare.	

Now hearken, while I strive to bring
 Shortly before thee everything
 Thou erst hast heard ; things briefest said
 Are oft-times best rememberèd.
 Whoso desireth Love to take
 For lord and master, must forsake
 Pride, and be wed to Courtesy.
 Gracious and merry must he be, 2320
 Well known and loved for open hand.
 Next, for a penance dost thou stand
 Commanded that by night and day
 Thy soul be given to love alway,
 And ever let thy memory cling
 About the source of love's sweet spring.

Desiring thou mayst perfect be
 In loving, I ordain to thee,
 Without appeal, that in one spot
 Thy very heart is centred, not 2330
 Lukewarmly, but all doubt aside,
 Void of deceit thou dost abide ;
 (Half-hearted service count I nought,)
 And he who foolishly hath sought,
 With heart divided, grace to gain,
 Shall find his labour lost and vain :
 He only hath my sovereign grace,
 Whose heart is fixed in one sure place.
 Moreover say I, let thy heart,
 Its home once fixed, ne'er more depart 2340

Give thy heart wholly
 Therefrom, for shouldst thou let it stray,
 That crime shall store an evil day.
 But he who wholly doth accord
 His heart in one great gift, reward
 Doth merit, and each gift shall bring
 The donor bounteous guerdoning.
 But give it freely, singly, clear,
 With joyous face and pleasant cheer,
 For greatly doth the manner make
 An offering welcome, none will take
 A gift bestowed with grudging mien,
 Above the worth of one poor bean.

2350

When thou thy heart hast freely given,
 As my fair sermoning hath striven
 To teach thee, then thou next shall know
 The toils and griefs those undergo,
 Whose shoulders bear the lover's yoke.
 Thy love adventures must thou cloke
 From eyes of other men, lest they
 Perceive the miseries that play
 Around thy heart; thou all alone,
 Content must be to make thy moan.
 Then sighs, and woeful plaints, and tears,
 And trembling hopes, and shivering fears,
 Within thy breast wilt thou enfold;
 Now parched with heat, now pinched with cold,
 And now vermilion red, and now
 Wan as a spectre shalt thou grow:
 No fevers ever troubled man,
 Nor tertian, nor quotidian,
 Worse than the throes that lovers feel.
 And many a time will love so deal

2360

2370

With thee, that thou shalt clean forego
 Remembrance of thyself, nor know
 What thing thou dost, but all alone
 Shalt stand, as dumb as stock or stone.
 That hath no voice or power to mové
 Hand, foot, or eye—spell-bound by love.
 At last, when thou long time hast been
 Like man of wood or wax, I ween, 2380
 Then shalt thou sigh, and take thy breath
 Long-drawn, as one might wake from death.
 And wot ye well that 'tis thy fate,
 As denizen of love's estate,
 To suffer bravely all such woe
 As Love's true soldiers needs must know.

The
 misery of
 absence

And then remembering that ye are,
 From her thou lov'st, aparted far,
 Thy soul shall cry: "Oh! God, my lot
 Is hard, that I myself may not 2390
 Go where she is: must then my heart
 Alone come near her? why apart
 Should we be thus condemned to dwell?
 When I desire my feet as well
 Should thither bear my heart, ah me!
 Therein there would small profit be;
 For if my heart hath not mine eyes
 For guide, their vision nought I prize.
 And should they then abide here? Nay,
 But haste to see without delay 2400
 That precious sanctuary, which
 The thought of doth mine heart make rich.
 While my desire so fast doth go,
 Myself I blame for dull and slow,

Sight only satisfies
 And when my heart is off my thought
 So far, it seems by madness caught.
 But I shall go to her, indeed,
 Still following where mine heart doth lead,
 Reckless of aught beside the way."
 Then wilt thou forth without delay; 2410
 But travelling at too great a pace
 Wilt oft-times fail to win the race,
 And so perforce must turn aback,
 Pensive and sad, thine outlook black,
 Bemoaning that all waste hath been
 Thy journey since thou hast not seen
 The longed-for object. Then to great
 And grievous misery of estate
 Thou com'st again, with sighs and groans,
 And twitchings, shiverings, and moans, 2420
 And pains acute, and minor ills,
 More quick and sharp than hedgehog's quills.

Let him who doubts the truth hereof,
 Ask some true lover ere he scoff.
 But still thy heart will feel unrest,
 With infinite desire oppressed
 To see once more the face of her
 Whose vision doth thy bosom stir
 To madness, and if that sweet sight
 Thou winnest, to thy great delight, 2430
 Past measure thou the chance wilt prize
 Thereon to feast thy hungry eyes,
 And through her beauty wilt thou be
 Fulfilled of all felicity :
 For gazing on the one sweet dame
 Who sets thy being all aflame,

Will but awaken new desire,
 And scorch thine heart like ardent fire.
 Far, far above all else 'tis sight
 That makes the flame of love burn bright. 2440

Neglected
 oppor-
 tunities

Of every lover 'tis the way,
 The flame to follow which doth play
 Fiercely upon him, and though he
 Be scorched, draws closer willingly.
 The fire is e'en that dearest one,
 Whom all his soul is set upon
 With such intense desire and yearning,
 That nought he counts the pain of burning,
 But ever nearer longs to draw
 Towards her he counts his life and law. 2450
 Sages and fools agree in this :—
 Nearer the fire the warmer 'tis.

And thus, the more thou see'st thy love,
 The bitterer will each parting prove,
 And when thou canst no longer stay,
 But willy-nilly must away,
 Through the long hours, remembrance tender,
 Wilt thou unto the loved one render,
 And utterly thy folly blame,
 That thou so ill hast played the game 2460
 Of love, that thou hast let slip by
 Some rare found opportunity
 Of pouring forth thy soul, and stood
 Beside her dumb as stone or wood.
 And then great fear of her disdain
 Shall cloud thy heart, because when fain,
 Thou might'st have made her, with some word
 Of tender love, no passion stirred

A lover's
confusion Thy tongue ere thou wert left alone,
Without a smile ; then wilt thou own, 2470
Not willingly hadst thou that chance
Lost, for a hundred marks of France.
Next shall thou issue forth amain,
Occasion seeking once again,
To traverse restlessly the street,
Spurred on thereto by hope to meet
Thy heart's delight, whom thou hast seen,
Erewhile, all fruitlessly I ween.
Most diligently then wouldst thou
Seek out her wonting, as I trow, 2480
Though daring not to go direct,
Lest people, Argus-eyed, suspect
Thy purpose ; therefore round about
Thy feet will wander, in and out,
Finding excuse and reason fair,
Though false, why thou meanderest there,
Scheming and plotting how to hide
Thine object from the world outside.

And if by hap thou dost behold
Thy love, and straightway makest bold 2490
To bow, and hold her in converse,
A moment later wilt thou curse
Thy folly, when thou feelest rise
Thy blood all hot, and next, from eyes
To chin wilt thou turn deadly pale,
And find thy voice to quiver and fail,
And thoughts confused within thine head,
Will tell thee thou hast blunderèd.
And when thou wouldst make fresh essay
With choicer words, thou'lt feel dismay, 2500

And doubt if thou in speech art able
 To show thee skilled and affable.
 Of three things that thou hadst to say
 Two suddenly have passed away
 From thy remembrance, t'other one
 Thou'lt babble forth in shamefast tone;
 For never man existed yet,
 Who did not thuswise words forget,
 Unless a lover false of heart
 Were he, who did but act a part. 2510
 Lovers untrue are void of fear,
 Ready of speech, and bright of cheer;
 One thing they think, yet speak another,
 With view their base designs to smother:
 Vile and malignant traitors they,
 Using fair words to lead astray.

Vexa-
tions and
anxieties

Whene'er this parleying is sped,
 Although thou hast no word missaid,
 Thou natheless wilt suspect that thou
 Art lightly held, and puzzle how 2520
 Thou more can'st say, whereof shall come
 Vexation sharp as martyrdom.
 For every lover's life is dight
 With dire vexation in despite
 Of noblest aim, and he must spend
 His days in strife from end to end.
 In vain he hopes for sweet increase
 Of joy, his lot is dire unpeace.

E'en when upon thee night doth close,
 Thou shalt but find exchange of woes 2530
 And vexings; supine on thy bed,
 A cloud of torment round thine head

Was this a dream? Shall gather; little shalt thou get
 Of slumber; anxious care shall fret
 Thy brain, and thou shalt toss and start
 Uneasily, and then athwart
 Thy pillow turn, like coin upthrown,
 Now cross, now pile, till thou hast grown
 Weary as one whose tooth doth ache.
 All this thou sufferest for the sake 2540
 Of her whose beauty to thine eyes
 Is present in such glorious wise
 That nought can equal it. Anon
 Thou dreamest thy beloved one
 Lies naked in thine arms, become
 Thy wife, and decks thy joyous home.
 And then shalt thou rejoice amain
 In dreams of palaces in Spain,
 And find delight in joys unstable,
 Built up of lies and foolish fable. 2550
 But soon thy vision shall be past
 And once again thy tears fall fast,
 And thou shalt cry: 'Was this a dream?
 Where am I? Doth all this but seem?
 Alas! Whence came this vision bright?
 Would God! ten times a day 'twere
 dight,
 Ay twenty, for it steeps my soul
 In joy supernal, and black dole
 Drives far away. Alas! that pure
 Delight should such short space endure. 2560
 Ah God! If I perchance could be
 In such blest case as seemed to me
 Erewhile my lot, how gladly I,
 Clasped in my mistress' arms, would die.

Full oft Love's pains my soul torment,
 And bitter plaint, and loud lament,
 I make thereof; would Love but grant
 To me that sweet for whom I pant,
 Ah! then all woes would count as nought,
 Seeing that heaven thereby were bought. 2570
 But out alas! I ask too much,
 How dare I e'en in vision clutch
 At prize so high, a stern rebuff
 The fool receives, when rash enough
 To dream such dreams: if one soft kiss
 My love would give me, Gods! what bliss
 My soul were wrapt in; richly I
 Were paid for all my misery.
 To me the future darkly looms,
 Whose rash inconsequence presumes 2580
 To lift my longing towards a place
 So high I scarce dare hope for grace.
 More than another's body were
 One single look or glance from her.
 Regard my prayer, bestow on me,
 O God, the boon once more to see
 My soul's desire; and then my pain
 Were cured, and life revived again.

Ah! wherefore lingereth then the light
 Of dawn to chase the weary night, 2590
 Wherein I nought have known of rest?
 How is my ardent heart oppressed
 With vain desire of her I love!
 Alas! how wearisome doth prove
 That couch whence sleep and dreams are fled!
 I turn and writhe with drearihead,

A lover's
restless-
ness

Fearing the night will never die,
Nor dawn relieve my misery.
Longing for light my spirit cries :
O sun, for God's sake, haste to rise 2600
Above the hills, delay thou not,
But cast thy beams on this drear spot,
And chase, by thy resistless power,
Night, and the clouds that round me lower.'

Thus shalt thou wear the night away
Reft of repose, for well the play
Of lovers' thoughts to me is known.
And then at last, impatient grown
Of vainly courting scornful sleep,
From off thy restless couch thou'lt leap, 2610
And set thyself in haste to don
Thy raiment, and thy shoes put on,
Although the dawning still delays
Its coming, and by secret ways
Wilt haste through storm of rain, or sleet,
To seek the house where dwells thy sweet,
Who, whilst thou wakest, in profound
And blissful dreams perchance is drowned,
Of thee unmindful : then shalt thou
Seek if the postern door allow 2620
Some entry, but an hour or more
Must bide, content, on stony floor,
Beaten by wind and rain, to sit :
Then to the portal shalt thou flit,
And seek with diligent eye some place
Unbolted, or some window space
Left open, so that thou mayst find,
With anxious ear, if slumber bind

The inmates. But, if thou awake
Shouldst find thy love, then mayst thou
take

Lovers
lean and
pale
2630

Advantage of that moment blest
To tell her all the hard unrest
And bitter suffering undergone
By thee for her sweet love alone.
O surely thou her heart shalt touch
With pity, when she hears how much
Thou hast endured, unless more stern
Her bosom grows, as thine doth burn.

Now hearken thou what next shall be
Thy work for her who robbeth thee
By her sweet beauty of thy rest.

2640

When thou against her door hast pressed
Thy lips at parting, have a care
That no man of thy step is ware
About her threshold-gate, or way
That leads thereto, ere dawns the day.
These midnight wanderings, to and fro,
And ceaseless promenades, high and low,
Cause lovers, who of late were hale
And strong, to turn as lean and pale
As hungry churls, and thou shalt see
This proved in thine identity.

2650

No faithful lover e'er is found
Rosy and jovial, sleek and round
Of limb and visage, such like traits
Belong to lovers false, who praise
Ladies with mean and base desire
To cheat their trusting hearts; the fire

Vails to
followers

Of love they know not ; though they sing,
Loud-voiced, their woeful suffering, 2660
And loss of appetite and sleep :
Natheless I see these losels keep
Fat and well liking, feeding higher
Than abbot, canon, monk, or prior.

Moreover, 'tis my strict command
Thou show'st a free and generous hand
Towards thy mistress' serving-maid ;
Bestow on her a robe well made
Of fine wove stuff, and she shall spread
Thy name abroad for goodlihead. 2670
In honour, marked by reverence, hold
All those thy lady hath enrolled
As special friends, great service they
May render thee in many a way,
And praise, perchance, bestow on thee
For gentle speech and courtesy.

Depart not from the countryside,
Or if perchance thou needs must ride
Afar, leave thou thy heart with her
Whom thou wouldst choose its cofferer. 2680
Then haste thy steps, that thou amain
Mayst win to her sweet side again,
And let her see how wearily
Time's foot doth lag, unless thine eye
Feast on her.

Therewithal is sped
My counsel, which shall well bestead
My faithful servitor, and bring
Him and his love to harbouring."

The Lover speaks.

When Love had said his say, I cried :
 " Alas! must lovers then abide
 Such cruel woe, such bitter pain,
 As you recount ere yet they gain
 The wished-for haven? Grievous fear
 O'erwhelms my mind : what man can steer
 His life through such a sea of woe
 As your sworn liege must undergo?
 In sighs and tears and wailings wrapped,
 His health destroyed, his vigour sapped;
 His nights consumed with anxious care :
 Ah! God, I ask what man could wear
 His life one month in such a hell,
 Unless forsooth he bare a shell
 Of adamant or steel?"

Love not
 won
 lightly

2690

2700

Quick sped

The God reply thereto, and said :

Love speaks.

" Now swear I, by my father's soul,
 Who wins the prize must pay the toll,
 For game hath ever sweeter taste
 Which weary foot hath hotly chased;
 And likewise good seems higher good
 When bought by pain and wearihood.
 Certes most true it is that, ne'er
 Can aught with lovers' woes compare;
 The man lives not whose might the sea
 Can empty, nor can ever be
 Love's pains set forth in tale or book;
 Yet natheless, still do lovers look

2710

Hope To live, however hard their lot,
 always And carefully shirk death, God wot !
 present The wretched thrall, in dungeon dark,
 Munches poor oaten bread life's spark 2720
 To keep within him, and despair
 Repels, though filth and vermin wear
 His wretched body : still doth hope
 Of freedom give him strength to cope
 With direst miseries, trusting still
 By happy chance or guileful skill
 To win deliverance. He likewise,
 Whose soul in love's sweet bondage lies,
 Hath hope at last to heal his woe,
 And thence such light and comfort grow, 2730
 As give him grace to bear the smart
 That love inflicts, with constant heart.

Through Hope it is that lovers learn
 To count their misery nought, and spurn
 Dark-eyed Despair, assured each blow
 And stripe they suffer but foreshow
 A hundred joys, when they shall be
 Made happy in love's victory.
 O blessed hope that through the strife
 Of years gives savour to the life 2740
 Of lovers.

Gentle Hope is kind,
 And never laggeth far behind
 A brave man's footsteps till the end
 Of life approacheth, but doth lend
 Comfort and light, although he be
 Bowed to the earth with misery.
 Nay, e'en the wretch who feels the rope
 Around his neck, still clings to Hope.

She 'tis whose brightness will sustain		Cupid's
Thy spirit though it flag and wane	2750	three
With weariness, and presently		gifts
Shalt thou be dowered and blessed with three		
Good gifts, whence those may ever get		
Ease, who are caught in my sweet net.		

The first of these which solace brings
 To those whose hearts endure the stings
 Of loving, hight Sweet-Thought, which
 gives

Blessings untold where Hope still lives.
 Whene'er the lover groans and sighs,
 As one who 'neath the torture dies, 2760
 Sweet-Thought steps in to drive away
 His grief, and set in bright array
 The longed-for joys of her whom he,
 Dreameth, through Hope, may one day be
 His high reward.

Before his eyes

He sees her thousand graces rise :
 The rose-red lips whence fragrant breath
 Exhales, like waft from thyme-grown heath ;
 The laughing eyes, the mignon nose
 Of perfect form ; his being glows 2770
 With rapture, while before him pass
 Her beauties pictured in the glass
 Of memory : o'er and o'er again
 Of such sweet solace is he fain,
 As dear remembrance of a smile
 Or gracious look affords him, while
 Recall of some kind welcome given
 Transports his soul to highest heaven,

Of Soft-Speech And thuswise doth Sweet-Thought assuage
 The storms of poignant grief that rage 2780
 In lovers' breasts.

I give to thee
 This precious boon, and verily,
 If thou my next gift valuest less,
 Reproach be thine for thanklessness.

Soft-Speech my next gift hath for name,
 Which many a man, and many a dame,
 Have found of great avail ; for all
 To whom the pains of love befall,
 Beyond aught else desire to hear
 Their passion talked of. Proof most clear 2790
 Hereof assuredly we see
 Through her who sang thus merrily :
 ' I am,' saith she, ' in joyous mind,
 Whene'er I hear sweet words and kind,
 Exalt my love, for whosoe'er
 Singeth his praises, kills my care.'
 Of Soft-Speech knew she all the ways
 And secrets, and had made essays
 Therein, full many a time.

Choose thou,
 From out your fellows, one ye trow 2800
 For wise and faithful, and to him
 Pour forth thine heart when all abrim
 'Tis filled with love, for comfort great
 It giveth to communicate
 To some dear friend one's hopes and fears,
 From whom, when all around appears
 Hopeless, some ease we yet may find :

Together may ye give your mind

To speak of her whose beauties fill
Thy ravished heart.

A sym-
pathetic
friend

With ready will, 2810

Thy tongue will every thought confess
That racks thy breast with anxiousness,
And thou wilt counsel with thy friend
How thou most fruitfully mayst spend
Thy life and goods to give delight
To her thou lovest

If the might

Of love hath struck thy friend, 'tis well,
His heart will know the tale ye tell,

And to thy sympathetic ear

Confide his hope, his joy, his fear, 2820

Revealing if his love be maid,

Or light o' love, or widow staid,

And who she be, and what her name.

Then thou from him wouldst fear no shame,

Or treacherous word, but all he saith

Believe, while he in thee puts faith.

Then shalt thou feel that passing good

It is to have in friendlihood

A man to whom thou dar'st to show

Thine inmost heart, and thou shalt know, 2830

Whenso hereof thou makest proof

How greatly works it thy behoof.

My third gift, hight ~~Sweet-Looks~~, hath birth

Of amorous eyes; of passing worth

It is to those whose cruel fate

Enforces them long years to wait

Their hope's fulfilment; have a care

To keep thee near thy flame or ne'er

The value of Sweet-Looks
 Can Sweet-Looks help thee, though above
 All else he serves the cause of love. 2840
 Ah, happy those who day by day
 God keeps from wandering far away
 From that sweet object of desire
 That burns their hearts like holy fire :
 Each day their longing eyes have caught
 That sight, all misery count they nought,
 Nor raging winds, or rains they fear,
 Or wrong, or danger, if anear
 Their loved one they may come ; when once
 With love the eyes begin to dance, 2850
 They will not selfishly enjoy
 Their happy moments, but employ
 The heart likewise, and give it peace,
 For through soft eyes a rich increase
 Of joyance woe-worn hearts may gain,
 And darkest clouds disperse amain.

As new-born morning chaseth night
 Across the hills, and haileth light,
 E'en so Sweet-Looks, like dawning clears
 Dark clouds from lovers' hearts and cheers 2860
 Their drooping spirits, which through day
 And night have worn long hours away
 In sighs and tears, for sad hearts rise
 From grief to joy through love's bright eyes.

Thus as a faithful master, I
 Thy faults and errors, truthfully
 Have told thee in plain speech, and named
 Fair means whereby, all unashamed,
 Lovers may gain their chief desire.
 Suffer thou not thine heart to tire 2870

Of those my four most precious gifts,
 The use whereof the heart uplifts
 To peace and happiness. Sweet-Speech,
 Soft-Looks, Sweet-Thought, and Hope shall
 teach

The God
 of Love
 departs

Thy heart content, and they again
 Will further blessings bring to fain
 And cheer thy heart; meanwhile the four
 I've given to thee, be thankful for."

XVIII

The Lover plains that forth doth go
 The God, and leaves him lost in woe.

2880

NO sooner was his counsel sped,
 Than suddenly, quick vanishèd
 The Lord of Love, and all amazed
 I stood, as one aghast and dazed.
 Once more I felt misease to prick
 My soul with anguish to the quick,
 And straightway felt that I must gain
 The rosebud, would I cure the pain
 That racked my wounded heart. To none
 I looked for help except alone

2890

The God of Love. Full well I knew
 That vain and foolish 'twere to sue
 For others' aid: no power but his
 Could save me in this pass ywis.
 A hedge thick-grown with thorns stood round
 The rose-tree, but at one short bound
 Had I o'erpassed its height, and bent
 My hand to pluck the bud, whose scent

Fair-
Welcome
appears Perfumed the air, save that I feared,
To be estopped, when'er I neared 2900
The goal I sought, and fail to get
The prize whereon my soul was set.

XIX

Fair-Welcome here the Lover learneth
How that for which his spirit yearneth
May be attained, and courteously
Leads where he sorely longs to be.

BESIDE the hedge awhile I stood,
With wavering heart, in dubious mood,
When towards me came, with gracious mien,
A youth whose aspect well I ween 2910
Lord Momus had not dared to blame.
Quoth he : " Fair-Welcome is my name,
The son of kind-heart Courtesy."
With graceful gest he showed to me
A path, and noting my surprise,
Thus spake he forth in friendly wise.

Fair-Welcome speaks.

" Fair sir, if 'tis your wish to find
How you perchance may come behind
The hedge, to taste the odour sweet
The roses breathe, you may your feet 2920
By my assistance set therein,
Thy promise given, that nought of sin
Or folly moves thee. Willingly,
That understood, I promise thee,
To that fair rose-tree free access,
Of generous love and friendliness."

The Lover answers.

“Fair sir, with right goodwill,” I cried,
 “I take your welcome word; beside
 My power of speech it is to give
 You worthy thanks, but while I live
 Shall be your debtor.”

Danger
 lies
 hidden

2930

By his aid
 I climbed the thorn-set hedge, and made
 My way within the envious close
 That circled round the longed-for Rose.
 To seek one special bud I ran
 Which seemed to me more fragrant than
 The host of others, and with me
 Fair-Welcome went, in company.
 I need not ask you to believe
 What rapture 'twas to thus achieve
 The object of my one desire—
 The Rose—which burnt my heart like fire,
 And thanks, untold, Fair-Welcome gained,
 Through whom I had this goal attained.
 But out, alas! unhappy I,
 A villain wretch was hid hard by,
 Danger to wit, the forge of woes
 For all who dare approach the Rose.
 Within a corner dim lurked he,
 Concealed by grass and greenery,
 Watching, with envious eye, whoso
 Should venture near the Rose to go.
 With this foul churl were other three,
 Whose care it is love's path should be
 Beset with briars; vile Evil-Tongue,
 And Shame and Fear: the best among

2940

2950

Of Shame The three was Shame, and know that she
 and Fear Cometh of doubtful ancestry ;
 Her mother Reason hight, her sire,
 Alas! was foul Misdeed, a dire 2960
 And bloody monster, to whom ne'er
 Did Reason yield herself, but bare
 Her daughter, when by sad mischance
 Misdeed had cast on her one glance ;
 And when God's will it was that Shame
 Was thus engendered, so it came
 That Chastity, who erst had been
 Of Roses and of Rose-buds queen
 And guardian, finding her beset
 By robbers, vainly sought to get 2970
 Swift aid.

Now Venus 'tis, forsooth,
 Who day and night inciteth youth
 To reive the Roses.

Chastity,
 By Venus sorely vexed, the knee
 To Reason bent, and asked from her
 Her child, as help and succourer.

Then Reason fired with will to save
 The Rosebuds, heard her prayer, and gave
 Her virtuous, innocent daughter, Shame.
 And Jealousy moreover came 2980
 With Fear, than these none better know
 Dame Venus' wiles to overthrow ;
 And evermore this well-met trine
 Of subtle castellans, combine
 That none may Rosebud seize or Rose.

Now being well within the close,

Almost I deemed me near my end,
 For prompt Fair-Welcome was to lend
 His help thereto, should not these three,
 By sad mischance get sight of me.

The
 Lover
 nears
 the Rose

2990

And now he bid me come anear
 And touch the Rose-tree, scorning fear,
 Whereon the Rose-bud grew, and seeing,
 How longing therefor, sapped my being,
 Stretched forth his hand, and plucked a leaf
 From off the Rose-tree's plenteous sheaf.

This leaf I set to deck my breast,
 Deeming the gift a worthy test
 That friendliwise Fair-Welcome stood
 In my regard, and likelihood

3000

I had of good success. Then bold
 I felt with hope assured, and told
 Fair-Welcome how my heart above
 All else was captive-led by Love.
 "One thing alone, fair sir, can give
 To me enjoyment while I live;
 For in my heart is buried deep
 A wound, whose pulses banish sleep.
 Alas! what words can e'er describe
 My case, whereat forbear to gibe
 Or mock, for rather were I torn
 In pieces, than provoke your scorn."

3010

Fair-Welcome.

"Speak forth," quoth he, "your full desire
 Nor fear you aught to raise mine ire
 Through that you say, whate'er it be."

The Lover.

Danger "Fair sir," I answered, "pity me,
 appears Whom Love hath seized within his grip,
 Nor fear that falsehood stains my lip.
 Through Love my heart is doomed to feel
 Five cruel wounds, which nought may heal 3020
 Unless I win that opening rose,
 Than which, the world's round circle knows
 Nought else so sweet. For it I live,
 Or die, content my life to give
 Therefor."—Fair—Welcome paled with fear,

Fair—Welcome.

And cried: "O brother, wherefore rear
 Within your breast a hope so vain?
 Desire you then to be my bane?
 Alas! I were forsooth undone,
 My credit lost, my honour gone, 3030
 If you should dare to reive that rose
 From where, by God's hand set, it grows
 Unharm'd. A villain's act I trow
 Is that you dream of. Suffer now
 That beauteous bud, whereso 'twas born,
 To flourish still, my hand would scorn
 The crime your mouth doth rashly bid."

The Author.

Then Danger, who lay closely hid
 Hard by, sprang forth. Of form immense,
 Dark-browed, with hair as stiff and dense 3040

As spike-set herse, his red eyes burned
 Like fire above his nose upturned,
 While loudly, maniac-voiced, he cried :

The
 Lover
 put to
 flight

Danger.

“ Fair-Welcome, are you then beside
 Your wit to bring a gallant thus
 Anear the Rose ? most infamous
 Is his intent towards you ; no one
 But you this great disgrace had done.
 To serve a felon is to be
 Partaker of his felony.
 A kindness you have will to do
 To him, who but betrayeth you.”

3050

XX

This tells how Danger, filled with ire,
 Expels, with ignominy dire,
 The Lover, and Fair-Welcome eke,
 Whose grief no words e'er framed could speak.

“ FLY, slave ! begone from out my sight,
 Ere on your pate my club doth light !
 This fool, Fair-Welcome, little knew
 The man he gave his aid unto,
 For in your speech have you betrayed
 The treachery that my hand hath stayed ;
 Avaunt ! nor seek you to explain
 Your crime, with me fair words are vain.”

3060

XXI

Danger, fell guardian of the Rose,
 The Lover drives from out the close.
 Upon his neck a club he bare,
 As he a thief or madman were.

Escape
 from
 Danger

SMALL lust had I to stay therein,
 'Neath Danger's scowling, hideous grin, 3070
 But quick as squirrel o'er the ledge
 Of thorns and briers that formed the hedge
 I scrambled, and heard Danger shout,
 Shaking his monstrous head about,
 That if thereto I dared return,
 My body vengeance dire should earn.

Fair-Welcome had made good his flight,
 And I, a-dread at Danger's spite
 And malice, stood ashamed, as one
 Amazed, recalling all I'd done 3080
 And said, and then my folly saw,
 And how I well might fear to draw
 Sorrow and misery great therefrom.
 But that whereby was overcome
 My spirit mostly, was the thought
 Of that thorn hedge. But surely nought
 Can one who hath not dared to love
 Know of the pains that lovers prove.
 Love had not failed to keep his word,
 Which warned me, that both stern and hard 3090
 Should be his service. Ne'er can know
 The heart of man, or tongue e'er show,

One-fourth of all the pain I bare ;
 And thinking on the Rose I swear,
 Woe worse than death my heart did rack,
 Yet thence alas ! must turn aback.

Reason
 reappears

XXII

How Reason, well-beloved of God,
 The Lover warns that he hath trod
 The path of folly, when above
 His reason, madly set he love.

3100

THEN was my soul all desolate
 For fear I had received checkmate,
 Till Reason saw me from her high
 And well-built fort, whence she may spy
 The country far around. Forth came
 From out her tower that gracious dame
 Towards where I stood. Nor young nor old
 She seemed, and he forsooth were bold
 Who called her short or over-tall,
 Or cumbrous big, or scanty small,
 Of limb or figure. But her eyes
 Shone like those glorious stars that rise
 Morn-tide and eve. Her head a crown
 Bedecked, like queen of high renown.
 An angel seemed she, pearl past price,
 Born in the realms of paradise,
 For neither earth nor Nature bare
 A being so surpassing fair.
 Sure 'tis, if Holy Writ lie not,
 That she the counterfeit hath got

3110

3120

Love
must be
forgotten

Of Him who rules earth, sea, and sky ;
Who her, moreover, gloriously
Endowed with power to rescue men
From rash and foolish actions, when
To her wise word they lend their ears.

Seeing mine eyes suffused with tears,
With kindly voice thus Reason spake :

Reason speaks to the Lover.

“ Fair friend, ’tis youth and folly wake
Tears in thine eyes, and gladsome May
’Twas led thy tender heart astray. 3130
Alas the chance that fell on thee,
When Idleness, who bears the key
Of these fair gardens, oped the gate,
Glad welcome gave, and sealed thy fate.
Except for her, thy heart had not
Been wrecked by love, nor in this spot
Had Mirth’s bright eyes of thee been seen.
Thy folly know’st thou now, I ween,
And while ’tis time, I charge thee turn
Thy face against it, and unlearn 3140
The counsel that hath been to thee
As poison. Though thou foolishly
Herein hast done, thy fault is not
A thing to marvel at, God wot !
With youth ’tis aye the same. But give
To me thine ear, if thou wouldst live
Thy days in peace.

Thou must forget
Love and his wiles, which do but fret
And waste thy life.

	Not otherwise,	Shame is
Danger mayst thou escape, who lies	3150	to be
In wait for thee; but thou from him,		feared
With murderous club and visage grim,		
Hast less to fear, than she who came		
From forth my womb, my daughter		
Shame,		
Who guards the Roses with an eye		
That sleepeth never. Soothfastly		
'Tis she whom thou hast cause to fear,		
When thou the Rose wouldst come anear,		
And Evil-Tongue lends aid to her,		
Against each rash adventurer.	3160	
For long ere deed is born of will,		
His voice the whole world round doth fill		
With news thereof: thou hast, forsooth,		
To deal with folk who know not ruth.		
Judge then the wiser thing to do,		
To run the gauntlet of this crew,		
'Midst bitter pain, and grief of heart,		
Or turn to seek some worthier part.		
'This cruel sickness men call love,		
Is folly of a kind above	3170	
The wildest madness, nay, I swear		
That love brings oft more carking care		
Than madness' self; each lover knows		
Ere long, that nought of profit grows		
From love: for if a clerk he be,		
Within love's toils, soon loseth he		
His learning: or if other sphere		
Man moves in, love will cost him dear.		
Worse pains a lover suffers than		
A hermit or Carthusian.	3180	

No safety but in flight
 Love's suffering past all measure is,
 Its joyance but shortlived, ywis.
 Alas! how slender is the chance
 To win love's joy—which won, like glance
 Of lightning faileth. Oft men spend
 Their lifedays to attain some end
 Which proves mere dust. Alas! but vain
 My counsel is, if thou the rein
 To Cupid giv'st of thy desires,
 And he thy fickle heart inspires 2190
 To clasp his knees. Young spirits drift
 To folly lightly, but to lift
 Them thence find arduous task. Aside
 I prithee cast fond love, though pride
 Thou tak'st therein, for dire disgrace
 'Twill bring on thee. If thou thy face
 Set not against this madness, 'twill
 O'erpower thee lastly. Wouldst thou still
 Master thy folly, seize the bit
 Betwixt thy teeth, and holding it 2200
 Firmly, therewith refrain thy heart
 Ere diest thou 'neath Love's cruel smart.
 Who follows where his heart doth lead
 Full many a day hath evil speed."

XXIII

Herein the Lover makes reply
 To Reason, who would Love decry.

WHEN Reason ceased her preachment, I
 Made answer somewhat wrathfully:
 "Madam, I beg that you refrain
 Your mouth from chiding words amain. 2210

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 107

You counsel me, that I with bold,
 Unbending will my heart withhold
 From Love's dominion. Dream you then
 That Love permitteth it to men
 To rule their hearts when he hath got
 Them 'neath his foot? 'Fore Heaven, you wot
 Thereof but little. Love hath so
 Subdued me, that my heart doth know
 Nought but his will. His golden key
 Hath locked it fast unalteringly. 3220
 Cease then, I pray, you do but lose
 Your time, and fair French words misuse,
 Thus sermoning me, who, for my part,
 Would sooner die than deem my heart
 Despised of Love for falsity.
 I little reck although I be
 Or praised or blamed, but while I live,
 To Love my heart will wholly give:
 Forego your counselling I pray."
 Then Reason ceased and turned away 3230
 Her face, convinced that words were vain
 To loose my heart from Love's strong rein.

Reason
 speaks in
 vain

Distress and wrath my being thrilled,
 The while with tears mine eyes were filled,
 To think how helpless there I stood.
 But Love had counselled that I should
 Seek out some comrade, unto whom
 I might, when life seemed wrapped in gloom,
 Confide my cares: therefrom I drew
 Much comfort, deeming that I knew 3240
 A Friend, from whose advice my mind
 Would grateful ease and solace find.

XXIV

Counselled by Love, the Lover makes
Confession to his friend, and takes
Thereby great comfort, seen that he
The case aredeeth skillfully.

The
Lover
seeks a
friend

I SOUGHT him straight, and did unfold
To him my troubled state, and told
At full the amorous lore I'd learned
From Love, and what sore anguish burned 3250
Within my breast. I showed to him
The tale complete: how Danger's grim
Fierce aspect feared me, and how he
Fair-Welcome chased with contumely,
And threatened o'er my back to break
His club, if I should dare to take
The Rose-bud, or should venture in,
With hope my sweet desire to win.
When all the truth my friend had heard
He uttered no desponding word, 3260

XXV

The Friend's soft, gentle words allay
The Lover's fears, and smooth his way.

BUT said, "Dear comrade, cast aside
Your fears, be nowise terrified;
This Danger, since longtime I know
For one who spareth not to throw
Curses, and menaces, and threats
Against each generous youth who sets

His foot anear the Rose. Although		
At first he maketh wondrous show	3270	Danger may be appeased
Of wrath, 'tis nought, I know him well		
As know I A B C to spell.		
This Cerberus fierce may be appeased		
With little pains; he's lightly pleased		
With soft caress and humble prayer:		
Learn then the way that you should bear		
Yourself towards him: first begin		
By asking pardon for your sin,		
Of his sweet love and gentleness.		
And then with solemn oath express,	3280	
Right hand uplift, your purpose fixed,		
That you will never more be mixed		
In plot against him: nought allays		
His wrath so soon as flattering praise."		

The Lover.

My friend so confidently spake,
As straightway in my soul to wake
New courage, and desire to try
Danger's rude soul to pacify.

XXVI

The Lover loud to Danger cries	
For mercy, and with flattery plies	3290
His rugged soul, till thus he gains	
The boon wherefor he spends his pains.	

TOWARDS Danger then once more I came
With timid step, affecting shame,
But ventured not to pass the bound
That hedged the precious Rose-tree round.

Humility I found him standing bolt upright
 before In seeming rage, and ready dight,
 Danger His gnarled and knotted club. Then I,
 With humble mien and downcast eye, 3300
 Approached him, and exclaimed: "O Sire,
 I pray you humbly, let the ire
 You well may feel against me die,
 Seeing that now, most abjectly,
 I crave your pardon, and would do
 Whate'er your will should set me to,
 As act of penance. Love it is
 Who rules my heart, and he, ywis,
 My trespass caused.

My mastering thought
 Is this, that through all time I nought 3310
 May anger you, and direst pain
 Would suffer ere that I again
 Incurred your wrath, wherefore to me
 Extend, I pray, your clemency,
 Who have your fear before mine eyes
 Unceasingly, and in such wise
 To you will render service due
 As ne'er shall give you cause to rue
 Free grant of pardon, noble sir,
 To your devoted worshipper. 3320
 Suffer that he but once again,
 Who of thy fostering hand is fain,
 May offer you his love. Your will,
 Or small or great, will I fulfil
 At risk of life, and faithful be
 Past all men call sincerity.
 What more to any sovereign lord
 Than life and love can man afford?

Nay, for my own full weight in gold
 No man for master would I hold
 But you alone.”

3330

Danger
 seems to
 relent

Surly and slow
 Was Danger ere he deigned to throw
 Aside his wrath, but in the end
 Such eloquent words did I expend
 To calm him, that I gained his grace.

Danger.

Shortly, quoth he: “Not out of place
 Is that thou say’st: no spiteful rage
 Consumes my breast, nor will to wage
 Hot war against thee. What to me
 Is it if thou lov’st fatuously?
 I feel therefrom nor cold nor heat;
 Love then—but suffer not thy feet
 To bear thee where my roses grow,
 Or thou my club’s full weight shalt know.”

3340

The Lover.

Thuswise, from Danger did I get
 Forgiveness, and with swift foot let
 My comrade know thereof, who great
 And glad rejoicing showed thereat.

The Friend.

“Right well,” quoth he, “goes your affair;
 Danger will prove him debonair
 In your regard; although at first
 His way it is to show a curst

3350

Renewed And evil spirit, yet his aid
 hope He oft affords to those who've paid
 Him adulation ; many a wight
 Gains his goodwill who knows aright
 To trim his tongue. Experience proves,
 That patience oft his hard heart moves."

The Lover.

Rejoiced I greatly, seeing thus
 My friend's kind heart solicitous 3360
 E'en as mine own, for my content.

I bade adieu to him, and went,
 With hurried steps, yet once again
 Anigh the hedge, for all heart-fain
 Was I once more the Rose to see,
 Nought else afforded joy to me.

On all my movements Danger kept
 A watch, that never flagged nor slept ;
 But truth to tell small lust had I
 To risk his dread ferocity, 3370
 And all my thought was how to bate
 His dudgeon, and conciliate
 His fierceness, but at last despair
 Woke in my breast. I did not dare,
 Though groaning 'neath the long delay,
 Ere yet his wrath might melt away,
 To pass the hedge where grew the Rose,
 But as I stood beside the close,
 The wretch could hear my piteous sighs,
 Yet heeded nought, though in such wise 3380
 He saw me as must plainly tell
 That Love's thrall bowed my soul to hell.

And, though he nought could challenge me
 Of treasonous plot or treachery,
 He yet such cruel despite nursed
 And fostered in his soul accurst,
 That nought could soften, shake, or melt
 His heart for all the woes I felt.

Franchise and
 Pity

XXVII

This tells how Pity and Franchise went
 Together, fraught with good intent, 3390
 To seek out Danger, and relate
 The Lover's woebegone estate.

WHEN life seemed lost, and effort vain,
 God sent to aid me sisters twain,
 Franchise and Pity, who their way
 Betook towards Danger; grieved were they
 To see the sad and doleful plight
 Wherein I stood. First Franchise dight
 Her speech with kindly sympathy.

Franchise.

“Danger,” she said, “as God hears me! 3400
 You do with menaces unmeet,
 And harsh and bitter words, entreat
 The Lover, who to you hath ne'er
 Done one unkindly act, I swear.
 If Cupid's power his heart constrain
 To love, wherefore should you complain
 Thereof?

The God of Love hath made
 This gentle youth his spoil, and laid

Pity's On him sore burdens, though he should
 appeal Be burned alive he never could 3410
 Shake off his yoke ; and will you then
 On this most wretched among men
 Let loose your rage, whom Love hath ta'en
 So fast within his toils, that fain
 Although he be to cast aside
 His yoke, therein must still abide ?
 What then, fair sir, doth prick you on
 To do him hurt ? Have you not won
 Promise from him to be your slave ?
 And wherefore should your heart still crave 3420
 His wrack and ruin ? If Love of late
 Hath bowed his soul to you, should hate
 Against him burn in you therefor ?
 You surely would be honoured more
 In sparing him than some rude hound ;
 A kindly, generous man is bound
 To succour those beneath him. Hard
 Is he who fast his heart hath barred
 Against a suppliant in distress."

Pity.

Quoth Pity then : " Oft gentleness 3430
 May overcome austerity :
 But whenso sternness comes to be
 Pushed past all reason, then it is
 But savage cruelty ywis.
 Therefore, O Danger, I require
 That you no longer let the fire
 Of your resentment burn too hot
 'Gainst this poor simple soul, whose lot

Great Love hath cast. I pray you cease
 Your wrath, and grant the youth release. 3140
 Sufficeth not that you with grim
 And cruel hand have torn from him
 Fair-Welcome, closest confidant,
 For whom his longing soul doth pant
 Day in, day out? For every pain
 He suffered you have given him twain.
 Alas! his soul I count but dead
 Unless his friend, Fair-Welcome, tread
 The path beside him. Would you do
 Him further wrong, who suffereth through 3450
 Love's cruelty such woes? Alas!
 You could not, or it would surpass
 The wrath of hell. Pray then restore
 Fair-Welcome to his arms once more
 In pity, and the earnest prayer
 Accord, that I with Franchise share;
 For he fell tyrant were indeed
 Who heard our cry, yet scorned to heed."

Pity
 pleas
 with
 Dang

The Lover.

No more could Danger then forbear
 Franchise's plea, and Pity's prayer. 3460

Danger.

Quoth he: "Fair ladies, not so bold
 Am I as venture to withhold
 Consent to that you ask, lest ye
 Condemn my soul of villainy.
 The Lover may Fair-Welcome take
 For comrade, I'll no hindrance make."

The Author.

Fair-
Wel-
come's
readiness

Then forthwith soft-voiced Franchise sped
Towards where Fair-Welcome stood, and said
With gentlest words, and sweetest tone :

Franchise.

“ O wherefore leave you all alone 3470
The Lover, for so long a while,
Without so much as one poor smile ?
Sombre is he, and pale of hue,
Cast out from sight or speech of you.
If you esteem in some degree
My love, I charge you earnestly
Return to him, make no delay,
But speak and do whatso you may
To cheer his heart. With Danger, I
And Pity wrought so earnestly, 3480
That now desireth he no more
To part ye twain as heretofore.”

Fair-Welcome.

Exclaimed Fair-Welcome : “ I agree,
Franchise, to that you ask of me.
Seeing that Danger grants your boon.”

The Lover.

Then Franchise hastened towards me soon,
Leading Fair-Welcome, who with bright
And friendly glances met my sight.
To tears of joy mine eyes did melt,
Assured in heart that nought he felt 3490

Of wrath against me. Then he took
 My hand, with reassuring look,
 Leading once more within the bound
 That cinctured Rose and Rose-bud round,
 Therein to wander as I would,
 Nought fearing Danger's evil mood.

The
 Lover's
 fair hope

XXVIII

Fair-Welcome here the Lover brings,
 With many sweet-voiced welcomings,
 Within the cincture whence the Rose,
 Across the air, its fragrance throws.

3500

AND thus I passed—believe me well—
 To brightest heaven, from darkest hell,
 For all throughout that closure rare,
 Fair-Welcome left me free to fare
 Whereso I would, and when the tree
 I came anear, it seemed to me
 That somewhat larger had it grown
 Since first I cast mine eyes upon
 Its wondrous beauty. Greater height
 The bush had gained, but not yet quite
 The bud had oped its eye to show
 The golden grain that lay below;
 While o'er its head, as 'twere a roof,
 The petals bent them for behoof
 And guarding of the precious seed,
 Which future roses yet should breed.
 But, God be thanked, the bud I found
 Of just expansion, full and round

3510

He would Of growth, and far more fair of hue
 kiss the Than heretofore ; it seemed anew 3520
 Rose To fill my heart with extasy,
 To think so sweet a thing might be
 Seen on the surface of the earth.
 But all the more, now jocund mirth
 Possessed my heart, with surer hold,
 Did Love his toils around me fold.

Long time I stood as in a trance,
 Rejoicing at the wondrous chance
 That I Fair-Welcome happed to meet,
 Seeing how well did he entreat 3580
 My every wish, nor aught deny
 I asked him. Then, all hastily,
 I dared to make him one request,
 Which might his friendship sorely test.
 "Fair sir," quoth I, "one great desire
 Consumes my soul, like ardent fire ;
 'Tis this, that of the Rose, whose scent
 With all the air like balm is blent,
 You would permit me one soft kiss,
 Bathing my heart in perfect bliss. 3540
 Fair sir, for love of God, I pray
 You turn not scornfully away
 From this appeal, unless in it
 Something appears you deem unfit."

Fair-Welcome.

"Dear friend," cried he, "God be mine
 aid !
 If I forsooth were not afraid

Of Chastity, with pleasure I
 Would grant your prayer, but verily
 I dare in nowise contradict
 Her will, and she hath given most strict 3550
 And sure commandment, none should touch
 Or kiss the Rose, however much
 Or sorely he might plead therefor :
 I pray you press your suit no more.
 'For one,' saith she, 'who should attain
 To touch and kiss, will not remain
 Therewith content ; he then had got
 The choicest morsel, well I wot,
 And pledge, thereby, that one day he
 Should win the rest all utterly.''' 3560

A kiss
 would not
 suffice

The Lover.

Thus answered, to my mind 'twas clear
 I must forego my suit, for fear
 Of angering him.
 One ne'er should press
 A prayer to point of wrathfulness.
 No mortal man, with single stroke,
 E'er cut atwain a sturdy oak,
 And none may know wine's savour sweet,
 Till grapes are trodden 'neath men's feet.

My suit for many a day had waited,
 By this or that mischance belated, 3570
 If Venus, whom all lovers know
 As friend to them, and mortal foe
 To Chastity, had not appeared.
 Mother of Love is she, endeared

Venus To all his faithful ones. Her hand
 appears Held with firm grasp a flaming brand,
 Which scorched hath many a damsel's heart,
 Fatal oft-times as Cupid's dart.

Dull were the eye that could not trace
 The Goddess in her radiant face 3580
 And fay-like form.

'Twere light to guess,
 So free her mien, so bright her dress,
 Religion's bondage held her not.
 'Tis nowise needful, as I wot,
 To tell the wondrous robes she ware
 Betrimmed with golden orfreys rare,
 Nor of the jewelled morse that bound
 The precious girdle, worn around
 Her dainty waist, nor hair of gold,
 That round her knees in wavelets rolled : 3590
 The tale of this I well may spare.
 But doubt her not for passing fair,
 Right gracious, and devoid of pride.
 Forth stepped she freely, and beside
 Fair-Welcome stood, then straight began :

Venus.

“ Wherefore against this love-lorn man
 Do you display such high disdain?
 This kiss forbidding, which he fain
 Would snatch? Do you not clearly see
 How honour, faith and loyalty, 3600
 Shine forth in him? His manly grace,
 His well-formed limbs, his noble face,

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 121

The generous accents of his tongue,
Proclaim him vigorous, blithe and young ;
Whereof thank God !

Fair-
Welcome
yields

On any dame
Or guardian, should I cry out shame,
Who, when such lover prayed a kiss,
With churlish heart denied that bliss!
List then my counsel, and bestow
The boon that he desireth so. 3610
From archèd lips, his breath as sweet
Exhales as southern winds that beat
On fresh-blown violet-beds. He seems
One of those happy youths whose dreams
Are but of soft and sweet desires.
His lips are red as ruby fires,
And close on teeth as pure and white
As fleur-de-lis in springtide bright ;
And, to my deeming, nought amiss
It were to grant him one sweet kiss. 3620
So let it be, nor longer stay,
'Twere time but lost to make delay."

XXIX

Queen Venus' ardent torch doth fire
The Lover's bosom with desire
So fervid, that he dares the Rose
To kiss, in faith 'twill heal his woes

FAIR-WELCOME, when he felt the flame
Of Venus' brand, forthwith became
Willing to grant my prayer, and nought
He hindered more the boon I sought. 3630

The kiss
attained

So towards the Rose I went amain,
And won the kiss, sweet cure of pain!
O moment blest! O heavenly joy!
O happiness without alloy!
My senses suddenly were drowned
In fragrant perfume, for I found
Love's bitterness was overpast,
Which o'er my life of late had cast
A cloud of woe. What floods of bliss
Embalm'd me, through a single kiss 3640
Of that fair flower, so sweet of scent!
No longer will my life be spent
In sighs, its memory will suffice
To hold my soul in paradise.

And yet what suffering have I tasted,
What days and nights in sorrow wasted,
Since first I kissed my precious Rose!
But never yet did sea repose
From ruffling, free of storm and wind.
So is it with the lover's mind, 3650
Controlled by Love's almighty power,
Wounded and healed from hour to hour.

But now, 'tis mine to tell how Shame,
To wear and waste my spirit, came,
And how that mighty tower was built,
Whereon was so much labour spilt,
Ere yielded it to Love's attack.
Of all the history nought shall lack,
But fair be writ within this book,
In hope that she therein may look 3660
Who hath my heart, God save and bless
Her everywise, whose tenderness

To me were far more rich reward
Than earth and heaven besides afford.

Evil-
Tongue
wakes
Jealousy

Then Evil-Tongue, who loves to spoil
The joys for which fond lovers toil,
(For no more reason than that he
Delights in strife and enmity),
Beheld the kind and friendly deed
Fair-Welcome wrought.

A hateful weed 3670

Is he, foul Scolding's base-born son,
Than whom in all the world is none
Of speech more bitter and severe,
And who his mother was is clear
By his discourse.

He, enviously,
At once began to watch and spy
Fair-Welcome and myself, and said,
The eye he'd give from out his head,
If we betwixt us had not laid
Some cunning plot.

Such noise he made 3680

'Gainst Courtesy's fair son and me,
That lastly waked he Jealousy,
Who from her couch in wild alarm
Sprang up, foreboding grievous harm,
And like a maniac ran to seize
Fair-Welcome, who such sore missease
Felt, that he wished himself, I trow,
Far off as Etampes, Toul, or Meaux.

XXX

Here green-eyed Jealousy doth scold
 Fair-Welcome for the falsehoods told 3690
 By Evil-Tongue against him, he
 Loves to load men with calumny.

Jealousy
 attacks
 Fair-
 Welcome

THEN on Fair-Welcome straightway fell
 Wan Jealousy: "I prithee tell,"
 Quoth she, "how thou dost boldly dare
 To bring one here towards whom I bear
 Suspicious hatred? Unto me,
 It seems that thou too easily
 Tak'st strangers for thy friends, henceforth
 I trust no more thy faith and worth, 3700
 But straightway bound, within a tower,
 Will hold thee prisoner 'neath my power.
 Too far from thee hath wandered Shame,
 Who well deserves to suffer blame
 For negligence to hold thee fast;
 Full many a time I've stood aghast,
 Noting the scanty succour she
 Affords her sister Chastity.
 'Tis she hath suffered thee to bring
 Within these precincts a loseling, 3710
 Whose presence doth but cast disgrace
 On each and all who guard the place."

The Lover.

Fair-Welcome all dumfounded stood:
 Right willingly had he made good

His flight, but nought could he deny :	Shame
We twain stood there in company.	excuses
Soon as I saw this angry hag,	him
Knew her vile face, and heard her wag	
Her cursèd tongue, I strove to hide,	
In hope to shirk her spite's full tide.	3720
Then coming towards us Shame appeared,	
With downcast look, as though she feared	
Correction. On her head a simple	
Nun's convent veil she wore for wimple,	
And thus with faltering words outspake :	

Shame speaks to Jealousy.

“Madame, I pray you, for God's sake,	
The words of Evil-Tongue despise,	
A man is he who lightly lies,	
And worthy folk calumniates :	
If now he wrathfully delates	3730
Fair-Welcome, he is not the first	
To suffer 'neath his tongue accurst.	
For, ever Evil-Tongue delights	
To mar the fame of noble knights	
And gentle damosels. In truth	
Fair-Welcome, though a gentle youth,	
Doth make his leash sometimes too long,	
Nor may he be acquit of wrong	
In gathering friends too readily ;	
Yet do I not believe that he	3740
Should be accused of ill intent,	
For is he not of good descent	
Through Courtesy, his mother, who,	
Life-long hath never stooped unto	

Jealousy Base folk for friends? No man can be
 scolds More free from all iniquity
 Shame Than is Fair-Welcome; only this
 His foes may charge him with, he is
 Mirthful and merry, and to each
 And all he meeteth, free of speech. 3750
 Too easy have I been, past doubt,
 In passing o'er his faults without
 Due chastisement. I humbly plead
 Guilty hereof, if evil deed
 Account ye this. If I forgot
 My duty, I repent with hot
 And scalding tears, and nevermore
 Shall you have reason to deplore
 My negligence herein; he ne'er
 Shall step one pace beyond my care." 3760

Jealousy addresseth Shame.

"Ah! Shame!" cried Jealousy, "afraid
 Am I to be again betrayed,
 For vice is now so widely spread,
 That soon I fear all past and dead
 Will virtue be. Nor is my fear
 Needless, when now we see appear
 On every side such wantonness,
 Such luxury, such pride of dress,
 Which day by day yet seem to grow,
 Nor e'er was abbey built, I trow, 3770
 With walls so close, well-barred and high,
 As safely to keep Chastity.
 But for these Rose-trees and the Rose,
 I will with stronger walls inclose

Their beauties. All the confidence
 I placed in you is lost, and hence
 My surest guard is gone. A year
 Will not go by before all here
 Will take me for a sot or fool,
 Unless I hold some safer rule. 3780
 But now have I devised a plan,
 Whereby to circumvent each man
 Who boldly dares to come anigh
 My precious Roses. Never I
 Shall be content, until a tower
 I've built to be at once a bower
 And fortress to protect my Roses,
 And planned it so that it incloses
 A keep, the which Fair-Welcome fast
 Shall hold, for fear that he at last 3790
 Betray me. And with such strong guard
 Shall he be kept, that monstrous hard
 'Twill be for him to issue out,
 Or converse with the rabble rout
 Who'd fain disgrace me; he hath been
 Too easily deceived I ween;
 But if I live, thine eyes shall see
 What gain he gets deceiving me."

The Author.

Hearing these words, a shiver past
 O'er Fear, who, trembling and aghast, 3800
 Stood still, and not a word dared say
 The wrath of Jealousy to stay,
 Whose eyes expressed her spiteful heart.
 Therewith the beldame did depart

Fear and And Shame and Fear were left alone,
 Shame Both trembling to the buttock bone,
 tremble Till Fear, low-voiced, with drooping
 head,
 To Shame, her cousin, spake and said :

Fear.

“ Fair Cousin Shame, it sore doth fret
 My soul to think we twain should get 3810
 Reproach for crime that was not ours.
 Through April’s tears and Maytide’s
 flowers,

Long years we’ve passed devoid of blame,
 Till Jealousy, the green-eyed, came
 Brimmed with suspicions.

Let us go
 Whither fell Danger lurks, and show
 Clearly to him what mischief he
 Hath done, that not more warily
 He kept strict watch and ward. A fool
 Was he to let Fair-Welcome rule 3820
 The Garden at his wont. ’Twere well
 That we, in plain-set terms, should tell
 To him his duty, and that he
 Must mend his ways, or speedily
 Betake him elsewhere. If so
 It happed that Jealousy should grow
 To hate him, then, beyond all doubt,
 War should she wage, and thrust him out,
 As guerdon of the feeble ward
 And watch he kept the Rose to guard.” 3830

XXXI

Herein 'tis told how Fear and Shame,
 In deep concern, to Danger came,
 Demanding wherefore spared he blows
 'Gainst those who dared approach the Rose.

THIS matter 'twixt them well agreed,
 With nimble foot the twain proceed
 Towards Danger.

**They
 approach
 Danger**

Soon they found the boor,
 Stretched out upon the greensward floor
 Beneath a thorn; a heap of hay
 Served him for pillow, as he lay
 In dozing sleep.

3840

Then Shame awoke
 The slumbering clown, and chiding spoke:

Shame.

“ How then! Is this a time for sleep?
 A fool was he who bid you keep
 The Rose, who little more avail
 Than any shearling wether's tail.
 Slothful are you, and dull and base,
 'Tis yours, vile, lazy hound, to chase
 Intruders hence. With folly, you
 Fair-Welcome gave permission to
 Bring here his new-found friend, hence blame
 Unjustly falls on us. For shame!
 That you should sleep, while we incur
 Rebuke, vile weak-kneed palterer.

3850

Danger What! are you then not yet awake?
 re- Arouse you! up! for Heaven's dear sake,
 proached And run to stop and fence each gap
 That way affords, by which might hap
 Some thief to enter. Show you not
 The smallest ruth, or well I wot 8860
 Your name, once dreaded, soon will be
 Scorned for a sham and nullity.
 Fair-Welcome's part it is to rank
 As open, generous, free and frank,
 And yours to show yourself a churl,
 Fierce blows to rain and curses hurl
 Against all gallants. Gentle ways
 Shall win for you more blame than praise.
 Do you the proverb then forget
 Which saith, that no man ever yet 8870
 Of timid buzzard made a kite?
 And men who find your mien polite
 And gentle, do but laugh to scorn
 Your folly, which hath overborne
 Your wit. Do you then deem your task
 Fulfilled, when you to all who ask
 Grant grace and favour? Fie, O fie!
 'Tis cowardice, and you will buy
 Thus, but the name of witling fool,
 Of loseling knaves the ready tool." 8880
 Then Fear took up the word and said:

Fear.

"Greatly am I astonishèd,
 O Danger, that but half awake
 Are you to your devoir; 'twill make

But badly for you, as I deem,	
Should Jealousy display extreme	Jealousy
Despise and wrath, for hard and rude	is implac-
Is she in her acerbitude.	able
Not only hath she Shame attacked,	
But also hath Fair-Welcome packed	3890
Hence, with a cloud of menaces,	
Declaring, that until she sees	
Him lodged in prison hard and fast,	
She'll know no joy in life. Aghast	
Am I, that your neglect should let	
The gallant in this precinct set	
His foot. I doubt me much that you	
Had but a chicken heart. In view	
Of Jealousy's malignant spite,	
Thy soul will be to evil plight	3900
Reduced, or greatly I'm deceived."	

The Author.

Then the rude churl his head upheaved,
 Rubbed his bleary eyes, and rolled them round,
 Shook his unwieldy limbs, and frowned
 O'er all his face, then loud did roar :

Danger.

"Great God! what then d'ye take me for?"
 'Tis clear I either must be mad,
 Or else too long a lease have had
 Of life, if I'm not fit to keep
 The Roses, even while asleep. 3910
 God grant I may be burnt alive
 If any wretch again contrive

Danger is
roused

To enter here—nay, if he do,
I hope two swords may riddle through
My heart and belly. By my head,
My doting folly 'twas that sped
The Lover, but I'll yet redress
By your good help my slothfulness.
Never again will I relax
My watchful care, but daily wax 3920
More strict, and should a gallant come
Herein, he'll wish himself at Rome.
By heaven, and earth, and hell, I swear
That never more while time doth wear
Shall ye find cause to say that I
Have played the watch-dog drowsily."

The Lover.

A bound brought Danger to his feet,
As though prepared forthwith to meet
The world in arms. He seized his club, 3930
And marched around with great hubbub,
Seeking if he perchance could spy
Some secret hole or gap, whereby
Strange steps might enter.

Thus alas!

By evil hap it came to pass
That Danger, who of late was good
On my behalf, now ready stood
To wreck my life, and I no more
Might have my will as heretofore.
Fair-Welcome have I lost! and oh!
What shivering horror seems to go 3940
Through all my frame, awaked to fear
Lest ne'er again my lips come near

The Rose, my every member shakes
 With rage, and all my being quakes
 With longing once again to see
 That treasure which is more to me
 Than life—sweet end of all desire.
 The memory of that one kiss doth fire
 My blood, and sweeter far than balm
 Its odours are, which sent a calm
 Sweet swoon o'er all my heart, that
 knows

The
 Lover's
 anguish

Peace only when 'tis near the Rose.
 If e'er should fall on me the fate
 To be cast out, all desolate,
 Therefrom, much rather would I die
 Than live in such drear misery.
 O God of Love, what boots it then
 That I, most love-lorn among men,
 Should have enjoyed that dear delight,
 With loving lips, with ardent sight,
 When thus from me 'tis reft amain
 With ruthless hand, no more to fain
 My longing heart ?

3950

3960

I then were doomed
 To be with wretchedness consumed
 E'en as aforetime—torn with woes,
 Tortured with sighs and bitter throes,
 And sleepless nights, and such a hell
 Of pain as passeth words to tell.
 Accursed be Evil-Tongue, through whom
 I fall once more beneath the doom
 Of hopeless love, the wretch for me
 Hath purchased endless misery.

3970

XXXII

This tells how Jealousy, by spite
 Urged on, a towering prison dight
 Amidst the precinct, wherein she
 Immured Fair-Welcome, for that he
 Had let the Lover's lips once press
 The Rose, through courteous kindness.

The Author.

Jealousy
 builds a
 tower

AND now behoveth me to tell
 How Jealousy, beneath the spell
 Of dark suspicious promptings, wrought.

3980

Through all the country-side she sought
 Masons and engineers, who made
 A wide deep moat, with pick and spade,
 Which many a penny cost to dig,
 And there beside they raised a big
 Thick towering wall of solid stone ;
 No marsh or bog it stood upon,
 But firm and solid rock. It went
 Within the moat by sheer descent, 3990
 And then rose upwards towards the sky
 With 'minished breadth, and gained thereby
 Great strength and firmness. Well was set
 The wall in perfect square, and met
 Each side of equal length, which ran
 Well-nigh a hundred fathoms span.
 Embattled towers, of stone well hewed,
 Rose at the corners, each indued
 With portal strong, which might defy
 The assault of fiercest enemy ; 4000

And every tower was fenced with tall
 And strongly-masoned outer wall,
 Which need not fear the heaviest stone
 By catapult or engine thrown.
 A barred portcullis o'er each gate
 Hung, ready poised, to fix the fate
 Of those who rashly dared to put
 Their feet therein ere yet 'twas shut.
 And lastly, midmost of the close,
 Another strong-built tower arose,
 Than which none grander, as I ween,
 The long piled ages e'er have seen.
 The walls were made so thick and well,
 That doubt ye not they might repel
 The heavy ram, balister, sling,
 And every sort of deadly thing
 Employed in siege. The stones were
 fixed

The
 tower
 described

4010

With mortar, made of quick-lime mixed
 With vinegar. The native rock
 Had furnished stone to bear a shock
 'Neath which firm adamant might shake. 4020
 This inner tower was round of make,
 And both within and out so dight,
 That ween I well, no fairer sight
 The world could show. On every side
 'Twas circled round by bailey wide,
 And wondrous strong; and then betwixt
 This barrier and the wall was fixed
 A closure broad of rose-trees rare,
 Whose blossoms sweet perfumed the air 4030
 Both far and wide. A mighty hoard
 Of warlike implements was stored

The tower
garrison

Within the tower, whereby it might
Be safely kept by day and night.
From every battlement looked out
Great mangonels to cast about
Gigantic stones, while east and west,
And north and south, an arbalest
From every loophole peered, 'gainst which
No man could stand who neared the ditch, 4040
And but a dotard fool, I swear,
Were he who rashly ventured there.
A long embattled wall extends
Around the moat, the which forbends
Assault of knights, until that they
At least have shown good battle play.

Within hath Jealousy arrayed
A garrison, and Danger made
The castellan; right surlily
He bears in hand the master-key 4050
That locks the gate, which looketh east,
And under him he hath at least
A thirty warders. Next there came
The southern gate, which boasted Shame
For trusty portress; many a guard
She hired to keep strict watch and ward
By night and day. Towards the north
A gate 'neath Fear's command looks forth,
The which she keepeth closely locked,
Mistrusting lest her guard be mocked 4060
The while she sleeps, and rarely she
Will open whosoe'er it be
Demandeth entrance. Trembleth sore
Her heart if e'en soft gales sweep o'er

The aspen trees, and fever shakes
Her limbs at each small noise that wakes.

The
doings of
Evil-
Tongue

Then Evil-Tongue, of God accurst !
Who never in his heart hath nursed
Aught else but baseness, at the last
Gate set himself, but quickly passed 4070
From one to other busily :
And if perchance it happed that he
Should keep the night-watch, haste he
made

To mount the tower, and there arrayed
Bagpipes, trumpets, horns and shalms,
On which, for hours on end, no psalms
He tuned, but merry songs and lays
And fables told in olden days ;
Or times he made a dismal wail
On bagpipes loud of Cornouaille. 4080
Another time he fluting sang
Old tales, whereof the burden rang,
That never woman, maid or wife,
Had lived a chaste and honest life,
But said that nought they loved so well
As legends, tales, and songs that tell
Of lawless love and luxury.

This woman he declares to be
A wretched strumpet, that one paints,
Another he of crime attaints, 4090
And such an one he calls a fool,
While such another fails to rule
Her speech.

Thus Evil-Tongue declares
War on all women—none he spares.

The Then Jealousy, whom God confound !
 duenna A garrison within the round
 And formidable tower had set,
 Of myrmidons, videlicet :
 Her closest friends.

Fair-Welcome wears

His days therein, and hardly fares ; 4100
 His prison door so strongly barred,
 And so close tended by a hard
 Old harridan, that little chance
 Seems left him of deliverance.
 This evil carline doth but watch
 Good opportunity to catch
 Fair-Welcome out in some misdeed.
 As adder deaf, she scorns to heed
 The softest word or kindest look,
 For she in youth had read love's book 4110
 So heedfully, that every ruse
 Is known to her that lovers use.
 Fair-Welcome scarce dare speak a word,
 So doubts he lest the hag preferred
 Some charge against him.

Well she knows

The blood that thrills, the heart that glows,
 The languorous look, the amorous glance,
 (Which all keep step in love's old dance.)

So now that Jealousy at last
 Hath seen Fair-Welcome, hard and fast, 4120
 Within this prison tower immured,
 Boundeth her heart, of peace assured
 Against all violence and wrong,
 Misdoubting nought that castle strong.

No longer hath she cause to fear
 Lest rude marauders come anear
 Roses or rosebuds, they repose
 Safely within that high-built close.
 Or fast asleep or wide awake
 She, undisturbed, full rest may take. 4180

The
 Lover's
 lament

The Lover.

Alas! what wretched fate is mine,
 Outside that envious wall to pine,
 All desolate and in misery.
 What heart but must bestow on me
 Some pity, did it wot the price
 At which I offer sacrifice
 To Love. My wound but bleeds afresh,
 And caught anew within the mesh
 Of Cupid am I. Short delight
 Was mine, and now a darker night 4140
 O'erclouds my heart.

What think ye then,

Am I not like to husbandmen
 Who cast the seed to earth, and see
 With joy how springeth sturdily
 In spring-tide's days, and through the hours
 Of summer, fed by sun and showers,
 The stalk, and flourisheth the ear?
 But ere the season comes to shear
 The ripening grain, the hail descends,
 Destroys the tender growth, and ends 4150
 The peasant's fairest hope. So I,
 Alas! must see my hope pass by,
 And all my patience lost. But Love,
 (Who helped my gentle suit above

The
tricks
of For-
tune

My dearest hopes) when'er I poured
The tale of what my soul endured
Into Fair-Welcome's willing ear,
Caused me to pay my rashness dear,
Dashing from out my hand the cup
Of happiness ere yet a sup 4160

My lips had tasted. So it is
That Fortune's fickle hand, ywis,
A man full oft will raise amain,
Then cast him to the ground again;
Now smiles she sweetly, now a frown
O'erspreads her visage; this one down
She casteth, but anon, on high
Will raise another suddenly,
For she the fate of men resolveth,
E'en as her restless wheel revolveth. 4170

Alas! now falls on me the shock
Of Fortune; walls and moat bemock
My hopes, and promised happiness
Gives way to weeping and distress;
Since now forbidding walls enclose
At once Fair-Welcome and the Rose.
Deprived of these and left alone,
All hope is past, all comfort gone.
If Love desire that I should live,
Nought can avail unless he give 4180
Fair-Welcome to mine arms again,
The source of joy, the cure of pain.

Ah! sweet Fair-Welcome! though you be
Set fast in cruel slavery,
I pray you, keep for me my heart,
Nor let fierce Jealousy dispart

Our friendship, but remember you,
 That though she keep you from my view,
 Your heart is mine, e'en though your flesh
 She torture. O keep ever fresh
 And free your spirit 'gainst her guile,
 Nor suffer that her rede defile
 Your mind with treason; keep it pure,
 Although your body may endure
 Dark prison. Gentle hearts but show
 More brightly when they undergo
 Fierce chastisement. If Jealousy
 Declare herself thine enemy,
 Take courage and defend your right,
 Nor courage lack to face her spite,
 At least in thought: do this, and I
 Shall peace and solace gain thereby.

Jealousy
 is cruel

4190

But now am I borne down by dole,
 Lest you, within your secret soul
 Perchance but con me little thank,
 Since 'twas for me, alas! you drank
 This cup of bitterness. But ne'er
 My heart hath been so base as bear
 One treasonous thought against you. None
 Dare ever charge me to have done
 One deed whereof I need repent.
 God knows 'neath what a weight is bent
 My sorrowing heart: e'en more than
 you

4200

4210

I suffer, for remorse doth brew
 For me a bitter draught; well-nigh,
 In truth, I come near death when I
 Remember all my loss. 'Twould be
 Small marvel though fear mastered me,

Fair- Who now on every side behold
 Welcome These traitors, venomous as bold, 4220
 in prison Who fain would hunt my soul to death.
 Ah! dear Fair-Welcome, they their breath
 But spend with purpose to deceive
 And bind you with the cord they weave.
 Alas! God help me, know I not
 But what already they have got
 Their will against you. Darkest fear
 Invades me, lest it should appear
 That you forget me quite; what woe
 Untold would fall on me to know 4230
 That I had lost your friendship, then
 Were I unhappiest of men;
 All pleasure, joy, and comfort sped,
 And hope itself nigh perished.

[The next eighty lines, which give a sort of conclusion to the story, are found only in some manuscripts. M. Méon gives it as his opinion that they were suppressed by Jean de Meun, in order that they might not interfere with his continuation of the poem. M. Croissandeau, on the other hand, considers them altogether spurious, inasmuch as they are not, as he very clearly points out, in accord with the spirit of the tale or of William Lorris. As M. Croissandeau thought well to print them, it has been judged advisable to give the translation. They were evidently unknown to the English translator of the fourteenth century.]

[Might I but see your face, and speak
 In converse sweet, but once the week

With you, dear friend, it would assuage **Help for**
 The griefs that in my bosom rage **the Lover**
 So fiercely, but no light I see
 To lead me where I fain would be. 4240

Thus in the direst woe was I
 Plunged, when behold, all suddenly
Dame Pity came from towards the tower,
 Who many a heart in darkest hour
 Consoleth; and at once began
 To comfort me: "O sorrowing man,"
 She said, "I come to cheer thy heart,
 And bring kind friends to bear me part
 In that good work. Simplicity,
 Joined with Sweet-Looks and Loyalty 4250
 And Beauty, and Fair-Welcome eke,
 Are 'scaped from forth the tower to seek
 With me thy comfort. Though right
 high

The keep is built, no walls defy
 True faithful hearts, although array
 Of death and danger bar the way.
 We watched, till weariness 'gan steep
 The eyes of Jealousy in sleep,
 And then sped forth although 'mid great
 Alarm; for Fear, whose constant fate 4260
 It is to cry and tremble, ran
 Hither and thither, and our plan
 Well-nigh defeated, filled with doubt
 If Evil-Tongue were not about
 And listening. But the brave Strong-Love,
 Who joys to serve his friends, above
 All else, destroyed the envious door
 Though Fear scarce dared to tread the floor.

A pre-
 ture end-
 ing

'Fore Heaven! if Evil-Tongue had known,
 Thereof no power on earth had thrown 4270
 It open. But Queen Venus, fair
 And ever kind, with loving care
 Snatched us the keys, and thus are we
 Freed from the tower of Jealousy.

And then all round me in a ring
 These six sat, greatly comforting
 My griefworn heart. Then Beauty gave
 In secret that my heart did crave,
 The precious Rosebud, which I took
 With rapture, while my being shook 4280
 With tremulous joy. Couched on the grass,
 New sprung, we saw the moments pass
 In soft content; our coverlet
 Of fragrant rose-leaves made, while met
 Our lips in fond embrace. The night
 We passed in transports of delight
 Fearful of morn, which all too soon
 Appears when Maytide treads on June.
 With dawn we rose, fordone with grief
 To find such joy must be so brief: 4290
 But Beauty much desired to gain
 Once more the bud, and I, though fain
 To keep it, dared not disobey
 Her high behest, woe worth the day!
 Whate'er my pains. But ne'ertheless
 The Rose no more in hard duress
 Was shut, for, ere all thither sped,
 Came Beauty, smilingly, and said:
 "Though Jealousy should now espy
 Our doings, and more thick and high 4300

Should make the wall and hedge, while on
 The tower she sets strong garrison,
 With joy have I been satiate
 Comes not her labour somewhat late ?
 Of loving friends it hath been said,
 Each finds of each the goodlihead.
 Love then with loyal heart and free,
 And of the Rosebud shalt thou be
 Master, and to the tower mayst go
 Whenso thou hast the will thereto, 4310
 Although it be enclosed and bound
 With wall and thorny brake around ;
 For my part, on my road I wend
 Waked from my dream, my tale hath end.]

J. de
 Meun
 continues

XXXIII

Dan William Lorris when he died,
 Had written nothing more beside
 The verses thou hast read. But when
 A forty years had flitted, then
 John Clopinel the end did speed—
 Behold his work, which all may read. 4320

AND shall I bow then to despair,
 Abandoning Hope ? 'Fore Heaven I swear
 That ne'er shall be, for thus were I
 An outcast, and most worthily
 Scorned and despised. If hope once fled
 My heart, far better were I dead.
 But Love declared that he should stay
 My steps and be my guide alway,
 Where'er I trod. But, after all,
 Will Hope prove faithful ? Though men call 4330

Uncertainty of Hope Her courteous, sweet and debonair,
 Small wit have they who trust her fair
 And specious seeming. Yea, although
 Sweet kindness she at times may show
 To lovers, otherwhiles will she
 Lure them to deepest misery,
 And oftentimes will Hope pretend
 One's love to be, but in the end
 Prove false, and many have found her thus,
 Most sweet and dear, but treacherous. 4340
 How many by her wiles have been
 Drawn on to love, yet ne'er have seen
 Fulfilment. Nothing more she knows
 Of what shall hap, than he who throws
 The dice, and often those who trust
 In Hope's fair promises are thrust
 From highest heaven to deepest hell,
 As many a love-lorn wight could tell.
 And many a worthy man, alas!
 Through her hath seen his best days
 pass 4350
 To wreck and ruin. With her can be
 Nought certain, for uncertainty,
 It is she lives on. Yet her will
 It is, the longing to fulfil
 Of those who wait on her. Oh why
 Should I then blame her wrathfully?
 Yet what avails her help or aid?
 Have I gained aught from her that made
 My sufferings less? Nowise I trow,
 For ne'er I find her promise grow 4360
 To ripeness, and a promise fair
 That doth not fruit in season bear,

Hath little worth ; I still remain
 As one beneath some curse or bane
 That waxeth ever. Danger, Fear,
 And Shame and Jealousy draw near
 To mock and gibe, while Evil-Tongue
 With speech envenomed worketh wrong
 To all good men, and dealeth death
 On every side with poisonous breath. 4370
 Fair-Welcome they in prison hold,
 To whom my thoughts would I unfold
 Freely, and rest of that delight,
 God grant me soon to die outright.
 Alas ! I well-nigh choke with rage
 If I but let that hag engage
 My thoughts, whose vigilance, from sight
 Keepeth Fair-Welcome day and night.

Love's
 threegifts

Thereby my woes will mount apace,
 Although the God of Love's sweet grace, 4380
 Gave me three gifts of sovereign power,
 Alas ! small help in this dark hour
 Are they. Sweet-Thought avails me not,
 While of Soft-Speech no chance I've got,
 And nought can Sweet-Looks do for me ;
 Unless God help me speedily,
 They must to me be lost past doubt.
 If dear Fair-Welcome should wear out
 His life in dreary prison cell,
 Held fast therein by treason fell, 4390
 He of my death the cause will be,
 For never, as I deem, will he
 Escape alive. Escape ! alas !
 Small might have I through such a pass

Why To bring him. What could my strength do
 reject A fortress-wall to batter through
 Reason? And draw him forth? My strength is gone
 Since that I madly made me one
 Of Love's sworn servants. Idleness
 It was, with shame I now confess, 4400
 That brought my life to this estate,
 When she, at my request, the gate
 Of this fair garden open threw;
 Alas! that she no better knew
 Than hearken my insane desire;
 Such foolish asking should inspire
 Nought but contemptuous scorn, and she
 Should have reproved my idiocy—
 A madman's prayer should not be more
 Considered than an apple core. 4410
 And mad was I, and therefore fell
 Through her good-nature to the hell
 I now endure of sighs and tears,
 And doubtings, miseries, and fears.

Right well hath Reason understood
 My case; ah! why did I her good
 And kind advice, then, cast away,
 Love to forego? Woe worth the day!
 With justice did her lips reprove
 The hasty way in which to Love 4420
 I gave myself; 'twas thence, alas!
 My misery grew: could aught surpass
 My madness? Could I but forget
 The vows my lips have sworn! and yet
 What say I? Should I then betray
 My master, Love, and cast away

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 149

Fair-Welcome, who hath been my friend,
 Doomed (for that crime alone) to spend
 Long days in durance, there to be
 The prisoner of foul Jealousy? 4430
 Great thanks I owe that generous youth,
 By whose kind courtesy forsooth
 I passed the hedge and won a kiss
 From that fair rose—the crown of bliss.
 Ne'er from my mouth one single word
 Shall 'gainst the God of Love be heard ;
 But I unceasingly will bless
 And thank Fair-Hope and Idleness
 For all the gentle courtesy
 And grace their hands have shown to me. 4440
 No ! 'tis my duty while I live,
 That unto martyrdom I give
 My body, but still hope to gain
 The comfort Love hath promised ; fain
 Were I thereof, for 'tis the thing
 Would once again make joyance spring
 Within me. His sweet tenderness
 To me these words did once address :
 " Thy service willingly I take,
 And will of thee a master make 4450
 In love, if thou oppose me not,
 But long delays must be, God wot,
 For fortune cometh not in haste,
 And pain and suffering must thou taste
 Ere thou attain'st the end ; " and so
 Thus speaking word for word, did show
 The love he bare to me.

And now

My one desire it is to bow

To Love My will to his, and thus deserve
 he will be His praise. If one of us should swerve 4460
 faithful From rectitude, alas! 'twere I,
 Not Love, who ever faithfully
 Keepeth his word; 'tis I alone
 My sin and folly must atone
 By suffering. But whence cometh this
 Malfeasance? I know not, ywis,
 And ne'er shall know; but Love shall
 have
 Me wholly, or to lose or save.
 Yea, he may take my well-loved life,
 Or give it over unto strife 4470
 Through hopeless years, I bond thereto
 As helpless otherwise to do;
 Ere long perchance kind death will come
 To end my woes, and call me home.
 But if the God of Love, who wears
 My heart so hardly, while it cares
 Alone to pleasure him, demands
 My life, I yield it to his hands,
 Or cheerfully will bear what he
 Lays on me of calamity. 4480
 'Tis his to do whate'er he will,
 And mine to bend, and suffer still
 His yoke. This thing alone I ask,
 That whatsoe'er of toil or task
 May fall upon me, or if death
 Be mine, he let my latest breath
 Protect Fair-Welcome, who will make
 My sepulchre for friendship's sake.
 Receive, O God of Love, my prayer,
 Ere yet I die, for him who ne'er 4490

Proved false. The testament
 Hear of your liegeman, whose intent
 Hath been to serve you well, and who
 Hath ne'er unfaithful been to you—
 Suffer Fair-Welcome to receive
 My heart, nought else have I to leave.

Reason
 reappears

XXXIV

Herein we meet again sweet Reason,
 Who ever, in or out of season,
 Findeth, before all else, delight
 For erring men the path to dight.

4500

WHILE thus lamented I, aloud,
 The many heavy griefs that bowed
 My spirit, and all vainly sought
 Comfort, I turned my head, and caught
 Sight of Dame Reason, who had heard
 My sighs, and unto pity stirred
 Thereby from out her tower descended,
 And graciously towards me wended
 With will to ease the grief she read
 Within my visage. Thus she said :

4510

Reason.

“ My friend, how stands thy business now?
 Of thy late folly dost not thou
 Grow weary? What dost thou now think
 Of lovers' burdens? Dost thou sink
 Beneath their weight? Or dost thou find
 Therein delight and peace of mind?”

Love's Or bitter-sweet commingled? Say
 burdens Which of Love's pleasures doth apay
 Thine heart the best? Hast thou not then
 For master one who slaveth men 4520
 All unawares, and evermore
 Torments them? Fickle Fortune bore
 Her kindly toward thee when she set
 Thy feet within Love's trammelling net,
 And made of thee his bond! 'Tis clear
 That little fathomed'st thou the cheer
 Of him thou took'st for master, or
 Thou ne'er hadst laid that fardel sore
 Across thy shoulders, or, if thou
 Becam'st his man, wouldst scarce, I trow, 4530
 Have borne his yoke a summer through,
 Nor day, nor hour, had bowed thereto,
 But, doubt I not, without delay
 His homage hadst thou cast away.
 Still dost thou know him?"

The Lover.

"Yea, heartwhole."

Reason.

"You jest!"

The Lover.

"Not I."

Reason.

"Upon thy soul?"

The Lover.

“He spake and said: ‘Thou oughtst to feel
 Much honoured that thy name I seal
 For servant to so great a lord.’”

Reason
 scoffs at
 Cupid

Reason.

“Hast thou than that no surer word?” 4540

The Lover.

“Nay, for when once his laws were said,
 With eagle flight his wings he spread
 And vanished, leaving me aghast.”

Reason.

“Certes! ’twas no great thing that passed
 Betwixt ye; well it were to know
 More of that master who hath so
 Entreated thee that, scarce e’en now
 I recognised thy face, I vow.
 Surely no creature doth exist,
 Whate’er his trouble, who more trist 4550
 And doleful looks.

’Twere right ye should
 Know well the lord ye serve, then could
 Ye find perchance some way from out
 Thy prison, walled with fear and doubt.”

The Lover.

Reason's "That, by our Lady, may not be,
 exposi- Love's liegeman sworn am I, and he
 tion Ruleth my heart. Yet do I writhe
 Thereunder, and were fain and blithe
 To cast his yoke, if shown the way."

Reason.

"Then, by my head! will I essay 4560
 To teach thee. If thy heart doth yearn
 For knowledge, thou mayst clearly learn
 From me a thing by no means clear,
 And thou, though ignorant, shalt hear
 And know such matters as no man
 Hath heard or dreamed of since began
 The sun his rounds. This thing alone
 I know for certain: if some one
 His heart hath given to Love, there is, 4570
 To end his miseries, nought but this—
 To fly. Now will I loose the knot
 Which thou hast found drawn tight, I wot.
 Give then thy most attentive ear,
 And learn Love's good and evil cheer:

✓ Love oftentimes is amorous hate,
 And hating, most affectionate,
 Disloyal loyalty past reason,
 And loyalty that nurseth treason,
 'Tis craven fear, as lion bold,
 'Tis ardent hope, all deadly cold, 4580

'Tis reason all unreasonable,
 A raving madman, calm and stable ;
 A peril sweet, delightful fear,
 A heavy burden light to bear,
 Charybdis perilous and dread,
 Horror to sweetest softness wed,
 'Tis sickness wrapped in rudest health,
 One sound, who haileth pain as wealth ;
 'Tis hunger overdone with meat,
 'Tis covetousness with gold replete ; 4590
 'Tis one, who sated, cries for drink,
 'Tis thirst that doth from water shrink ;
 'Tis sadness gay, 'tis joyance sad,
 'Tis calm contentment raving mad ;
 'Tis evil good, 'tis good malign,
 'Tis odour sweet that savoureth swine ;
 'Tis holiness made up of sin,
 'Tis crime that paradise may win ;
 A torment full of sweet delight,
 A felon outrage pure and bright ; 4600
 A game of hazard, constant never,
 Ever the same, yet changing ever ;
 Weakness it is as Samson strong,
 Doing the right for sake of wrong ;
 'Tis mighty strength devoid of force,
 Yet strong enough to stay the course
 Of Phœbus ; folly wondrous wise
 It is, and joy that mirth defies ;
 'Tis laughter fraught with sighs and
 tears,
 Repose that knows no rest for years ; 4610
 'Tis hell endowed with sweetest bliss,
 'Tis heaven, a heap of miseries,

Con-
 trarities
 of Love

No safety A dungeon foul of paradise,
 but in A May-tide midst of snow and ice ;
 flight A moth which deigns alike to fret
 Coarse woollen cloth and fine brunette ;
 For love will thrive as well between
 Rough blankets as fair silken sheen,
 And no man yet was born so wise,
 Nor bore such quarterings and device, 4620
 Nor proved himself of such great might
 In counsel, court, or field of fight,
 Nor showed himself so stern and grim
 But what strong Love hath conquered him.
 Except I those of vile estate,
 Cast out and excommunicate
 By Genius, insomuch that they
 Have given their lives and souls away
 To such-like crime as none may name,
 Of sense bereft and lost to shame. 4630
 Now if it be thy wish, above
 The joys and pains alike of love
 To set thee—flee—take not one sup
 From out that sweet but venom'd cup.
 For thy disease there is but one
 Complete and perfect guerison :
 Flee Love, and Love from thee will flee,
 Embrace him, and he'll master thee."

The Lover.

When heard I Reason beat the air
 With many a word she well might spare, 4640
 I cried: "Good Lord! I know no more,
 For all your talk, than heretofore,

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 157

How from my misery I may be
 Deliverèd : all by contrary Love's
aim
 You argue, but so far I nought
 Have learned from all thy tongue hath taught.

By heart I know each saw that you
 Have uttered, and will gladly do
 All your commands ; would God I might
 Gain wisdom thence my soul to light. 4650
 But, by our Lady, I would know
 What like may be this Love whom so
 You blame and scorn ; can you define
 His ways and works, while I incline
 A diligent ear to all you say ?”

Reason.

Quoth she : “ Right readily, I pray
 Thee give good heed : Love is, I trow,
 A malady much prone to grow
 Severe 'twixt folk of different sex,
 And liable to sorely vex 4660
 Their minds. Once caught, betwixt the two
 Befalls a strong desire to do
 The self-same thing ; to fondle, kiss,
 And spend long hours in mutual bliss.
 Love doth not crave by any measure
 To fill the world—his aim is pleasure—
 Thereto alone he gives his mind,
 Not the engendering of mankind.
 Yet on the other hand have I
 Known some who loved but feignedly, 4670

Of false Mocking fair ladies with pretence
 lovers Of true devotion and intense
 And earnest love ; full ripe to swear
 Black-hearted lies for truths, where'er
 They find fond dames, and thus they gain
 Their pleasure oft through kind heart's pain.
 These are the jolly folk who thrive
 At cost of others, and contrive
 To show that better 'tis to be
 Duper, than suffer dupery. 4680

Now hearken what doth most befit
 Love, as laid down in Holy Writ :
 Although well 'ware am I that few
 Follow the course God sets them to,
 Namely, to carry on the race
 He made, true image of his face.
 Behold the end for which should mate
 Man with a woman ; to create
 One who may follow him when he
 Through God's goodwill hath ceased to be. 4690
 For when the parents pass away,
 Nature hath ordered it that they
 Shall children leave, who, following still
 Their forbears, shall the world refill.
 Thereto her hand hath placed the fire,
 Within men's breast, of fierce desire,
 That Love's great work they should not
 hate,
 But eagerly perpetuate
 Their kind, which work were left undone
 Unless soft joyance drew them on. 4700
 Nature herein with subtle hand
 Doth work, and you may understand

How thus her nobleness doth speak Youth
 All trumpet-tongued 'gainst those who seek and Age
 Nought fairer in her work to see
 Than carnal love and lechery.
 For wot you well what those folk, who
 But joyance seek herein, may do?
 They give themselves as bondsmen o'er
 To Satan, lord high chancellor 4710
 Of all foul vices, seen that this
 The very fount and wellspring is
 Of man's worst woes, as Tully says,
 Who, in his book 'Of old age,' lays
 It clearly down that age should more
 Be valued and esteemed therefore
 Than youth, for man and maid doth youth
 To follies numberless, forsooth,
 Push on, and 'tis no simple thing
 Both mind and body safe to bring 4720
 Through youth, devoid of shame, and free
 From ill that curse posterity.

In youth run lawless passions wild,
 Till folly is on folly piled.
 By loose companions led aside
 Man changeth oft, and roaming wide,
 Becomes at last, perchance, a monk;
 Within some dreary convent shrunk,
 He casts off Nature's glorious gift
 Of freedom, in the hope to lift 4730
 A fool to heaven when in the pew
 Of vows he lives, like hawk in mew.
 And then perchance he finds too great
 The load, and out the convent gate

Youth's Flee; or craven fear or shame,
 joyous- Maybe, will keep him there, and frame
 ness Excuse to stay until he die,
 Sighing and groaning woefully
 For that fair freedom he hath lost;
 Unless God, pitying the drear frost 4740
 That nips his every manly sense,
 Grant patience and meek abstinence.

Through Youth's quick goad 'tis people fall
 To merry dance in bower and hall,
 And ribald mirth and jollity,
 While loose unbridled luxury
 Doth cause within young hearts to rise
 Desire, that bit and curb defies.
 Such are the perils that attack
 Bright youth astride fair Pleasure's back. 4750

And thus doth Pleasure deftly bind
 Within his toils both body and mind
 Of men, through Youth his chamberlain,
 Who is of every folly fain,
 And draws them on to crime, while they
 List not his yoke to cast away.

But eld is she who casteth off
 Folly; and if thereat you scoff,
 Go ask the elders, who have been
 Youth's victims, but at last have seen 4760
 Escapement thence (and now repent
 The madness which their backs hath bent),
 Whether they're not right glad to be
 From thrall of Youth exempt and free.

Old age it is that brings men straight
 With safety towards the postern-gate
 Of life, but natheless, though she be
 Heartwise and worthiest company,
 Few people love her voice to hear,
 Nor hail her steps, approaching near, 4770
 With welcome; nay, forsooth they hate
 Her name as she were reprobate
 And villain. For no man desires
 To wed with Age and quench the fires
 Of Youth that still burn clear and bright
 In memory. Still old men delight
 To stir the thought of bygone days,
 And as the sun with setting rays
 Gildeth awhile the world, so flings 4780
 Remembrance o'er far distant things,
 With specious hand, a film of gold,
 And putteth in dark shade the old
 Forgotten troubles that, above
 The throes of pleasure, ruled in love.
 Right happy they if aught remains
 Of health or goods as life tide wanes.

Youth's
 dwelling-
 place

But art thou fain to know where lives
 Youth, unto whom the whole world gives
 Such plenteous praise?

(In Pleasure's house
 Her woning is,) who keeps her thus 4790
 In bondage, nor desireth she
 Aught else than bonded slave to be
 To Pleasure; nay, therein she hath
 Such joy that followeth she the path
 Whereso she leads, and rendereth her,
 Both body and soul, her worshipper.

The And where, deem'st thou, old age doth
woning dwell?
of Age To let thee know thereof were well
I trow, since thou must thither go
Unless in youth death lay thee low 4800
Within his den, a dreary spot,
Dark, cold, and gloomy, well I wot.

Within Eld's woning, Grief and Pain
Are lodged, and many a cruel chain
They bind around her limbs, and scourge
Her limbs, and point dread death to urge
Her soul to penitence, and she
Remembereth, all too tardily
(Hoar-headed, reft of every tooth),
How she hath been deceived by Youth, 4810
Who all her years of vigour spent
In folly; now doth she repent
Her wasted preterite, and would fain
By painful penance seek to gain
Future forgiveness of the sin
Committed long ago, and win
Sweet heaven thereby, and thus redeem
Those days, that now so worthless seem,
When youth and all its joyance drew
Her feet from virtue's paths, and slew 4820
Remembrance of how quickly pass
The glorious hours of youth; alas!
Too late she sees how brief a time
Endure those days of golden prime.

Now whenso lovers will to do
The work Dame Nature sets them to,

Their thought therein should be of sweet
 And pure enjoyment ; when two meet
 In marriage, nowise should they fear
 Lest round about their hearth appear 4830
 Young faces, nor should think to shirk
 Duties that wait on Nature's work.
 But many a woman, as I know,
 Doth desolate of spirit grow
 Whene'er she finds herself with child,
 Yet dares not show it e'en by mild
 Complaint, for fear she suffer blame
 As lost to modesty and shame.
 But soothly when in love's delight
 Twain join, they do but seek to 'quite 4840
 Their debt, except those slaves of vice,
 Who set their bodies at a price.
 Dame Nature's laws account they nought,
 By shameless compact sold and bought.
 That woman all men worthless hold
 Who sets herself to sale for gold,
 And he a fool were who should
 take
 A quean who loves for lucre's sake ;
 Deems he a woman holds him dear
 When he forsooth hath purchased her ? 4850
 Is he so foolish as to dream
 A woman hath for him extreme
 And tender love, because in her
 He finds a smooth-tongued flatterer ?
 O fool, bewitched with amorous smile !
 O fool, that lets a strumpet's guile
 Master his heart ; wife good and pure,
 As jewel bright, through life will dure,

Of gifts But folly 'tis to mate oneself
 between With one whose only thought is self 4860
 lovers And pillage. But I nowise say
 It shames a woman to display
 On neck or arm a jewel fair,
 If some true knight hath set it there
 In gift; but ne'er should dame demand
 An offering at her lover's hand;
 That savoureth much of sale, but she
 May, saving still her modesty,
 Exchange a token with her knight;
 By such sweet take and give, more bright 4870
 The flame of love doth burn.

'Tis well

That lovers meet full oft, and tell
 The thoughts that brim their hearts, and
 lace
 Their arms in gentle, fond embrace.

 But keep good heed against the wiles
 Of love unholy, which defiles
 Its votary; ne'er cease to be
 On guard against venality,
 Which heart untrue doth oft invade,
 O'er true love casting deadly shade. 4880
 But perfect love is born of heart
 Where gold hath neither lot nor part;
 Nor should man let that love inmesh
 His soul, whose trammels wake the flesh.
 The burning love which overcame
 Thy heart was carnal, purer flame
 Burnt not within thee; thou the Rose
 Thereof didst wish to pluck, God knows!

But far art thou from thy desire,
 And that 'tis robs thine eye of fire 4890
 And pales thy cheek. O thou didst get
 A fatal guest when moved to set
 The door ajar that Love might come,
 And make thy too fond heart his home.
 Now rede I thee to drive him hence
 Who clogs each high and noble sense,
 To thy great loss and detriment.
 Full many a glorious soul hath spent
 Vainly its force, intoxicate
 With Love's dread philtre: sad thy fate 4900
 Would prove, if all thy youth should be
 Consumed in Love's wild revelry,
 And thou shouldst all too late behold
 Thy life laid waste. If thou so bold
 And strong art found that thou canst cast
 And break Love's bonds, thou then time past
 Mayst mourn, but canst recover never.
 But if, ere death comes, thou canst sever
 Thyself from love, thereat mayst thou
 Rejoice, for he hath known to bow 4910
 Men 'neath his yoke who thus have lost
 All life holds dear—his power hath cost
 Them body and soul, and strength and health,
 And stripped them bare of worldly wealth."

The Lover.

Thus Reason spent her words in air,
 For Love had ta'en effectual care
 That I should nought of profit draw
 From all her wise and sober saw,

The Lover deaf to Reason
 Though strict attention had I given
 To every word, as though from Heaven 4920
 Her message came. But Love so held
 My heart in bond, that he compelled
 Me, as his thrall and liege confessed,
 To shape my thought as pleased him best,
 Keeping my heart beneath his wing,
 While, as with shovel, did he fling
 From out my head each sapient word
 That I from Reason's mouth had heard
 Fall, and e'en fast as in one ear
 Words entered, so did they appear 4930
 From out the other, insomuch
 That nowise did her sermon touch
 My spirit but to raise my ire.
 Then cried I: "Is it your desire,
 Madam, that I should feel despite
 'Gainst all my neighbours? Shall I 'quite
 The world with hate because the God
 Of Love hath laid on me the rod
 Of pain and dole? I then should live
 In mortal sin that ne'er forgive 4940
 Would God; and I should be forsooth
 (If I should count your words for truth)
 Worse than a heathen.

Either hate
 Or love must be to me the gate
 Of life. I have small lust to try
 The former, until finally
 I find that Love has thrust me forth,
 And proved his promises not worth
 One penny. Counsel strict you gave
 That I, all hastily, should save 4950

Myself from Love's employ, or be
 Accounted mad ; but eloquently
 Discoursed you of a love beside
 The love I'm bound to, which you chide
 So sharply. That's a love, meseems,
 So pure as men but meet in dreams,
 Where all is fair, and nought is wrong.
 I humbly beg thee to prolong
 Thy wise discourse, and you may deem
 Me fool if I give not extreme
 Attent thereto, and hear you out,
 For you will teach me thus past doubt
 The various forms of love, and show
 The loves my spirit fain would know."

Various
 forms of
 love

4960

Reason.

" Good friend, no wiser than a daw
 Art thou, who scarce above a straw
 Esteem'st my sage discourse ; yet fain
 Thou seem'st to be that I amain
 Should further speak of love. Good will
 Have I to teach thee, hoping still,
 Though doubtful if 'tis worth the while.

4970

Love doth the soul of man beguile
 In many ways, besides that blind,
 Tormenting madness of the mind
 'Neath which thou sufferest : God permit
 That thou mayst free thy heart from it.

One precious kind of love men know
 As friendship, where two spirits grow

Love of friends Together, and no difference make
 (For love of God and virtue's sake) 4980
 Of thought, or speech, or worldly good,
 But live in sweetest brotherhood,
 With earnest purpose to fulfil
 Thereby God's high behest and will.

Each unto each should freely give
 With open hand, and thus will live
 Fair loyalty betwixt them both,
 But lacking that, my tongue were loth
 To call them friends.

In confidence
 A friend should tell his friend each sense 4990
 That stirs his brain, nor doubt that he
 Betray his trust. This certainty
 Of faith becomes a bond to hold
 With grip more firm than steel or gold,
 True friends. Such perfect love unites
 Those sworn in friendship, that the spites
 Of Fortune move them not; though poor
 One man become, his rich friend's door
 Is closed not on him, but one roof
 Will cover both, in earnest proof 5000
 Their hearts are one. If one friend see
 His fellow tend towards poverty,
 With ready hand will he afford
 Quick, generous succour, unimplored,
 Nor leave unto his friend the task
 Ungrateful, help or aid to ask,
 For of a truth is bounty bought
 Right dearly when with tears 'tis sought.

XXXV

Herein the needy man doth stand
 Before his friend, and at his hand 5010
 Requires that of his goods he give
 Fair share, that he in ease may live.

FOR one whose heart is strong and brave, True
 A bitter thing it is to crave friends
 For alms : O many a cruel thought open-
 Is his before his lips are brought handed
 To ask a boon. Fear ties his tongue,
 Lest in his anxious face are flung
 His tremulous words. But hath he found
 A friend with whom his life is bound 5020
 In long-tried friendship, then he may
 (Casting base fear and shame away)
 Pour forth to him the grief that bites
 And wears his heart, for that unites
 True friends the closer ; who need fear
 Reproach from such an one to hear ?
 And when his loving friend hath heard
 His secret, he need fear no third
 It passeth to ; nor yet afraid
 Need be lest he should be a-paid 5030
 With scornful words. To keep his tongue
 A wise man knows, while oft is rung
 A zany's bell. A generous man
 To give his aid is readier than
 His friend to ask. And if so be
 He lacketh opportunity
 Or means to help, he grieveth more
 Than he who needs assistance, for

Cicero on
friendship Love worketh aye in earnest wise,
Though found in many a differing guise. 5040
If love run strong betwixt the two,
Each hath his part in turn to do,
For this one suffereth that one's pain,
And that one's joy is this one's gain.

By friendship's law, great Tully saith,
That when two men repose full faith
In one another, and request
Is made betwixt them, 'tis a test
Of mutual love; and asking made
With right and reason, to evade 5050
Fulfilment were a thing unjust,
Save in two cases, which men must
Keep aye in mind. The first is this:
If it attaint man's life, ywis,
Refuse to have concern therein;
Or secondly, if one would pin
Disgrace on some well-honoured name,
Scorn thou to aid an act of shame
And baseness. In each case, I trow,
Stern duty cries: Thou shalt not bow 5060
Thy will to his, whose heart perverse
Injustice 'gainst his foe doth nurse.
Such love it is that thou shouldst give
Thine heart to, if thou fain wouldst live
In honour, but flee thou that blind,
False love that but obscures thy mind;
The one is virtue's very breath,
The other draws men on to death.

Another Love will I describe,
An adverse love, whereat may gibe 5070

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 171

All worthy men—a forgery
 Of villain hearts, that foolishly
 Torment themselves for base-earned gain.
 Of such sort is this love, that vain
 It finds its life so soon as e'er
 It loses hope of profit where
 It looked to find it, and away
 'Tis gone and vanished in a day.
 The true friend loveth not the pelf
 His friend possesses, but himself;
 And little true love moves that heart
 Which of its friend but makes a mart
 For chaffer.

Love for
 gain's
 sake

5080

 This vile love doth wane
 Or wax with Fortune, which amain
 Suffers eclipse, as doth the moon
 Whose brightness dims and fades so soon
 As o'er it goes the gloomy shade
 Of earth, but ere long is arrayed
 More brightly as the sun 'gins cast
 His beams again on her. So, fast
 This fickle love doth ever range
 From man to man as fortunes change,
 Sometimes obscure, and sometimes bright.

5090

 But when by Poverty 'tis dight
 In wretched gaberdine, or when
 Fair Richesse' beauty fails, O then
 This sordid love doth disappear,
 But once again 'twill shine forth clear
 As Richesse gaineth strength and health;
 Cupidity adareth wealth;
 When Richesse dies, it sinks to earth,
 She rises, and it hath new birth.

5100

Churls
win no
friends

Of this base love that I declare
A wealthy carle gets ample share,
And the vile miser more than all,
Who ne'er hath wisdom to let fall
From out his soul the wretched vice
Of hard-eyed, grasping avarice.
More simple than a wild deer is
A miser, who believes for this 5110
He winneth love. Nay, proves it not
He's nought above a doltish sot?

How shall a man who never gave
Love to his fellow hope to have
Return of love? O is not he
Counted a fool most worthily?
The branch-horned stag is not so poor
Of sense as this dull, drivelling boor.
Pardie! whoso will draw around
His hearth true friends must needs
abound 5120

In kindly words and deeds, but nought
A miser loves, in deed or thought.
Nay! if he wots his neighbour poor,
He draws his purse-strings tight, and door
Shuts in his face.

Yea! still his gold,
With fist fast gripped, he strives to hold
Till death's sharp sickle clears the field,
For liefer than a scrap he'll yield
Of pelf from out his darling hoard
Would he prefer to be by sword 5180
Cleft limb from limb.

But little part
Hath he with love, for how in heart

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 173

So hard could friendship find fit place?
 The miser knows how void of grace
 He lives, and loving none, must die,
 Unloved of all men, shamefully.

Friends
 in fortune

Dame Fortune next beneath our ken
 Appears; and how she deals with men
 Shall be set forth. My tongue shall tell
 Strange tales of her, past parallel. 5140
 Thou doubt'st my word? I marvel not,
 Yet thou in my discourse no blot
 Of falsity shalt find. We see
 That Fortune falleth, so that she
 Oft-times brings richer blessings down
 On men who live beneath her frown,
 Than those on whom she smiles. And though
 This seems a paradox, yet so
 It many a time hath proved, that when
 Fortune doth sweetly smile on men 5150
 She lies, and gives good cause to weep,
 Yet lulls them into gentle sleep,
 As nursing mother lulls her child,
 And oft hath she man's heart beguiled
 With favours, honours, and richesse,
 And dignity, and prosperousness,
 And promise given these things shall last
 For aye, though soon all overpast
 Is worldly might. When Fortune's wheel
 Men mount upon, exalt they feel, 5160
 Assured of safety, and are raised
 So high, their better wit is dazed.
 And when she setteth them on high
 She will provide them royally

False friends depart with wealth
 With pleasant friends, who all about
 Their steps still keep them, in and out,
 Whereso they wend, and well-nigh break
 Their backs for your great honour's sake
 As lord and seignior; loudly they
 Declare them prone to cast away 5170
 Their lives in your defence, like dirt,
 Vowing, each one, his very shirt
 Is yours if so you will, and they
 Will fight for you whate'er the way
 Your arm shall lead them. Far too oft
 Men swell with pride to hear these soft
 But treacherous fawners, and believe
 Their flattering words as they receive
 The gospel's holy truths, though not
 More worth than those Iscariot 5180
 Used to betray his Lord, and this
 They prove when riches fleet, ywis,
 Past hope of bettering. Though five-score
 Of friends they lately had, if more
 Than one remain, they well may raise
 Their vows to God in humble praise
 For boon so great.

When Fortune makes
 Her home with men, she lightly wakes
 Their worser selves. Contrarily
 When from their proud estate they be, 5190
 By turn of Fortune's wheel, cast down,
 From lordly seat to stool of clown,
 Then she, as step-dame, doth apply
 (Smarting sore hearts most recklessly)
 No plaister mixed of eager wine,
 But poverty that stings like brine.

She then makes plain, with rugged truth,
That no man, or in age or youth,
Who habiteth this changeful earth,
Should count prosperity of worth
Beyond the slippery hour.

But true
friends
abide

5200

Whene'er

A man, once wealthy, finds him bare
Of worldly garnishment, he then
Shall learn how many or few of men
Remain his friends. For those who came
In flocks around when wealth and fame
Smiled sweetly in his face, are shocked,
And sharply startled, when bemocked
By Fortune's hand they see him; none
Remain to cheer, not half a one
Alas! is left; nor do they fly
In silence, but loud-voiced deny
Knowledge of him 'fore whom of late
They fell, with fawning voice, prostrate.
Nor stay they there, but loud proclaim
His thousand faults, and sharply blame
His folly, though scarce yet is cold
The breath with which his manifold
Good deeds they chaunted. Still remain
Some few whose love no hope of gain
Or place inspired; they still defend
The man they once called 'well-loved friend,'
For on his honoured self they set
Their hearts, devoid of hope to get
Advantage.

5210

5220

Goes not by the board
His love whose wilful hand the sword
Would draw against his friend?

The
test of
adversity

There are
Two points where friendship forms no bar
To quarrel: bitter wrath or pride
May end its term; and woe betide 5230
Old friendship if a man reveal
A secret given beneath the seal
Of confidence; or poisonous spite
Of base detraction puts to flight
Kind thought of olden days.

If one
True friend be found, ere life be done,
Among a thousand, happy he
Who proves him; for a man may be
Wealthy, and held in high repute,
But yet, forsooth, be destitute 5240
Of one friend's love.

It well was said,
A traveller on his road is sped
Better by friend than purse well lined.
When changeful Fortune proves unkind
To wealthy wights, by dole it is
She opes their eyes to see, ywis,
How they true faithful friends may know
From those who did but boast them so
In Fortune's hour, and proves how vain
To win true friends is wealth mundane, 5250
Showing adversity to be
More profit than prosperity;
Through one in ignorance we stay,
The other clears the mist away.

And whenso'er it haps that poor
A man becomes, he may with sure

Unfailing test discover who		Suffi-
Among his friends are false or true.		ance
O then he finds how base and mean		bette
Are those whom he but late hath seen	5260	than
Bowing before him, offering all		plenty
That they of worldly good could call		
Their own, to serve him. Prithee say		
What sum think you 'twere worth to pay		
Hereof to be forewarned? Much less,		
Perchance, had been the readiness		
Wherewith he was deceived if he		
Had known the wit you learn from me.		
The stroke of poverty had been		
To this man better far, I ween,	5270	
Than riches, for he then had turned		
His back on vanity, and learned		
Wisdom. That man is never rich		
Who sets his heart on treasure which		
Leaves void within his soul; enough		
Of simple goods and household stuff		
Doth far more happiness confer		
Than wealth unbounded; joy doth stir		
More freely hearts of peasants fed		
On hard-earned crusts of barley bread,	5280	
Than of rich men whose barns contain		
A hundred moddes of golden grain.		

Hearken, while I essay to paint
 The tribulations that attain
 Rich merchants, who but live to gain
 More wealth: what miseries are they fain
 To undergo with will to pile
 Riches on riches; avarice vile

Poverty hath advantages
 Hath seized their hearts ; and fierce desire
 To have, which nought can stay or tire, 5290
 Corrupts their every thought ; they want
 The more, the more they get, and pant
 For increase still, though when 'tis got
 Small joy it gives their hearts, I wot.

But happy lives the man who ne'er
 Suffers the thought of carking care
 To rack his heart, while day by day
 With hardy hand he holds at bay
 The wolf of hunger, and provides
 Whatso he needs, yet never chides 5300
 The stroke of Fortune. Well content
 He rests with what kind Heaven hath sent,
 So long as fails he not to gain
 Raiment and food.

If racked with pain
 And sickness lieth he abed,
 And loatheth in his wearhead
 His meat, he wisely looks around
 To seek what issue may be found
 Therefrom, and Nature saith that good
 And prudent 'tis that he all food 5310
 Foregoes the while.

If so it fall
 He passeth to the hospital,
 There shall his sorrows comfort find.
 But oft it haps the poor man's mind
 Cares little for the morrow's need,
 And all the woes hard want doth breed.
 But if he thinks thereon, declares
 There's time enough for that, nor spares

One denier from his daily gain
 To ward the risk of future pain
 By timely foresight ; cold and heat
 Alike with constant heart he'll meet ;
 And if gaunt famine face him, he
 Welcomes his end right manfully,
 For all the sooner that he knows
 The stroke of death, the sooner goes
 His soul to paradise, where God
 Grants heaven in change for earth's dull sod.

Pythago-
 ras and
 Boethius

5320

Pythagoras hath said the same
 Within that noble book men name
 'The Golden Verses,' fair and bright
 They shine throughout the ages' night.
 'When of thy body thou art quit,
 Forthwith to heaven thy soul shall flit,
 And freed from human grossness be
 Absorbed within the Deity.'
 Wretched the fool who dreams that this
 Poor earth our only city is.
 Let one demand of some wise clerk,
 Well versed in that most noble work
 'Of Consolation,' foretime writ
 By great Boethius, for in it
 Are stored and hidden most profound
 And learnèd lessons : 'twould redound
 Greatly to that man's praise who should
 Translate that book with masterhood.

5330

5340

Thrice happy he who knows to live
 On that which kindly Heaven doth give
 To feed his wants, nor strives for more
 In hope to gather needless store ;

5350

Poverty light-hearted
 For, saith our master, none need be
 Caitiff, whatever his degree,
 Except he deem him so ; the king,
 Proud knight, or beggar, in this thing
 Fare all alike.

Light-heart and gay
 Goes many a beggar by the way,
 But little heeding though his back
 Be bent beneath a charcoal sack.
 They labour patiently, and sing,
 And dance, and laugh at whatso thing 5360
 Befalls ; for havings care they nought,
 But feed on scraps and chitlings bought
 Beside St. Marcel's, and dispend
 Their gains for wassail, then, straight wend
 Once more to work, not grumblingly,
 But light of heart as bird on tree
 Winning their bread without desire
 To fleece their neighbours. Nought they tire
 Of this their round, but week by week
 In mirth and work contentment seek ; 5370
 Returning when their work is done
 Once more to swill the jovial tun.
 And he who that he holds esteems
 Enough, is rich beyond the dreams
 Of many a dreary usurer,
 And lives his life-days happier far ;
 For nought it signifies what gains
 The wretched usurer makes, the pains
 Of poverty afflict him yet
 Who having, struggleth still to get. 5380

'Tis truth (though some 'twill little please
 To hear the trader knows no ease ;

For ever is his soul a prey
 To anxious care of how he may
 Amass more wealth : this mad desire
 Doth all his thought and actions fire,
 Devising means whereby to stuff
 His barns and coffers, for 'enough'
 He ne'er can have, but hungereth yet
 His neighbours' goods and gold to get. 5390
 It is as though for thirst he fain
 Would quaff the volume of the Seine
 At one full draught, and yet should fail
 To find its waters of avail
 To quench his longing. What distress,
 What anguish, wrath, and bitterness
 Devour the wretch ! fell rage and spite
 Possess his spirit day and night,
 And tear his heart ; the fear of want
 Pursues him like a spectre gaunt. 5400
 The more he hath, a wider mouth
 He opes, no draught can quench his drouth.

The
 misery of
 avarice

The lawyer likewise, and the leech,
 One brush hath tarred them both, for each
 Will eagerly for lucre sell
 His soul, and both deserve right well
 The gibbet. Such foul greed for gain
 The one devoureth, that he fain
 For one sick man would have two-score,
 And t'other longs that thirty more 5410
 Were tacked to every cause he pleads ;
 Nay, multiplied by tens, their needs
 Were yet unsatisfied, so bold
 Their lust and hunger is for gold.

Of evil And then divines who all the earth
 priests O'errun that they may gather worth
 Of worldly goods, and power and place,
 Foremost in vice, and last in grace :
 Most evil lives these preachers lead,
 Treading in their unholy greed 5420
 Vainglory's treacherous path, and eke
 Thereby their souls' damnation seek.
 Their very selves do they deceive,
 For through their preaching they receive
 No vantage, though perchance their word
 By others be with profit heard,
 For if their sermonising be
 Attaint with culpability,
 Nought shall the preachers gain, but they,
 Preaching, themselves are cast away, 5430
 And though the hearers virtue learn,
 The teachers God's damnation earn.

But let us leave the priests awhile,
 And turn again unto the vile
 Gold grubbers. Reverence, love, or fear
 Of God they know not, but hold dear
 Their pence alone : the trembling poor
 They leave to starve beside their door,
 Till God stretch forth His arm and show
 How crime doth unto judgment grow. 5440

Three cruel vengeancees pursue
 These miserable wretches who
 Hoard up their worthless wealth : great toil
 Is theirs to win it ; then their spoil

They fear to lose ; and lastly, grieve	True use
Most bitterly that they must leave	of wealth
Their hoards behind them. Cursed they die	
Who living, lived but wretchedly ;	
For no man, if he lack of love,	
Hath peace below or joy above.	5450
If those who heap up wealth would show	
Fair love to others, they would go	
Through life beloved, and thus would reign	
Sweet happy days. If they were fain,	
Who hold much good, to shower around	
Their bounty unto those they found	
In need thereof, and nobly lent	
Their money, free from measurement	
Of usury (yet gave it not	
To idle gangrel men), I wot	5460
That then throughout the land were seen	
No pauper carl or starveling quean.	
But lust of wealth doth so abase	
Man's heart, that even love's sweet grace	
Bows down before it ; men but love	
Their neighbours that their love may prove	
A profit, and both bought and sold	
Are friendships at the price of gold.	
Nay, shameless women set to hire	
Their bodies, heedless of hell-fire !	5470

Thus fraud and baratry have spoiled
 The pleasant earth, which all who toiled
 Once owned with all her foison, now
 Her fruits are held in fee, I trow,
 By few, who are themselves not free,
 But bound by their cupidity

Hoarders To work as hopped slaves of gold,
 are Which they in iron-bound coffers hold
 slaves Imprisoned ; nay ! by it are held
 In bondage, all their joyance quelled ; 5480
 Wretchedly live they as a toad
 That writhes beneath the harrow's goad.
 What else should be the aim and end
 Of gathering than the pelf to spend ?
 Alas ! to this clear truth are blind
 These graspers, though they needs behind
 Must leave their riches when they're dead,
 To be once more out-scatterèd
 By heirs and kindred, and small good
 Will have of their vile niggardhood. 5490
 Moreover, 'tis in nowise sure
 That through their own short day will dure
 Their much-loved hoard, for who can say
 What chance may snatch their wealth away ?

 Those men to Riches do great wrong
 Who kill the uses that belong
 To them by Nature's gift. Distress
 'Tis theirs to aid ; their usefulness
 Should not lie dead, for God hath sent
 Earth's wealth for mankind's betterment. 5500

 But Riches do not love to be
 Diverted from their destiny,
 And signal vengeance take on those
 Whose folly holds them hard and close.
 They follow surely on their track
 As sleuth-hounds, nor their vengeance slack

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 185

Till they have pierced their hearts with three	Pecunia
Sharp swords of dire malignity :	punishes
The first, hard labour is, to gain ;	her
The second, fear to lose amain	gaolers
	5510
The pelf amassed with carking care,	
Long dolorous days, and scanty fare ;	
The third sword is the drivelling fear	
Of death as old age draws anear,	
When, as aforesaid, graspers see	
Their self-inflicted misery.	

Pecunia, queen-like, hath the wit	
To scourge the fools who benefit	
Nought of her favours, but would keep	
Her prisoned fast. She lies asleep	5520
In peace the while these dotards wake,	
Swink hard and 'neath her ruling quake	
Whate'er may hap; in honour she	
Doth live, while they but shamefully	
Bow them before her vengeful rod,	
And writhe beneath her foot steel shod.	
But small and scant her thanks will be	
To him who curbs her liberty,	
Seeing he must, or soon or late,	
Forego her when he meets his fate,	5530
Though while he lived he did not dare	
To harness her or let her fare.	
But bold courageous men attack	
This dame, and mounting on her back,	
With spur and rein entreat her so	
As quickly gives her cause to know	
Her lords for men of valiant heart ;	
For e'en as Dædalus by art	

God hates Most rare and wondrous, fashioned wings
 niggards For Icarus, as Ovid sings, 5540
 To pass the sea, so merrily
 Do free hearts make Pecunia fly,
 And they would kill themselves, God wot !
 Unless through her some joy they got.
 Great souls know not the hideous vice
 Of sordid, grasping avarice,
 But ever love, with largess grand
 And free, to sound from land to land
 Their noble deeds, their proud success,
 Their valour, might, and gentleness ; 5550
 For unto God a generous heart
 Is grateful, but nor lot nor part
 Hath Avarice with him ; like to a foul
 Rank stench he hates a niggard soul ;
 For when he made the world, with
 wealth
 He plenished it for joy and health
 Of man, and therefore loveth he
 Freehanded generosity.
 But pinching, stinting, griping curs
 God damns with vile idolaters, 5560
 Poor caitiff hounds, insatiable,
 Extortionate and miserable,
 Who rove the world with whining cry,
 That riches only set they by
 That they may have, when cometh age,
 Sufficing food and harbourage.

But say, sweet Riches, are ye then
 So soft of heart ye love the men

With gentle tenderness who cast		
Ye into bondage, hard and fast ?	5570	Terrors of rich men
Nay! nay! The more of you they keep		
Imprisoned, all the less sweet sleep		
Enjoy they, terror and affright		
Pursue them, and in wretched plight		
Are they whose hearts are aye oppressed		
With anxious care, unsoothed by rest.		
Perchance a many may be stirred		
To hastily condemn my word		
Hereof, reciting how great kings		
Have shown that riches are the springs	5580	
Of glory, when, as saith the crowd,		
To strengthen and maintain their proud		
And noble state they hire of men		
Five hundred or five thousand : then		
The commons cry : ' Doth not then this		
Show forth their glorious life, ywis ?'		
But God knows well that 'tis not so,		
For all this valiance doth but show		
They live their lives in mortal fear.		
Far more of happiness doth cheer	5590	
The very beggar of the street,		
Who feels no terror lest he meet		
Thieves in his daily round ; but kings,		
In furred robes set with jewellings		
And gold, atremble live, lest they		
To wandering robbers fall a prey,		
Who would no scruple feel to kill		
Their king moreover, lest he spill		
Their blood in vengeance of the crime ;		
For he alive, they know their time	5600	

Kings are Would wax but short ere on the tree
 but slaves He'd surely hang them ; nay, not he,
 But those who serve him ; wondrous weak
 A king would find him should he seek
 To match him 'gainst a caitiff wretch
 Who standeth begging, palm astretch
 For alms ! The men who serve him ? Nay !
 Base lie it were if I should say
 ' They *serve* him,' for by Heaven, I trow,
 Though to his seigniory they bow, 5610
 'Tis *he* serves *them* ; though he defends
 Their liberties, his power depends
 Upon his servants' will ; if they
 Deny their aid to him, away
 Goes all his kingly might, and left
 Is he, of all he had, bereft :
 For not to him belongs of right
 The people's valour, wit, or might,
 Their bodies, work, or property ;
 No single thing of theirs can be 5620
 His, for great Nature gave them not
 To him, and Fortune's self no jot
 Can give to any man unless
 Dame Nature in her bounteousness
 Saw fit his life with wealth to leaven."

The Lover.

" Ah ! Madam, by the Lord of heaven !
 I beg you teach me then what can
 Solely belong to any man.
 Can you not show me what may be
 One's own in its entirety ? " 5630

Reason.

"Right well," quoth she, "but understand, ✓ Happi-
ness is in
oneself
 I mean not lordly house or land,
 Nor costly robes or garnishment,
 Or jewels, or incoming rent,
 Nor household goods and furniture,
 But something better and more sure.
 A thing 'tis, hid in each man's soul,
 More precious to him than the whole
 Of worldly wealth, for 'twill endure
 When things are gone you deemed for sure, 5640
 And ne'er from thee can it be ta'en,
 Another's heart to ease and fain,
 Nor ever can be reft from thee
 Henceforward through eternity.
 External goods have no more worth
 Than some poor horse's outworn girth,
 And neither thou nor any man
 Can own throughout a long life's span
 The value of a garden leek.
 Only within us must we seek 5650
 That which we dare to call our own,
 All else that in the world is known
 Belongs to Fortune, and her breath
 Hither and thither scattereth
 All worldly wealth, and then again
 Recalls it, whensoever fain
 She is thereto, which makes fools cry
 And laugh by turns; but utterly
 Wise men Dame Fortune's gifts despise,
 And when to move their hearts she tries 5660

Fortune By moving round her wheel, no sigh
 to be dis- Or laugh from them evokes thereby.
 dained For all her gifts one well may dread,
 Seeing how they are chequerèd
 With good and ill, and ne'er should stir
 A wise man's heart for love of her,
 One moment bright, and then again
 Eclipsed, to nought she falls amain.

List patiently the word I say,
 And forthwith tear thine heart away 5670
 From such a love as this; 'twould foul,
 Sully, and stain thy very soul.

If thou hereafter shouldst herein
 Toward others in such fashion sin
 That, having called thyself their friend,
 Didst yet, by chicane, in the end
 Seek thine advantage, thou wouldst be
 ✓ By good men held disdainfully.
 This love, whereof I have rehearsed
 The nature, flee as thing accursed. 5680
 Put thou unholy love away.
 List thou my speech nor make delay,
 But many a thing thou need'st as yet
 To learn, since thou believ'st I set
 Thee on to hatred: prithee show
 Thy meaning, that I fain would know."

The Lover.

"You have not ceased to urge on me
 To cast my Lord off utterly
 For some strange wilding love you dight.
 Though one should travel day and night 5690

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 191

To Carthage, then from East to West
 Should journey round, until oppressed
 With age he'd lost his every tooth,
 Yet still with all the zest of youth
 Pressed onward vigorously, his skirt
 For speed around his waistband girt,
 And brimmed with ardour still stride forth
 From sultry south to freezing north,
 Till all the earth he'd scoured around,
 Much doubt I if he yet had found
 This wondrous love that you recite.
 The world, meseems, thereof was quite
 Delivered when the old Gods fled
 By giants overmasterèd,
 And Chastity, Good-Faith, and Law
 Alarmed, did also hence withdraw,
 For then, I trow, this love was tost
 Aside, and earth the treasure lost.
 E'en ponderous Justice, who was cast
 In stronger mould, retired at last.
 All left this world, outworn with war,
 And sought beyond the skies afar
 A fairer home, and since have shown
 Themselves by miracles alone
 To those on earth. 'Twas Fraud that
 sent

The gods
 fled the
 earth

5700

5710

Them hence, who since that time hath bent
 Earth 'neath her yoke.

E'en Tully's wit,
 Which searched through all that e'er was
 writ,

Could never find throughout the store
 Of ages more than three or four

5720

No love perfect Examples, since the world was made,
 That this most perfect love betrayed ;
 Nay fewer e'en than this I trow,
 Who did by word of mouth avow
 Themselves such friends.

And am I then

Wiser than Tully? Surely men
 Would call me fool if I should try
 To find such love as certainly
 Dwells not on earth? Where should one go
 For love that lives not here below? 5730
 Deem you that I dare soar as high
 As cranes, or seek to pierce the sky
 Of thought with Plato? Nay, I tire
 Of speaking, and have small desire
 The Gods should think of me as one
 Who'd storm their heaven, and cast adown
 Dread thunder on me as on those
 Old giants of whom the story goes.
 You'd scarce desire such fate should be
 For self-same cause dealt out to me, 5740
 Thereof have I no shade of doubt."

Reason.

"Fair friend," quoth Reason, "hear me out.
 To fly aloft would suit thee not,
 But flight of thought and will, I wot,
 May all men compass. Set delay
 Aside, and list me when I say,
 If thou esteemest all too high
 The love I tell of, possibly
 The fault is thine. Thou yet shalt know
 From me another love—but no— 5750

'Tis not another, but the same,
 Though paler mayst thou deem the flame,
 And less intense. Of fairer hope
 Thou'lt find this love, and wider scope,
 For, leaving special loves, thy mind
 Shall clasp the whole of human-kind
 In large embrace. No one apart
 Should claim the fulness of thy heart,
 But every living man should be
 Joined in one vast fraternity,
 Loving the human race as one,
 Yet giving special love to none.
 Mete out such measure as ye fain
 From others would receive again :
 Pursue thy fellow in such guise
 Alone, as thou in equal wise
 Wouldst be pursued, and freely give
 Quittance of debt, if thou wouldst live
 By all beloved—such love should sway
 The lives of men from day to day.

Love
 of one's
 fellows

5760

5770

It is because unrighteous folk
 Refuse to bear the gentle yoke
 Of this fair love that it hath been
 Needful to set the judge as screen
 To shield the weak against the strong,
 Uphold the right and quell the wrong,
 To reprimand and punish those
 Who rob their neighbours and dispose
 Their hands to evil, and so shame
 This love I tell of, and defame
 Good men with foul detracting speech,
 And (founts of ill example) teach

5780

Love and justice Foul sins to others, whether it be
 Or secretwise or openly.
 Such people needs must be chastised."

The Lover.

"Pardee! I fain would be advised
 Concerning this famed Justice, who
 Is held in such esteem by you.
 Wilt thou then kindly indicate
 Her nature, manners, and estate?"

5790

Reason.

"Say how."

The Lover.

"Most willingly. Show forth,
 I prithee, which hath more of worth,
 Or Love or Justice? Pray declare
 Which of the twain you judge most fair."

Reason.

"What love then speak'st thou of?"

The Lover.

"Why this
 Whereof thou told'st but now, ywis,
 For that sweet love which fills my soul
 No judgment needs, 'tis pure and whole."

Reason.

“Poor fool! Believe so if ye will,”
But if ye ask my sentence, still
Broad love is better.”

5800 The best
form of
love

The Lover.

“Show me proof.”

Reason.

“Right willingly. For one’s behoof,
If two things are agreed to be
Needful and fair, it seems to me,
That needed most, must be the better.”

The Lover.

“I own that true unto the letter.”

Reason.

“Incline thine ear, while I pursue
The differing nature of the two :
Each one is good within its sphere,
And both great benefits confer.”

5810

The Lover.

“’Tis true.”

Reason.

“And you will not contest
But things which profit most are best.”

The Lover.

Love
higher
than jus-
tice

“Well, well, that freely I concede.”

Reason.

“Then that between us is agreed.
Now Love, that springs of Charity,
More needful is, it seems to me,
Than Justice.”

The Lover.

“Make that clear, I pray,
Ere from the point you go astray.”

Reason.

“With right good will. I this maintain :
The thing that's good in every vein 5820
Must be of worthier metal made
Than that which needs extraneous aid.
This point beyond all question is,
I doubt not thou wilt grant me this.”

The Lover.

“The matter make more plain to me,
Who knows but what some catch may be ?
I fain would some example hear,
Perhaps thereby 'twere made more clear.”

Reason.

"I'faith, when thou example askest
 For proof, my power thou sorely taskest, 5830 The proof
 Natheless, some instance will I find thereof
 To soothe and satisfy thy mind.
 The man who should a vessel guide
 Unaided o'er a trackless tide
 (A thing thou scarce couldst do, I trow),
 Were he not better skilled than thou?"

The Lover.

"Why clearly, he would know each rope."

Reason.

"List then, and thou shalt see the scope
 Of mine intent. If Justice sped
 From off the earth, or lay stark dead, 5840
 Love only would be still enough
 (That Love whereat ye rashly scoff)
 By which a perfect life to lead,
 For Justice' help Love nought would need.
 But Justice reft of Love? ah no!
 Therefore doth Love more virtue show."

The Lover.

"Give proof thereof."

Reason.

Justice
once
supreme

“ With pleasure, but
Prithee, thy lips meanwhile keep shut.
Justice held undivided sway
O'er all the earth in Saturn's day. 5850
Saturn, whose son, as Ovid sings,
Cut off, as they were chitterlings,
His father's cullions, and the sea
Consigned them to most cruelly,
And thence was fair Queen Venus born
(Unless old histories be forsworn).
If Justice came again on earth,
And mankind recognised her worth
Once more as in the age of gold,
Sweet brotherhood should then unfold 5860
All sons of men, 'neath Justice' eye,
Dwelling together peaceably ;
For Love once dead or fled away,
Ruthless would be stern Justice' sway.
But if mankind were joined in one
Great brotherhood of love, then none
Would wrong his fellow, and vice sped
Were not all call for Justice dead ?”

The Lover.

“ Past doubt it then were needed nought.”

Reason.

“ Well say'st thou, for in Love's school
taught 5870
All men would live in peaceful rest,
Neither by kings nor lords oppressed.

No provostship or bailiehood Corrupt
 Would people need if all were good ; judges
 No judge would then be set above
 His fellow-man, and therefore Love
 Should before Justice be preferred,
 Although 'tis true her voice is heard
 Restraining evil, which hath been
 Wellspring of all earth's lords, I ween, 5880
 In whom is freedom lost. For ne'er
 Except for Crime and Sin, vile pair,
 Had kings been known in any land,
 Nor Justice shown her iron hand.
 For judges, even from the first,
 Bewray themselves as men accurst,
 But they their own souls should discern,
 In hope the world's respect to earn
 As men, fair, careful, and upright,
 Not giving sentence in despite 5890
 Of truth ; not false, with palms that itch
 For bribes, alike from poor and rich.

But judgment set they at a price,
 And ancient usage in a trice
 Upset to serve their turn ; they clip
 And gather, grasp and pare and snip ;
 And poor and helpless men beguile
 Of land or chattels ; many a while
 The judge who hangs the thief is he 5900
 Who ought to deck the gallows tree,
 If only he were doomed aright
 For all the crimes his hands have dight."

XXXVI

Learn how Virginius made his plea
 To Appius, who corruptedly
 His fair and well-loved daughter gave
 To Claudius for his chattel slave.

Appius
 and
 Virginia

“ A CORD vile Appius merited,
 When he his felon servant sped
 As witness false, to foully swear
 Against Virginia, maid most fair, 5910
 Of brave Virginius daughter dear,
 As doth in Livy’s page appear,
 Because he could not subjugate
 Her virtuous mind, nor quell the hate
 His suit inspired. Vile Claudius cried
 In open court: ‘ Upon my side,
 O judge, give sentence, seen I can
 Prove clearer claim than other man
 To this fair maid, who is to me
 The house-bred slave in simple fee, 5920
 For she beneath my roof was born,
 And being thence unjustly torn,
 Was to Virginius’ palace led,
 And therein reared and nourishèd.
 Great Appius, sentence give, I pray
 That, from Virginius reft away,
 Restored she be to my good care.
 And if denial he should dare
 To give my oath, I straight will bring
 Good witness to affirm the thing.’ 5980
 ’Twas thus this villain servant told
 His vile and treacherous tale with bold,

Unblushing speech, and ere the word	The judg-
Of brave Virginius could be heard,	ment of
Vile Appius hasty judgment gave,	Appius
And the pure virgin, as a slave,	
Decreed to Claudius. Then her sire,	
Most noble knight, his soul afire,	
Beheld how this decree unjust	
Consigned his loved one to the lust	5940
Of Appius, and that all in vain	
He strove to save his child from stain ;	
So rather than such foul disgrace	
Should sully her, he set his face	
To suffer grief, than hell more hot,	
If Titus Livius japeth not."	

XXXVII

This telleth how—the judgment given—	
Virginius unto madness driven,	
Strake off his well-loved daughter's head,	
Though to her life his life was wed,	5950
Preferring rather that his child	
Should die unstained than live defiled ;	
Then the sad head to Appius sent,	
Who met his well-earned chastisement.	

“FOR not in rage, but fondest love,	
Virginius slew this spotless dove,	
And then, all gory, at the feet	
Of Appius cast her visage sweet	
In open court, before the eyes	
Of all who stood there, and loud cries	5960

Power Of horror raised they. History saith
 and virtue That the vile judge ordained the death
 consort Of good Virginius, but the crowd,
 not The tale all heard, cried out aloud
 That such foul treason must not be
 Wrought, and yet find impunity:
 But for his treachery, to the jail
 Straightway the unjust judge they hale,
 Who there foul expiation made,
 By his own hand to hell betrayed. 5970
 And Claudius, witness false and base,
 Had met the hangman face to face
 Had not Virginius nobly craved
 His pardon from the crowd, and saved
 His pitiful life; agreed he went
 Thenceforth to outer banishment,
 While other witnesses forsworn
 Met death beneath the people's scorn.
 Judges, in short, are scoundrels vile;
 List ye what Lucan saith the while 5980
 In golden verse: 'Vain hope! to find
 Great power with virtuous will com-
 bined.'
 But if with hardened hearts they cling
 To crime, and strive by pilfering
 And robbery base to swell their stream
 Of worldly wealth, the Judge supreme
 Shall cast them down to hell, and there
 Bid Satan cords of steel prepare
 To bind their necks. Except I not
 Proud kings or prelates, for their lot 5990
 Is cast with judges, whether they
 Be shaven pates or people lay.

'Tis not for us these men to crown
 With state, that they may trample down
 Suitors, and every cause exploit
 To fill their purses by adroit
 Chicanery, and shut their door
 To claimants cursed in being poor.
 But theirs in person 'tis to sit
 Each cause to hear, and judge of it
 With righteous care, for false or true,
 With all the points that 'long thereto.
 Slaves of the populace are they,
 Who win full foison day by day
 From mother earth, and not their will
 It was to let these miscreants fill
 Their maws by foul despoil. Their time
 All folk should pass in peace, for crime
 Judges should punish, and 'tis theirs
 Themselves to mount the gallows stairs
 And execution do on thieves,
 If no man willingly relieves
 Their hands thereof, for justice they
 Should do whate'er the price they pay.
 For since the people 'tis who 'quite
 The justicers, undoubted right
 Have they to justice, and a vow
 These judges made thereto, I trow,
 On their investment.

Judges
 the
 people's
 servants ←

6000

6010

Thy request
 Is now fulfilled, and thou mayst rest
 Content, since I have given thee proof
 Of all thou wouldst for thy behoof."

6020

The Lover.

Un-
seemly
phrase

“That I allow, and fain confess
That words would fail me to express
My boundless thanks; but yet I heard,
Methinks, one most unseemly word,
Both wanton and inconsequent,
Which, if thereon my wit were spent,
All lightly I could show to be
Most gross, used indecorously, 6080
Leaving you bare of all excuse.”

Reason.

“I know the word that doth induce
Thy wrath,” quoth she, “but thou shalt hear
Me later purge and make all clear
That word, if such be thy desire.”

The Lover.

“That certainly shall I require.
Most clearly in my memory fixed
Is that unseemly word you mixed
In your discourse, when you began
To rail at justice dealt to man. 6040
But my great master bid me not
(His counsel ne'er have I forgot)
Speak any ribald word, and he
Shall be obeyed implicitly.
But since that word I did not name,
To me 'twill not be counted shame

Though I repeat it. Not in vain
 He speaks who to a fool makes plain
 His foolishness. It is but right
 That you should see in clearest light
 How you, who hold yourself so high,
 Have spoken most immodestly.”

6050

Reason
reproved*Reason.*

“ I think I understand the gist
 Of what thou say'st, but wherefore twist
 My words to mean that I would urge
 Thee on to hate? Shouldst thou emerge
 From out one folly, pray what need
 Is there that what I say should lead
 On to another? If I advise
 Thee to forsake thy mad emprise
 Of love, should that then indicate
 A wish to see thee turn towards hate?
 Horace hath writ—no dullard he—
 That fools from one absurdity
 Fall to a greater, and their last
 Estate is worse than that they've passed.

6060

The love whereof I raise alarm,
 Is one that scarce can fail to harm
 Thy life.

If I on thee should press
 To flee the vice of drunkenness,
 Wouldst thou suppose I'd have thee shrink
 From every kind of wholesome drink?
 Such counsel wouldst thou treat with scorn,
 As not worth one poor peppercorn.

6070

Reason
justifies
herself

If I condemn a spendthrift's ways,
It follows not I therefore praise
And recommend the converse vice
Of hard and grasping avarice.
I never spake so foolishly."

The Lover.

"Nay, but you did."

Reason.

"'Fore God, ye lie ! 6080
Think'st thou to baffle me, I pray ?
'Tis not to flatter thee I say
That of old lore thou know'st but little,
And of sound logic not a tittle.
It is not thus that I have read
Of love ; but ne'er my mouth hath said
That hate should thrive.

Another sort
Of love is that which I exhort
Thee to embrace, the which I find
To bring both grace and peace of mind. 6090

Another love Dame Nature gives
To every bird and beast that lives
On earth, through which to birth they bring
Their young and give them nourishing.

If thou perchance shouldst wish to know
What is this love, and whence doth flow
Its force, I answer that 'tis given
To all God's creatures under heaven,

That they in loving pairs may mate,
 And duly thus perpetuate
 Their varied kinds with joyance rare,
 Alike in water, earth, and air.
 All creatures that Dame Earth doth own
 For children, to this love are prone ;
 Which though it profits divers ways,
 Yet casts no blame, nor merits praise,
 For neither is it good or bad,
 But since the world first rose it had
 Its laws, and following those, no wrong,
 Or vice, or blame, thereto belong,
 But grievous wrong 'twere to reject
 Dame Nature, and her laws neglect.

6100
 Fecun-
 dity Na-
 ture's end

6110

For instance, he who eats his food
 Scarce merits praise as wise and good
 Therefor, but he who nought at all
 Will eat, a fool we justly call.

'Tis not this love, I doubt, that thou
 Wouldst give thy heart to, but I trow
 A love more mad dost thou design
 To spend thy youth on ; O incline
 Thine ear to my advice, and leave
 That love, it flattereth to deceive.

6120

But prithee, dream not that my will
 It is no loving friend should fill
 Thy heart. Wilt thou not for thy love
 Take me ? Am I not fair above
 Ten thousand, fit to rule the home
 Of him who reigns o'er mighty Rome ?

Reason
proffers
her love

Behold then, as my love and friend
Thou hast the choice thy life to spend. 6130
Wot'st thou how great the gift I throw
Here at thy feet? Thou ne'er shouldst know
The pain of void unsatisfied,
But over all mischance shouldst ride
Triumphant, and shouldst lordly soar
'Bove proudest king or emperor.
How high soe'er thy soul aspire
Thou nought shalt fail of thy desire,
Seen thou art ready to fulfil,
Unmurmuring, all my sovereign will. 6140

Dost thou with me in love engage,
One shall be thine whose lineage
Surpasseth all men might compare
Therewith, for I am child and heir
To God supreme, whose power and grace
Hath shed o'er all my form and face
His own unclouded brightness. See,
Dear friend, what beauty glows in me:
Yet ne'er hath dame of high repute
Loved with a love so absolute. 6150
'Tis by my father's will I make
That man my friend whose love I wake;
Nor need we tremble to incur
From him displeasure or demur,
But he will guard us 'neath his wing.
Say then, what think'st thou of this thing?

The god who holds thy heart in snare
So tightly, is his yoke more fair

Than this I offer? Doth he give
 Guerdon more rich to those who live
 Beneath his sceptre? For God's sake
 Refuse me not, or else will ache
 My heart with pain which maidens know
 Alone, who pine 'neath passion's glow.
 Bethink thee what Dan Ovid saith
 Of Echo, and her woeful death."

6160
 Despise
 Love and
 Fortune

The Lover.

"From your hard Latin phrase I blench,
 Can you not speak plain wholesome French?
 Say plainly what you ask of me."

Reason.

"Fain would I thou my friend shouldst be, 6170
 And I thy humble slave. Forsake
 Thy cruel God of Love, and make
 No count of Fortune and her wheel
 (Not worth a prune is she), but steel
 Thy heart like Socrates, who ne'er
 In all his life was swayed by her.
 She smiled, his heart grew nowise gay;
 She frowned, he laughed her frowns away.
 Whatso of good or ill he met,
 Was each 'gainst each in balance set, 6180
 Nor deigned he say that this was good,
 Or that was fraught with dreariness.
 No evil chances could destroy
 His peace, nor good luck move to joy.

Fortitude
of Soc-
rates

Of all who lived was he the man
Judged by Apollo Pythian
For wisest, as Solinus saith ;
For ne'er could Fortune's changeful breath
Alter his visage—still 'twas seen,
In joy unmoved—in woe serene. 6190
And even when, because, quoth he,
'There is but one great Deity,'
They brought to him the poison cup,
Calmly he drank the potion up,
Charging his gaolers they should ne'er
By more than one God use to swear.

Heraclitus—Diogenes—
Old time philosophers were these,
Who held it scorn that joy or woe
Should glad their souls or overthrow 6200
Their calm of mind : without a sigh
Or smile they met stern destiny.
Follow these wise men's ways, nor swerve
Therefrom, wouldst thou my love deserve.
But let not Fortune's freaks dismay
Thine heart, although foul tricks she play.
A puny wrestler should I call
The man who suffers Fortune's fall
Without a struggle, but a-low
Will lie, abashed by overthrow. 6210
No man should let himself be ta'en,
But give her buffets back again
With vigour ; Fortune faintly fights
With him who hardy battle dights,
And he who strikes and fears her not,
Whether in palace or in cot,

Fortune For he by power of will alone
 endureth May scorn her strokes if adverse grown.
 not Give ear : A folly most extreme
 It is that men should Fortune deem
 A Goddess, up to highest heaven
 Exalting her, for ne'er was given 6250
 To her by reason nor by right
 In paradise a mansion bright ;
 No house enduring hath she got,
 But one right perilous, God wot.

Amid a sea, of depth profound,
 Rises a mighty rock, around
 Whose bases in tumultuous roar
 The rude waves beat for evermore.
 The billows never shepherded,
 Dash 'gainst its sides, and o'er its head, 6260
 And ever and again nigh drown
 With thundering burst its high-built crown.
 Sometimes the giant's strength awakes,
 And so the assaulting deluge shakes,
 That 'tis half vanquished and falls back
 While draws he breath 'gainst fresh attack.
 But ever, Proteus-like, his shape
 Doth change, as one who would escape
 Cognition of his boisterous foes,
 And when he lifts his head, he shows 6270
 A thousand flowerets (like to stars
 That brighten heaven around the cars
 Of deities) amidst the tides,
 When Zephyrus in triumph rides,
 But when the north wind blows, he reaps
 With freezing sword the flowers in heaps.

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 213

And blooms and verdure die, as they
 Draw nigh unto their burgeoning day.

An alle-
 gory of
 Fortune

This rock doth bear a fearsome wood
 Of strange-grown trees, both bad and
 good.

6280

Sterile is one from crown to root,
 Another beareth wholesome fruit ;
 The one puts forth fair branches green,
 Another void of leaves is seen ;
 This showeth blossoms passing fair,
 That stands of bud or promise bare.
 And while this flourisheth on high,
 That other withereth barrenly.
 If one towards heaven doth raise its head,
 Another seeks the earth's cold bed.

6290

When buds on one show strong and hale,
 Those on its fellow shrink and fail.
 The broom shoots upwards, giant high,
 While pine and cedar lowly lie
 Along the earth ; shrub, tree, and plant
 Their natures change in this strange haunt,
 With variance wide. To dusky grey
 The verdant laurel fades away,
 Its brightness lost. The olive tree,
 So famed for rich fecundity,
 Stands barren there. The sterile elm
 The gracious vine doth overwhelm
 And win her fruit. The willow, bare
 Erewhile of berries, giveth there
 Fair foison.

6300

Nightingales forsake
 Their tunefulness, but screech-owls break

Fortune The silence, whose discordant song
 unsatisfy- Gives prophecy of woe and wrong,
 ing Sad heralds, clad in hideousness,
 Of evil happening and distress.

6310

While winter doth to summer grow,
 And summer fall to winter, flow
 Two plenteous streams of diverse source,
 And nought alike of kind or force.
 The water of the one doth greet
 All those who drink with savour sweet
 Beyond compare, and he who tastes
 Thereof but once, in nowise hastes
 Him onward, but would gladly stay,
 Drinking his fill, the livelong day ;
 But yet it quencheth not his thirst,
 For eagerly as when he first
 Had ta'en a sup, he drinketh still
 As though no draught his pouch could fill.
 The more one drinks the more doth he
 Desire to quaff unendingly,
 Nor doth his burning thirst abate,
 Though he become intoxicate.

6320

The strongest words were weak and waste
 To tell the sweet enticing taste
 These wretched sots experience, who,
 Their drouth unquenched, must still pursue
 Their maddening, monstrous draughts, for
 thirst
 Infernal still, like souls accurst,
 Consumes them, till at last they fall
 Inflate, like victims dropsical.

6330

In rippling wavelets speeds along
 This gentle stream with tinkling song,
 More musically sweet, I ween,
 Than ever broke from tambourine 6340
 Or silvery cymbal. Those who stroll
 Beside the flowery meads where roll
 These singing waters haste anear,
 Impatient such sweet sounds to hear
 More perfectly, but when the side
 Attain they of the murmuring tide,
 Can nowise find the manner how
 To reach the farther bank, for trow
 Ye well that when their feet they set
 (No more than just enough to wet 6350
 Their shoe-latch) in the trancing wave,
 And drink one drop, then nought can save
 Their hearts from lust of that sweet drink,
 And plunging in o'erwhelmed they sink.

The
 rivers of
 Fortune

Others, more bold, from off the brim
 Leap hardily, and think to swim
 Across the current; from among
 The waves they shout, in accents strong,
 The joyousness of their success;
 But suddenly a wavelet's stress 6360
 Carries them back, and there on dry
 And arid earth, heart-sick, they lie.

And now will I relate to thee
 The other stream's strange history.
 Its waves are sulphurous, black and grim,
 No birds flit o'er it, no fish swim

Fortune's
votaries

Within its depths, the while its floor
 With filthy scum is surfaced o'er.
 No purling brook, no gentle tide
 It floweth in, but billows gride 6870
 Tumultuous, with a dreadful roar
 Sounding across from shore to shore,
 Like to the threatening thunder's crash
 When heaven and earth together clash.
 Above these ruffling waves unclean,
 Kind Zephyr's wing hath ne'er been seen
 To poise or lightly kiss the stream,
 But harshly doth the north wind scream
 In triumph there, and buffeteth
 The surface dark with angry breath. 6880

Its force hath dug dim ravines deep,
 Whence towering mountains all a-heap
 Rise up on either side, and wage
 Unceasing war with furious rage
 Of wind and storm, which never stay
 Their combat fierce through night or day.
 Along the bank is spread a crowd
 Of wretched folk, whose wailings loud
 Burden the air, while out their eyes
 Gush forth their griefs and miseries. 6890
 For, ever they, convulsed with fear,
 Behold the engulfing water near,
 And if within it one should dip
 His body till above the hip
 It touch his waist, then swift, below
 Its surface dragged, above him flow
 The raging waters. But upcast
 Are some, above whose heads have passed

The waves, thrown back upon the brink ;
 But, rashly venturing, many sink 6400
 For ever 'neath the o'erwhelming flood,
 And from the rank and noisome mud,
 That clogs its cavern depths, no more
 Shall gain the light, or win the shore.

The
 house of
 Fortune

This horrible flood doth boil and churn,
 With many a vagrant twist and turn,
 Through gorges numberless, and thus,
 At last its waters poisonous,
 That reek with odours foul, and steam
 With noisome vapours, meet the stream 6410
 So pure and limpid, and to it
 Their own vile mirous filth transmit,
 Fulfilled of direful pestilence,
 And sickening every finer sense ;
 The waters of the pleasant pool
 Flow on no longer calm and cool,
 And that same stream that higher gave
 Forth perfumes delicate and suave
 Becomes a fetid torrent, curst
 With odours that from hell might burst. 6420

Not on the crest of mountain tall,
 But where its flank doth sloping fall,
 Above the plain, in crumbling state,
 As ready to succumb to fate,
 Is Fortune's mansion dight. No rage
 There is of stormy winds that wage
 Wild war, that falls not on it. Fierce
 And strong the tempests are that pierce
 That dwelling. Rarely Zephyr soft
 Descendeth gently from aloft 6430

Both To visit it with gentle breath,
 bright And lull those blasts that tell of death.
 and drear One half the house stands high and straight,
 The other poor and desolate ;
 And thus it seems as though it hung
 Ready ere long to fall among
 The rocks beneath.

One part so fair
 And glorious looks, that man hath ne'er
 Seen nobler mansion ; walls and roof
 Are wrought of one same warp and woof: 6440
 Silver and gold, with gems beset
 Resplendent, (whence men oft-times get
 Great virtue), never mortal eye
 Saw palace built more gorgeously.
 The other part is raised of mud
 Commingled with decaying wood ;
 Thin fragile walls with many a flaw,
 And broken roof of mouldering straw.
 And thus, while scarce can words express
 The symmetry and gorgeousness 6450
 That one side shows, the other mean
 And rotten looks, within it seen
 Five hundred thousand cracks and gaps
 Betwixt the worthless bits and scraps
 Whereof 'tis built, and to its base
 It tottereth, as in parlous case.

Within this mansion, bright and drear,
 Dame Fortune makes from year to year
 Her home.

Whene'er she hath desire
 The minds of mortals to inspire 6460

With wish to honour her, she goes
 To that side of the house which shows
 So gorgeously, and dwelleth there
 In queenly state, attired in fair
 Rich regal vesting; passing sweet
 Of perfumes, and of colours meet
 For Iris' self; such tints indeed
 As dyers, or by herb or seed
 Produce, for costliest garments made,
 In silk, or wool, or rich brocade,
 For wealthy folk, who dearly love
 To vaunt themselves in pride above
 Their fellow mortals. Thus her snares
 Doth Fortune set, but never cares
 One straw for living man when she
 Is 'tired in all her bravery.
 When looks she round and notes her
 great

Fortune's
 vicissi-
 tudes

6470

Honour and wealth, and proud estate;
 So madly then is she misled,
 That seemeth she to lose her head
 Outright, and dream that none on earth
 But she have smallest count or worth,
 Oblivious that on her descend
 Oft-times rude strokes ere falls the end.

6480

Then wandereth she about the house,
 Till comes she where 'tis ruinous
 And all in cue to fall piecemeal,
 Yet ceaseless moveth on her wheel.
 Then stumbling gropes she, head low
 bent,
 As though she saw not where she went;

6490

Fortune's And when she finds her fallen a-down,
 lastestate Straightway both cheer and broidered gown
 Are changed, and all at once of dress
 She finds herself an orphaness ;
 And all her pride of state subdued,
 There stands she, as a blind-worm nude ;
 All she possessed hath vanishèd,
 And now doth nought her need bestead.
 Then seeing her estate so low,
 All shameless seeketh she to go 6500
 Beneath the bordel's roof to hide
 Her head, for sorrow humbleth pride.
 Then mourneth she, with floods of tears,
 The splendours now no longers hers—
 The worldly pleasures past and gone,
 The gorgeous robes she woned to don.

Alas, for Fortune! jade perverse!
 Full many a noble man shall curse
 Her hand which cast him in the mire,
 A prey to woe and misery dire, 6510
 While vilest men she sets on high,
 Bestowing on them lavishly
 Honour, and dignity, and power,
 Only that when their little hour
 Is past, she suddenly away
 May snatch the gifts of yesterday.
 O were not then the ancients wise,
 Who Fortune drew with blindfold eyes."

XXXIX

How Emperor Nero, in his mad
 And cruel unchecked fury, bade 6520
 In daylight clear, before his eyes,
 His minions to anatomise
 His mother living, and the spot
 Disclose where he was erst begot.

“ALAS! that thus should Fortune play Nero and
 Her pranks, and worthy men betray Seneca
 To misery, while the better part
 She deals to miscreants. In thine heart
 Bethink thou well of Socrates
 (Too wise a foolish world to please); 6530
 My love I gave him, and to me
 He gave his love all utterly.

Full many examples have there been
 Of this in old-time records seen,
 In proof whereof will I relate
 Great Seneca's and Nero's fate.
 But here I purpose not to tell
 The grievous crimes and actions fell
 Of Nero; such a tale of wrong
 Were wearisome and over long 6540
 To cite once more; how he with dire
 Intention set great Rome a-fire,
 And many a senator that time
 Met death by his atrocious crime.
 Or how with heart more obdurate
 Than stone, he sealed his brother's fate;

The crimes of Nero
 Or how the monster ruthlessly
 His mother slew, that he might see
 The sanctuary where he conceived
 Had been, then watched her body reived 6550
 Of every limb, and, standing there,
 Adjudged her members passing fair.
 Ah God! what vile and felon judge
 Who could to that dread sight begrudge
 One single tear, for so 'tis writ,
 He calm looked on, nor wept at it,
 But gave command to thither bring
 Fair cups of wine, and roystering
 Therewith, beheld, with fiend's delight,
 Unmoved, the matricidal rite. 6560
 Moreover did he lay a-waste
 The body of his sister chaste,
 And gave himself to work all crime
 That man hath stained since birth of time.

He martyred Seneca, his guide
 And mentor, bidding him decide,
 With impious oath, the manner he
 Would choose to face his agony,
 E'en as a devil brimmed with wrath.
 Quoth Seneca: 'Make warm a bath, 6570
 Since I must bow me to the pains
 Of death, then forthwith ope my veins,
 That through the wave my blood may flow
 Forth freely, till my spirit go
 To that great God from whence it sped:
 May he sweet mercy on it shed.'''

XL

How Seneca, that noble man,
Succumbed beneath his pupil's ban;
Set in a bath to die was he,
By Nero's savage cruelty.

6580

“THE sentence given, no stop or stay
Made Nero, mocked he all delay;
And Seneca was straightway set
Within a bath, and leeches let
The blood from out his veins, till dead
He lay—his glorious spirit fled.

The death
of Seneca

No pretext Nero had for this
Most treacherous crime, save that amiss
He took it that, since childhood's days,
He had been taught his cap to raise
In humbleness and reverence when
He met his tutor. Cried he then:
'Fit is it I should bow my face
Either in house or public place
To any man?

6590

As emperor
No longer will I bend before
Another, whosoe'er he be,
Tutor or sire, 'tis one to me.'

Sithence he felt it as a brand
Of tutelage that he should stand
Uncovered, as the custom bade
That he from tender years had had,

6600

Fortune's
 favourites
 of
 vicious

He made forthwith a royal decree,
 That Seneca should shamefully
 Be put to death. Unbridled rule
 This monster (mingled knave and fool)
 Held o'er the Roman Empire wide,
 That stretched its arms from side to side
 Of all the earth ; north, south, and west
 And east, this madman's sway confessed. 6610

Good friend, I hope thou hast the wit,
 Hearing my tale, to learn from it
 That riches, rule, and honours high,
 Full power and great prosperity,
 And all the gifts Dame Fortune showers
 With lavish hand on those she dowers
 With worldly wealth, can never make
 Those whom she favoureth to break
 With vice and turn to virtuousness,
 Proving them worthy to possess 6620
 The kingly rod ; for if abide
 Within their bosoms hateful pride,
 The germ of every poisonous fruit,
 Little to them will honours boot,
 For ever as men mount more high,
 Their crimes but blaze more openly ;
 For had they ne'er to power attained,
 Their paltry vices had remained
 Obscure, but when aloft men rise,
 Then comes the crucial test which tries 6630
 The stuff they're made of.

Oft I've heard
 A proverb, which I count absurd
 And false, though many a man, forsooth,
 Will quote it for unquestioned truth.

It boldly saith that : ‘ Honours spoil
 Good manners.’ ’Twere but wasted toil God all-
 If I should strive to prove how vain powerful
 That proverb is ; no poisonous bane
 Are honours if they chance to fall
 On worthy wights, for not at all 6640
 They change men’s natures ; if erst good
 That nature proved in needihood,
 So will it still to good incline,
 When on it wealth and honour shine
 ’Fore all the world ; but if poor men
 Are vicious, past all question then,
 If they arrive at high estate,
 They do but show more reprobate.

The name of power is ill applied
 To malice, ignorance, and pride, 6650
 For hath not sacred Scripture shown
 That power proceeds from God alone ?
 And no man doth God’s law transgress,
 Save when misled by foolishness :
 And every man who sees aright,
 Knows lack of good is lack of might,
 For thus ’tis said in Holy Writ ;
 But if, still unconvinced of it,
 Thy soul remaineth yet in doubt,
 Nor draws assurance full thereout, 6660
 I’ll quickly show that nought can be
 Impossible to the Deity.

No man would dare to say the will
 Of God could ever stoop to ill,
 And owning that, thou know’st right well,
 That God hath power o’er heaven and hell,

Vile men Yet hath not power aught ill to do.
 are Then is the axiom clearly true,
 nought That he who made all things in earth
 And heaven, ne'er gave foul evil birth. 6670
 E'en as a shadow hideth not,
 Except the light, one single jot
 Of matter, so in equal wise
 The man in whom no virtue lies,
 By God was simply left all void
 Of good. His soul then if destroyed
 And lost for ever by gross sin,
 Did not from God perdition win.
 Also the Scriptures go so far,
 Well knowing what the wicked are, 6680
 As say a sinner is no man.
 To prove this were none other than
 Mere waste of time, for is it not
 In many a Scripture found, God wot?

 Yet nathless, if thou wilt but bear
 Some short space with me, thou shalt hear,
 Among a thousand reasons, some
 Which, staying not for others, come
 Within my mind. The common end
 Toward which all living things should tend 6690
 Forsake they, yet the first it is,
 And highest of all things, ywis.
 And other reasons might, if sought,
 Be found, why wicked men are nought,
 By him who notes the road they fare,
 Seeing they live all unaware
 Of that one end and aim which each
 And all on earth should strive to reach.

The plain corollary is then,
That less than nought are evil men.

Desire
not
Fortune's
favours

Behold ye in this world what pranks
Dame Fortune plays, and less of thanks
Than curses gets thereby, for she
It was by whose supreme decree
The worst of all men was declared
Lord of the world, and 'neath him fared
The noble Seneca so ill.

Therefore let thou no longing fill
Thy heart for Fortune's favours, for
The mightiest king or emperor
Is but her plaything. Better far
Persuade thyself her blessings are
But curses, and to be despised.

6710

The poet, Claudian hight, surprised
And shocked at this, would cast the blame
Back on the Gods, as if it came
Of them that fools were set on high
And dowered with riches plenteously,
And honour great and uncurbed might,
With all that man's heart longs for, dight.

6720

But afterwards he wisely writ,
When he had thought and conned of it,
How that the Gods permit such things,
That later they on scatterlings
May send a heavier chastisement,
Whose day of power hath been misspent
In foolish vice, and do but call
Them into place that greater fall
May be their lot; higher the state
Such men attain, more dire their fate.

6730

Face And if so be that thou forsake
trouble My counsels never, they shall make
boldly Thee wise and happy, and no man
 Shall higher be or richer than
 Thy very self, and thou shalt ne'er
 Eat out thine heart in dark despair
 Or wasting wrath, though Fortune's stroke
 Thy friends, estate, and body broke;
 But having patience, thou in me,
 Shalt find a friend to comfort thee.

6740

 Wherefore discoverest thou such dole?
 Tears from between thine eyelids roll,
 As drops from some alembic stood
 Above a furnace. In the flood
 Thou mightst be washed out like a rag,
 None but a fool, or merry wag,
 Would call so poor a stick a man,
 For never creature looked so wan
 And wretched as dost thou. The devil,
 True spring and source of all things evil,
 Within thy weakling heart hath set
 This love, and hence thy cheeks are wet
 With waterfalls; thou shouldst disdain
 To show thee so far weak and vain.
 This tyrant God whose breath doth fan
 The fire of love within the pan
 Of thy frail brain it is, alone,
 Who causeth thee to fret and moan.
 Thy noble liege! thy revered friend!
 Through whom thy soul thou dost expend
 In tears—he sells his friendship dear,
 As doth to my poor wit appear.

6750

6760

Brave, manly hearts do not disgrace
 Their souls with woe-worn maudlin face;
 To puny boys, and women weak,
 Leave it through sobs and sighs to speak
 Their griefs, poor feeble willow wands—
 But thou—stand firm with hard-clenched hands,
 When see'st thou Fortune near thee reel
 Her aye-revolving, changeful wheel. 6770
 Dost thou imagine thou canst stay
 Its turning e'en for one short day?
 Nay! never since first rose heaven's sun,
 Hath rich or poor that marvel done.

Nero, of whom I lately spake,
 And whose mere frown sufficed to shake
 The world, o'er which he held such sway
 As never tyrant till his day
 Had known, had yet no power to check
 Fortune, but bowed before her beck, 6780
 If history lie not, for 'tis said
 Most wretchedly he perishèd.
 So did he fire the people's hate,
 That rose they all infuriate
 Against this monster. Then he sent
 Envoys to all his friends, intent
 To save his worthless life, but not
 A single man he found, I wot,
 To give him refuge. Then while rocked
 His craven heart with fear, he knocked 6790
 With frantic strokes at many a portal,
 But, to his thundering, not a mortal
 Replied, and he aback returned,
 While helpless rage his vitals burned."

XLI

This tells how Nero sought to hide
 Within a garden, where he died,
 Self-slain. Thus, coward-like, life's stage
 He fled, nor dared the people's rage.

How Nero died “**T**HEN ran he swift to hide his head
 In flower-grown close, and with him
 fled 6800

Two faithful slaves, but all around
 He heard the fearful surging sound
 Of maddening voices, which: ‘Nero,’
 Cried loudly, ‘thou to hell shalt go;
 Where skulk’st thou?’ And he, terrified,
 Beheld that vain it was to hide,
 Yet knew not how to go or stay
 So he might ’scape the dread affray.
 And compassing his fearsome case,
 Despaired he of all hope of grace, 681
 And ’mandment gave his slaves to kill
 Their master, and when nought fulfil
 Would they his hest, the wretched elf
 Fell on his sword and slew himself
 Outright, but ere death came he gave
 His servants bidding they should shave
 His head from off his trunk, that none
 Might know ’twas he, and, that stroke done,
 They should his corse without delay
 Burn on a pyre to ashes grey. 6820
 This may be read by him who dives
 Among old parchments in the lives
 Of those twelve Cæsars, which were writ
 By Suetonius, who doth twit

The law of Christ as tale absurd	Fair
(This is the wretched caitiff's word)	promise
And mischievous. Alas! the day,	blighted
That mouth of man such words should say!	
With Nero perished out the line	
Of Cæsar, and, as I opine,	6830
This monster so was void of grace	
Or virtue, that 'twere meet his race	
Should fall extinct. He nobly reigned	
Five years before with crime he stained	
His annals, and no prince e'er gave	
A fairer promise by his grave	
And loyal rule; so good at first	
Appeared this felon-king accurst,	
That once in audience given at Rome,	
When some poor caitiff to that home	6840
Whence none return he should consign,	
He cried: 'O evil fate is mine	
That e'er my hand hath learned to write.'	

This monster stood upon the height
 Of empire more than sixteen years,
 Deceiving hopes, fulfilling fears,
 And for his whole life thirty-two
 Years good and evil lived he through.
 But, stirred to felony by pride,
 So grievously he turned aside
 From virtue, that he lastly fell
 From highest grace to lowest hell
 Of crime and sin, as thou hast heard,
 And Fortune's freak it was preferred
 Him thus on high, that she might show
 Her power to raise and overthrow.

King
 Cræsus' dream Neither could Cræsus, Lydia's king,
 And mighty conqueror, 'scape the sting
 Of Fortune. On the burning pyre
 He stood and round him leapt the fire, 6860
 When suddenly the lowering sky
 Disburdened it so copiously
 That died the flames; his foes dismayed
 Thereat took flight, nor long time stayed
 King Cræsus, but escaped his bane.

Then ruled he o'er his land again;
 But yet, once more by Fortune flung
 In durance, was he lastly hung;
 But ere that happed this vision dreamed:
 High on a beech tree's top he seemed, 6870
 Where mighty Jupiter had set
 Himself to wash him: when all wet
 By Jove's hands made, his glorious son,
 Phœbus, with towel, had begun
 To dry his skin. Alas! too true
 That dreaming proved; he thereby grew
 To hateful pride and foolishness,
 And then succumbed to sore distress.
 Though when to Phanie fair, his child,
 He told this dream so strange and wild, 6880
 She strove to tear from off his eyes
 The veil, for she was passing wise
 To pierce the visions of the night,
 And show their truth in morning light."

XLII

This tells how Phanie to the king
 Gave warning that his pride would bring
 Him shameful death. The dream but sung
 His knell, when he on gallows hung.

“‘FAIR father,’ quoth the damosel,
 ‘This dream but rings your passing bell; Phanie’s
 interpretation
 I count your pride not worth a cock; 6891
 The jade hight Fortune doth but mock
 And jeer at you; by this portent
 I clearly read that she is bent
 That you, ere long, on gallows tree
 Shall perish; and while mournfully,
 The sport of winds, it swings in air,
 Heaven’s rain upon your body bare
 Shall beat, and then the scorching sun
 Shall dry it. So doth Fortune run 6900
 Against you. She but gives and takes
 As pleaseth her; one while she makes
 The highest nought, and then amain
 The pauper setteth up again
 In wealth or splendour. Why should I
 Betray your heart with flattery?
 Fortune hath ruthlessly assigned
 You to the gibbet, and will bind
 The halter close about your neck,
 And that gold crown that now doth deck 6910
 Your well-loved head will she uplift
 Therefrom, and then as royal gift

Jupiter and Apollo Bestow it where you dream not. Hear,
 While yet I make my rede more clear :
 God Jupiter, who you did wash,
 Is air and cloud, whose rains shall lash
 Your corpse ; and Phœbus, who bedried
 Your body, clearly typified
 The sun ; the high beech tree,
 What should it but the gallows be ? 6920
 This cruel path you needs must tread,
 Dear father ; on your glorious head
 Will Fortune wreak her wrath as one
 Whose arrogant pride hath vengeance
 won :
 No man, whate'er his dignity,
 More than an apple counteth she.
 High loyalty or treachery base,
 Lordly estate or pauper case,
 Are one to her. As shuttlecock
 Which playful damsels lightly knock 6930
 Hither and thither, so doth she
 Toss gifts and favours recklessly,
 Without a thought whereso they fall,
 On mansion proud or cobbler's stall.
 For good or bad hath she no care,
 All, all alike her giftings share ;
 She valueth none above a pea,
 Saving her child Nobility,
 Misfortune's cousin, and her friend,
 Who doth in Fortune's balance pend. 6940
 But Fortune, though she take away
 Nobility from whom she may,
 Will deal it forth to none except
 Such as through every change have kept

Them pure in heart and courteous,
 Upright, and good, and generous.
 For never yet was man so bold
 In field, but, if he chanced to hold
 In heart some baseness, then would flee
 Far from him fair Nobility.

True
 nobility

6950

Nobility I greatly prize,
 Because mean spirits in her eyes
 Are hateful, and I meekly pray,
 Dear father, that you cast away
 All proud and villain thought, and reign
 The good man's prop, the bad man's bane.
 Make your dear heart the dwelling-place
 Of gentle love and tender grace
 For all poor folk ; 'tis well a king
 The portals of his heart should fling
 Wide open. O my father, deign
 To list my speech, you then shall gain
 The people's love ; that lacking, poor
 Is greatest king as rudest boor.'

6960

O Phanie, precious words were these,
 But never fool his folly sees
 In other light than worthiest sense,
 Wisdom he hears, but learns nought thence.

Thus Cræsus' heart was obdurate,
 And sternly scorned he to abate
 His pride ; if herein wise was he,
 Or foolish, thou ere long shalt see.

6970

Cræsus makes answer to Phanie.

The fall of pride ‘ My daughter, neither courtesy
Nor sense you show herein,’ quoth he ;
‘ Much better versed am I than you
In what the Gods propose to do ;
You do but treat me to a lie,
Interpreting most shamefully
This riddle hid within my dream :
Your gloss approacheth the extreme
Of witlessness : my dream will be
Fulfilled, I doubt not, literally :
Sure ne’er before did prophet dare
To shadow forth for dream so fair
Such vile fulfilment.

6980

Yet will come
The Gods from out their sky-built home,
To work the end that they in sleep
Foretold to me, and I shall reap,
Dear child, from them such high reward
As they to those they love accord,
For well have I deserved of them.’ ”

6990

Reason.

“ Alas ! the boastful apophthegm !
Fortune laid hand on him and gave
His body wastefully to wave
In wind and storm on gibbet hung,
And last be o’er the desert flung.

Doth this not plainly demonstrate
No man can cause her wheel to wait

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 237

Or stay its course, and thus be able,
 Honour attained, to keep him stable? Manfred
 And dost thou aught of logic know 7000 of Sicily
 (Which falsity from truth doth show),
 Thou'lt see, where great and strong men
 fall,

For poor and weak, the chance how small!

But if examples thou shouldst scorn
 From old authentic writings torn,
 Then is it well that thou shouldst learn
 That if thou wilt, thou need'st but turn
 For good examples which have been
 Before the eyes of all men seen, 7010
 Writ large for us in later days,
 Of turmoils, battles, and affrays.

In Sicily we first may see
 Lord Manfred, who by treachery
 Long time unchallenged kept the land,
 Till Charles of Anjou's mighty hand
 O'ercame him, and there reigns to-day,
 Where no man dares dispute his sway.
 Him thou mayst better know perchance
 As Count of Anjou and Provence, 7020
 And who by providence of God
 Is lord of Sicily's fair sod.

This good King Charles from Manfred took
 His kingdom not alone, but strook
 The life from him; when he, with sword
 Fine tempered, on the battle sward
 Where first they met assailed him; high
 On towering war-horse mounted: 'Die,'
 He cried, 'shalt thou, for check and mate
 I give thee,' but soon met his fate, 7030

Death of Amid his goodly company,
 Conradin By arrow-stroke, death pierced, fell he.
 It scarcely needs my page to blot
 By telling of the woful lot
 Of Conradin, whom Charles decreed
 To death, although for him did plead
 The German princes; or how fell
 Henry, the prince of Spain as well,
 In prison slain, as guerdon good
 For one whose treason shamed manhood. 7040
 These two rash, foolish men, I ween,
 Lost knights and rooks, and pawns and
 queen,
 Till, seeing all against them scored,
 They fled and left swept clear, the board.
 Great fear they had lest round them spun
 Should be the web they had begun,
 Yet ne'er need they have been afraid
 Lest they should see check-mate arrayed
 Against them, since devoid of king
 They fought, their foes could nowise bring 7050
 Those into check with whom they played,
 Since first this noble game was made,
 For never men at chess can fight
 (How great soe'er the power they dight)
 With check 'gainst those who fight afoot,
 The pawn, or rook, or fool to boot,
 Nor queen or knight, nor all the hoard
 Of commoners who fill the board.
 For of a truth I dare to state
 What meaneth that men call 'a mate'; 7060
 The king it is to whom we give
 'Check,' when his men have ceased to live,

Or captive stand, and none he sees
 Around him save his enemies,
 And thus doth he in check remain,
 Escape debarred, resistance vain.
 And thus saith Attalus the wise,
 Who did the game of chess devise
 With worthy wit; its subtle trick
 He found when deep arithmetic 7070
 He taught, and Polycraticus,
 Of John of Sarum, showeth us
 How he the intricate movements set,
 Wherewith the game is played e'en yet.

The
 game
 of chess

From off the field these leaguers cleared,
 Since to be captive ta'en they feared
 Most bitterly. What say I then?
 They feared captivity, these men?
 Nay, but far worse; fierce death they fled,
 Which ne'ertheless they sufferèd, 7080
 For in this wretched game had they
 With impious daring played their play.
 Despising faith, estranged from God,
 They madly his chastising rod
 Had bared their backs to; Holy Church
 They braved, and found them left a-lurch.
 And if their fortunes lay in wreck,
 And on them cried their foes 'a check!'
 What wonder? Who would cover them,
 Or who their tide of misery stem? 7090
 For when the onset came their queen
 They lost, as well might be foreseen,
 And then this worthless, foolish king
 Lost rooks, knights, pawns, and everything.

Charles Forsooth she nought was present there
of Anjou But worn with grief, and wan with care
Could not defend herself nor flee,
Hearing how Manfred wretchedly
Lay dead and cold, head, hands, and feet.
And when these tidings men repeat 7100
To good King Charles, how both these men
Like caitiffs fled the combat, then
On both he freely worked his will,
Giving command to slay and kill
Them and their fellows who had stood
To aid their impious hardihood.

This noble prince, whose deeds I sing,
Of many a tale hath been the spring.
May God preserve both night and day
His body, soul, and heirs I pray, 7110
And grant such wisdom as ne'er fails :
The pride he conquered of Marseilles,
Whose rebel burghers' heads lopped he
Ere yet high rule in Sicily
To him was given, where he as king
Was crowned, and vicar minist'ring
For all the Empire : but to write
His deeds at full must one indite
A ponderous tome.

See what became
Of all these favourites of fame 7120
And Fortune.

Doth she not, I ask,
Make fools of those who calmly bask
Beneath her smiles ?

At first they find
All fair, then comes a stab behind.

And thou, who joy'dst to kiss the Rose,	Victims
Through which to thee such misery grows	of
As seems would never more abate,	Fortune
Dost thou desire it for thy fate	
Ever to live in soft delight	
Kissing fair roses, day and night?	7180
Now swear I stoutly by my head,	
Good sense within thee seemeth dead.	
Lest thou beneath thy sorrow sink,	
I counsel thee to muse and think	
Of Manfred and of Conradin	
And Henry, who, than Saladin,	
Did deadlier crimes, since war they made	
'Gainst Holy Church their nurse, who	
laid	
Her curse on them, and mark how died	
Those of Marseilles through fatal pride.	7140
With ancient lore too well acquaint	
Art thou that I again need paint	
Vile Nero's crime, or Cræsus' fall,	
Such lessons might'st thou well recall,	
Showing how vain their power to stay	
The turn of Fortune's wheel one day.	
I'faith! the freeman who in pride	
Of freedom scorneth all beside,	
Forgets how mighty Cræsus fell	
From freedom's heaven to serfdom's hell,	7150
And in his memory holds he not	
Sad Hecuba's unhappy lot,	
The wife of Priam, nor the fate	
Of Sisygambis, who the great	
Darius, king of Persia, bore,	
Yet Alexander fell before ;	

Study
 Homer's
 page

All these o'er realms in freedom reigned,
 Yet slaves became when Fortune waned.
 'Fore God I count it shame to thee
 That, having studied history, 7160
 Thou ne'ertheless hast clean forgot
 Examples which thou well shouldst wot
 From out great Homer's page; why
 spend
 Thy time in reading if the end
 Is but forgetfulness, and nought
 Thou hast by all thy study bought?
 Who is there if thou still lackst wit
 Except thyself to thank for it?
 Each man great benefit will find
 If Homer's lessons in his mind 7170
 Are duly stored; each word he said
 Should be with care rememberèd
 While life endures, and he whose heart
 Pastures thereon shall ne'er depart
 From wisdom's ways, but surely know
 To tread her holy path, nor go
 Therefrom: he no mischance need fear,
 But safely through the world may steer,
 Whatever haps of good or bad,
 Hard, soft, sweet, bitter, bright or sad. 7180
 For he so perfectly doth paint
 Dame Fortune's tricks and manners quaint,
 That every man may mark the sense
 Who's blest with slight intelligence.
 'Tis strange thy brain should lie a-waste
 If e'er thou Homer's wit didst taste,
 But this insensate game of love
 Would seem all better sense to shove

THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE 243

Aside. To make my meaning clear
I'll tell a tale, thereto give ear :

Jupiter's
7190 two wells

Great Jupiter hath dight two wells
Or water-tuns, as Homer tells,
Before the threshold of his door,
From which nor youth nor grandsire hoar,
Nor buxom dame, nor damsel slim,
(Nor young nor old, nor fair nor grim),
Who at his hands their being take,
But drink a draught their thirst to slake,
And o'er this inn, to all men free,
Fortune presides as deity, 7200
And open-handed doth assign
To all who come, of well-spiced wine
Or wormwood, great or little cups,
But every man some liquor sups ;
Her hand deals out or more or less,
As pleaseth best her fickleness.
And day by day the drinkers come
For barrels, hogsheads, gallons some,
And some for quarts and pints, or e'en
A palmful or a suplet mean, 7210
As Fortune chooseth to bestow,
And cross or kind she haps to grow ;
For while to some she's soft and good,
To others hard as ebon wood.
And no man such great happiness
Can boast him, but that some distress
Shall come to dash his cup of joy ;
Yet shall not misery destroy
Wise men's content and peace of mind,
But each in darkest hour shall find 7220

Sighs and Some comforting, unless despair
 tears O'erwhelm them. None, how great soe'er
 unmanly His wisdom or his learning be,
 For this can find a remedy.

What purpose think you then can serve
 These sighs and tears which so unnerve
 Thy manhood? Cheerfully accept
 Whatever Fortune's hand hath kept
 In store for thee of good or bad,
 Joyous or dull, or bright or sad. 7230

'Twere vain to tell the many turns
 Of Fortune's wheel, by which she earns
 The name of fickle; pile and cross
 She plays, a game of gain and loss,
 And Fortune so her gifts doth cast
 Around, that whether first or last
 A man may be, he scarce can say
 On loss or gain from day to day.

Of her awhile I'll stay my tongue,
 Although perchance I may ere long 7240
 Return thereto, when unto three
 Righteous requests thou answerest me,
 For readily from lips depart
 Those things a man hath most at heart.
 And shouldst thou my requests refuse,
 In no degree mayst thou excuse
 Thy folly, that can spare thee shame.
 I firstly then request and claim
 Thy love, and next that thou reject
 Dan Cupid, thirdly, nought expect 7250

From Fortune ; and if thou too weak
 Feel for this triple bond, I'll seek
 To spare thy strength, and will but ask
 One simple boon, to light thy task.
 List then my first demand ; if thou
 Thereto with ready heart wilt bow,
 Then shalt thou from the other two
 Be freed.

The ex-
 ample of
 Socrates

Unless thy mind askew
 Be turned as one who's drunk or mad,
 Thou'lt see that he whose soul is clad
 In Reason's garb must needs despise
 Fortune and Love in carnal guise.
 My well-loved friend, great Socrates,
 Was one who scorned the vanities
 Of Fortune and of Love alike,
 God grant his great example strike
 Thy heart, and make it one with mine,
 And nought for this, as I opine,
 Is lacking but thy word. Grant this,
 My first request, and then, ywis,
 Thou of the other two art quit.
 Unglue thy lips, and therefrom flit
 Thy answer—does thy heart agree ?
 Cry yea ! and thou shalt find thee free
 From further quests. Serve me alone,
 Nor suffer treacherous love to wone
 Within thy breast.

7260

7270

Cupid hath trapped
 Thy courage, and thy memory sapped,
 And round thy spirit's eyes doth bind
 A web whose woof obscures thy mind."

7280

Here the Lover replies to Reason.

Love “Nay, nay!” I cried, “that would but be
before To treat my master treacherously,
all else Who hath the power to make me rich
 With wealth that monarchs’ palms might itch
 In vain for. His kind hand will give
 To me the Rose if I but live
 True to my oath, and if I gain
 That prize, I count all else but vain.
 Your Socrates, and all his riches,
 I value not three bodkin stitches; 7290
 I pray you speak of him no more;
 My master, Love, I prize before
 Aught else, and joyfully confess
 His might, his love, his tenderness.
 Nay, though he led the way to hell
 I’d follow him and cry ‘’tis well.’
 My heart belongs no more to me,
 ’Tis his to deal with utterly,
 And past persuasion am I loth
 To make to any other oath 7300
 Of fealty; my testament
 Fair-Welcome hath, wherein I’ve spent
 My very soul; my fate is sealed
 By law that ne’er can be repealed.
 My precious Rose I would not change
 For all your promise, nor estrange
 My heart therefrom.

 It seems to me
 You lack the flower of courtesy,
 For erstwhile did you cullions name,
 A word no maid, with sense of shame, 7310

Would set her tongue to. More than much I marvel one so sage should smutch Her speech with such a phrase, unless She glossed it into seemliness. Oft have I heard a gentle nurse Washing an infant say ' the purse ' (While she her love on it hath spent With many a kiss and blandishment) For that you named so shamelessly. Speak out and say then, do I lie ?"	Reason re- proached
--	---------------------------

7320

Then Reason smiled a merry smile,
 And smiling, thus she spake the while :

Reason.

"Fair friend, I may with justice call
 (Yet nowise under censure fall)
 That by its name which if not good
 Is nothing ; no unseemlihood
 I see therein. I feel no shame
 For that which none as sin can blame.
 Nay, even though 'twere thing unfit,
 Yet may I fitly speak of it.
 Rest you assured that when of sin
 A matter savours, nought therein
 Would I take part. But 'tis without
 A taint of sin to speak about
 Such things as God's own hands have made,
 Free of all gloss, and unafraid
 Discourse of what in paradise
 Our Maker ordered to suffice

7330

The
 Lover
 feels
 outraged

For carrying on the human race
 (Formed in the image of his face), 7340
 And which, except for these, had been
 Void of succession, as I ween.
 But in his wisdom God supplied
 The purse and staff, which might provide,
 By natural force, the race of men
 In undisturbed succession; then
 From age to age would mother earth
 Rejoice, from whom they erst had birth.
 For when one dies another lives;
 That sire God takes, this child he gives. 7350
 And so likewise with beast and bird,
 Some flit, but nature's force hath stirred
 Others to fill their place; through time
 Ring life and death in equal chime."

The Lover.

Cried I, "You do but make things worse,
 For now I reckon most perverse
 And lewd your speech, not only bad
 You seem to me, but downright mad.
 For if so be that everything
 From God's unerring hand doth spring, 7360
 As you have said, at least not he
 'Twas taught your tongue this ribaldry."

Reason.

"Fair friend," wise Reason said, "thou mak'st
 A grievous error if thou tak'st
 Folly for valiance; that it ne'er
 Hath been, nor shall be; speak, nor spare,

If so thou wilt, my heart is fain
 Thy good esteem and love to gain ;
 Talk on if so thou wilt, and I
 Will stand to hear thee silently. 7370
 Ready am I to suffer all
 That may be ; so thou dost not fall
 From bad to worse, I care not how
 Thou treat'st me, I my neck will bow.
 It seems as if thou'dst draw me on
 To talk as fool or simpleton :
 That is but vain, for thine own good
 I speak to thee with hardihood :
 Thine enemy forsooth were I
 If I should stoop me angrily 7380
 To check thy folly. Vengeance is
 An evil weapon, but, ywis,
 Slander is worse. Some fitter way
 Than that I'd surely find to pay
 My vengeance were I thereto driven ;
 And if it happed that you had given
 By word or deed offence to me,
 'Twould be more fit that secretly
 I gave reproof without disgrace
 Or shame to thee ; and if in face 7390
 Of kind and friendly counsel thou
 Laughed me to scorn, 'twere then, I
 trow,
 Better before some magistrate,
 Whate'er the grievance were, to state
 It calmly, and redress amain,
 Receive or other vengeance gain
 Unblameful. No desire to scold
 My neighbours have I, or to hold

Reason
defends
herself

The
tongue
needs a
bridle

Them up to scorn, nor through my tongue
Shall good or evil folk be stung. 7400
Let all and each their burdens bear,
And each and all confess them where
It please them, or confess them not,
The case is none of mine, God wot.
No lust have I to say or do
Such things as folly lead unto.
Although to keep a silent tongue
May be small merit, yet among
The foulest crimes it is to say
Things it behoves us hide away. 7410

The tongue hath sorely need of rein,
As Ptolemy doth well explain
In that fair book, the 'Almagest';
For in its opening he addressed
Himself to show that those do well
Who keep their tongues beneath the spell
Of silence, saving when they raise
Loud voice to God in prayer or praise,
For then need men seek no excuse
However much their tongues they loose, 7420
For never yet was tongue too free
In praising God's high majesty.
Of due obedience, love, and fear
No mortal who life's bark doth steer
E'er gave his God too much; his gift
It is that man from earth may lift
His soul to heaven.

Great Cato said
The same, as those well know who've read
His book, for we therein may find
He hath the highest praise assigned 7430

To those who strictly keep the tongue
 'Neath bridle ; ' Be not found among
 Such folk as let their tongues run wild
 In foolish, brutal speech, but filed
 And polished be thy words : ' much good
 Christians may learn from paganhood.

A
 daughter
 of the
 Deity

On one thing will I make remark,
 Although it be without a spark
 Of hatred, blame or bitterness.
 Saving thy grace, thou dost express 7440
 Thyself in terms which but reveal
 That thou within thy heart dost feel
 Displeasure great 'gainst me, and why ?
 My Father, who beyond the sky
 Rules o'er the angels and no less
 Is than the type of nobleness
 To those on earth, most graciously
 Hath in all good instructed me.
 I by his precepts guide my speech,
 Nor hesitate to give to each 7450
 Created thing its proper name,
 Free from all gloss ; but if you claim
 That when God made all things 'twas not
 From him they names distinctive got,
 I answer that herein forsooth
 Your words are not divorced from truth,
 Though had it pleased him, well he might
 Have done so when the world he dight.
 But his good pleasure 'twas that I
 Should name all things distinctively, 7460
 And indicate their use and sense
 To further man's intelligence,

And thereto gave he me that gift
 Of speech, which man o'er brutes doth lift,
 But to thy folly doth appear
 More comely as it grows less clear.
 Thou good authority mayst find
 For that I say, if so inclinèd,
 For, in his school, great Plato said,
 That God the gift of talking shed 7470
 On man that, learning, he might teach
 Others, and greater learning reach.
 This proverb which I set in rhyme,
 Was taught by Plato in old time
 (Than whom ne'er lived more wifful wight)
 Within the book *Timæus* hight.
 And since a word thou tak'st to task
 I used erewhile, I dare to ask
 Before the face of God, if I
 Perchance had called Jove's cullions by 7480
 The name of relics, and had named
 Saints' relics cullions, hadst thou blamed
 That name and straightway wouldst thou
 find
 Relics in no degree behind
 The other as a blameful word?
 'Twas I who gave the names which stirred
 Your anger, and they are to me
 Devoid all taint of ribaldry.
 One's free to use such words, i'faith,
 Yet rest assured that nought he saith 7490
 To reprehend. Now if I'd named
 The cullions relics, nought ashamed
 Thou'dst been thereat, but hadst been fired
 With approbation, and admired

The word as something quite divine,
 And in the church wouldst thou incline
 Thine head before them set in gold
 And silver, and wouldst doubtless hold
 Thy breath whilst with adoring kiss
 Thou knelt'st before them. God, who is 7500
 All wise, will note the word I say,
 Yet nought will turn his face away
 In wrath.

Modern
 squeam-
 ishness

By body of Saint Omer!
 Dream'st thou that I do ill whene'er
 I mention God's good work? Shall I
 To suit thee blame the Deity?
 Each thing it pleased him to create
 Must be by some name designate,
 Therefore is thy contention dross,
 That names for things we needs must gloss. 7510
 If noble dames of France use not
 These words, the reason is, I wot,
 Simply because the usance they
 Have lost in this our squeamish day.
 But if the fashion 'twas, no sin
 Or harm fair dames would find therein.

In all the world there's nought more strong
 Than custom, whether right or wrong.
 Men hate new ways until they through
 Time's course are old, which once were new. 7520
 Each woman who essays to speak
 Hereof some periphrase will seek
 As purse and staff, or things, or horns
 (E'en as she gloved her hand 'gainst thorns),
 But time and place according, nought
 Objects if by such thorns she's caught,

Plain
speech
is good

And following custom gives a name
To suchlike things, untouched by shame.

No fault I find therewith, but I

My privilege claim equally

7530

A thistle not to call a rose,

Or otherwise good words to gloze.

 Within the schools one oft may hear

Lessons in parables made clear,

But grievous error those would make

Who should each word for gospel take.

And when of cullions I discoursed,

You put upon that word a forced

And needless sense. When I to you

Of those things spake, 'twas with the

 view

7540

Of showing briefly what I meant

In parable, thereto was bent

My reasoning. Whosoe'er should see

The words of scripture literally,

Ere long would pierce the sense obscure

That lies beneath their coverture.

Uplift the veil that hideth truth,

And bright it flashes forth forsooth.

This shalt thou find if thou rehearse

The noble stories writ in verse

7550

By ancient poets. Great delight

Will flood thy soul if thou aright

Dost read, for thou shalt see unrolled

Secret philosophy of old,

Profiting thou amused shalt be,

And thine amusement profit thee,

For oft their quip and crank and fable

Is wondrous good and profitable,

And much deep subtle thought they hide
 'Neath veils torn easily aside. 7560
 Now have I given two words that should
 By thee be scarce misunderstood,
 And best were taken by the letter,
 Gloss them thou mayst, but nought wilt better."

The
 Lover
 foregoes
 blame

The Lover.

"Lightly will all who know the tongue
 Of our fair France allow you strung
 Your words so clearly that no man
 In any sort or fashion can
 Misunderstand them. Needless quite
 Is further talk to prove you right. 7570
 The fiction, fable, metaphor,
 That poets wrote in days of yore,
 I've no intention to expound.
 Right joyfully will I resound
 The pleasant tale of what hath happened
 To me, if but my life be capped
 With such rich guerdon as should pay
 My constancy for many a day,
 In suchwise as all men might see
 Clearly whate'er hath happened to me. 7580
 I grant you to be well excused
 The manner you your tongue have used,
 And nowise shall I strive to fit
 Your phrase with gloss, nor think of it.
 But for sweet sake of God above,
 Forbear to blame my ardent love.
 If I be mad, 'tis my affair,
 And well content am I to bear

Reason
dismissed

The yoke of Love, and ever be
 A slave 'neath his sweet mastery. 7590
 If I am mad, regard me not,
 To Love I'm vowed, whate'er my lot,
 And to the Rose have given troth-pledge:
 If wrong, 'tis wrong; if right, 'tis right.
 If now my love I gave to you,
 Alas! I then must prove untrue
 To my sweet Rose, and can but be
 A traitor either unto thee
 Or Love, my master. But I've said
 Already, that my heart is dead 7600
 To all except the Rose, and when
 With tiresome talk you press me, then
 I feel outwearied; I shall fly
 Your presence if persistently
 You talk against my love, for she
 Is more than all the world to me."

TABLE OF CHAPTERS

CHAP.	PAGE
<p>I. lines 1-128, Fr. 1-130</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The famed Romance that hight the Rose, Behold! love's art its leaves enclose.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>II. lines 129-528, Fr. 131-530</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Lover here essays to draw The wondrous counterfeits he saw Painted along the garden wall. Before our eyes doth he recall, Lifelike, the semblance, form and fame Of each, and tells thereof the name. And first, with lively pen, portrays Of Hate the direful works and ways.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>III. lines 529-742, Fr. 531-742</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Here is described how Idleness Unto the Dreamer gave ingress.</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>IV. lines 743-802, Fr. 743-796</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Herein the Lover tells of Gladness: A dame is she who, casting sadness To the wild winds, doth nought but play And carol through the livelong day.</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>V. lines 803-896, Fr. 797-890</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Herein the Dreamer's pen doth draw The semblance of the dance he saw And joined in, and relates how she, Hight Courtesy, essays to be His guide, and gently tells him who Dance there, and all they say and do.</p>	<p>27</p>

CHAP.	PAGE
VI. lines 897-1038, Fr. 891-1044 . . .	30
The Dreamer hear ye now declare What guise the God of Love doth bear.	
VII. lines 1039-1268, Fr. 1045-1264 . . .	35
Here tells the Dreamer of Richesse, Who counteth her of high noblesse, But so consumed is she with pride, That all poor men she casts aside, And therefore less beloved by far Than those who sweet and courteous are.	
VIII. lines 1269-1306, Fr. 1265-1300 . . .	42
Herein the author's pen essays To show why Courtesy the praise Deserves of all men; love she spreads Around her wheresoe'er she treads.	
IX. lines 1307-1334, Fr. 1301-1328 . . .	43
And lastly here is told of Youth, Reckless, naïve, and wild forsooth.	
X. lines 1335-1492, Fr. 1329-1486 . . .	44
The God of Love with care doth watch The Lover's steps, in hope to catch Him unawares, and so the five Bright arrows through his heart to drive.	
XI. lines 1493-1536, Fr. 1487-1538 . . .	50
The author here of fair Narcisse Doth tell the tale, who was, ywis, Drawn on to love his proper shade, Seen in a well, and thereby made His life so wretched, that at last He pined and wasted till he passed To nothingness. His soul doth sit Beside the fount and dream of it.	

TABLE OF CHAPTERS

259

CHAP.	PAGE
XII. lines 1537-1750, Fr. 1539-1740	51
This telleth how Narcissus sighed His soul away in tearful tide Through fond self-love; yet died he not, But lives within this fount, I wot.	
XIII. lines 1751-1960, Fr. 1741-1950	58
Herein the Dreamer telleth how He felt the shaft of Cupid's bow, E'en as he sought his hand to close Around the stem, and snatch the rose, Whose fragrance though his soul had sent Such madness and bewilderment. But this, his fondest hope, denied The God of Love, who him espied.	
XIV. lines 1961-2030, Fr. 1951-2028	65
Herein is told how Love amain The Dreamer claims his prisoner—fain Is he to yield him at command, As liegeman 'neath his master-hand.	
XV. lines 2031-2076, Fr. 2029-2076	67
From Youth, which had deceived his heart, The Lover tears himself apart, ³ And to the God of Love doth now In homage, as his liegeman, bow.	
XVI. lines 2077-2158, Fr. 2077-2158	69
This tells how Cupid skilfully The Lover's heart with golden key Locked in such wise, that though his breast It entered, nought it harmed his vest.	
VOL. I.	S

CHAP.	PAGE
XVII. lines 2159-2878, Fr. 2159-2852	72
Herein the God of Love doth teach The Lover, and against the breach Of laws contained in this Romance He warns him, lest he err perchance.	
XVIII. lines 2879-2902, Fr. 2853-2876	95
The Lover plains that forth doth go The God, and leaves him lost in woe.	
XIX. lines 2903-3053, Fr. 2877-3028	96
Fair-Welcome here the Lover learneth How that for which his spirit yearneth May be attained, and courteously Leads where he sorely longs to be.	
XX. lines 3054-3064, Fr. 2029-3040	101
This tells how Danger, filled with ire, Expels, with ignominy dire, The Lover, and Fair-Welcome eke, Whose grief no words e'er framed could speak.	
XXI. lines 3065-3096, Fr. 3041-3072	102
Danger, fell guardian of the Rose, The Lover drives from out the close. Upon his neck a club he bare, As he a thief or madman were.	
XXII. lines 3097-3204, Fr. 3073-3178	103
How Reason, well-beloved of God, The Lover warns that he hath trod The path of folly, when above His reason, madly set he love.	

TABLE OF CHAPTERS

261

CHAP.	PAGE
XXIII. lines 3205-3242, Fr. 3197-3218 .	106
Herein the Lover makes reply To Reason, who would Love decry.	
XXIV. lines 3243-3260, Fr. 3219-3236 .	108
Counselled by Love, the Lover makes Confession to his friend, and takes Thereby great comfort, seen that he The case aredeeth skilfully.	
XXV. lines 3261-3288, Fr. 3237-3264 .	108
The Friend's soft gentle words allay The Lover's fears, and smooth his way.	
XXVI. lines 3289-3388, Fr. 3265-3363 .	109
The Lover loud to Danger cries For mercy, and with flattery plies His rugged soul, till thus he gains The boon wherefor he spends his pains.	
XXVII. lines 3389-3496, Fr. 3365-3474 .	113
This tells how Pity and Franchise went Together, fraught with good intent, To seek out Danger, and relate The Lover's woebegone estate.	
XXVIII. lines 3497-3622, Fr. 3475-3596 .	117
Fair-Welcome here the Lover brings, With many sweet-voiced welcomings, Within the cincture whence the Rose, Across the air its fragrance throws.	
XXIX. lines 3623-3688, Fr. 3597-3662 .	121
Queen Venus' ardent torch doth fire The Lover's bosom with desire So fervid, that he dares the Rose To kiss, in faith 'twill heal his woes.	

TABLE OF CHAPTERS

CHAP.	PAGE
XXX. lines 3689-3830, Fr. 3663-3800 .	124
Here green-eyed Jealousy doth scold Fair-Welcome for the falsehoods told By Evil-Tongue against him, he Loves to load men with calumny.	
XXXI. lines 3831-3972, Fr. 3801-3932 .	129
Herein 'tis told how Fear and Shame, In deep concern, to Danger came, Demanding wherefore spared he blows 'Gainst those who dared approach the Rose.	
XXXII. lines 3973-4314, Fr. 3933-4282 .	134
This tells how Jealousy, by spite Urged on, a towering prison dight Amidst the precinct, wherein she Immured Fair-Welcome, for that he Had let the Lover's lips once press The Rose, through courteous kindness.	
XXXIII. lines 4315-4496, Fr. 4283-4450 .	145
Dan William Lorris when he died, Had written nothing more beside The verses thou hast read—But when A forty years had flitted, then John Clopinel the end did speed— Behold his work, which all may read.	
XXXIV. lines 4497-5008, Fr. 4451-4952 .	151
Herein we meet again sweet Reason, Who ever, in or out of season, Findeth, before all else, delight For erring men the path to dight.	

TABLE OF CHAPTERS

263

CHAP.	PAGE
XXXV. lines 5009-5902, Fr. 4953-5838	169
Herein the needy man doth stand Before his friend, and at his hand Requires that of his goods he give Fair share, that he in ease may live.	
XXXVI. lines 5903-5946, Fr. 5839-5888	200
Learn how Virginius made his plea To Appius, who corruptedly His fair and well-loved daughter gave To Claudius for his chattel slave.	
XXXVII. lines 5947-6228, Fr. 5889-6162	201
This telleth how—the judgment given— Virginius unto madness driven, Strake off his well-loved daughter's head, Though to her life his life was wed, Preferring rather that his child Should die unstained than live defiled; Then the sad head to Appius sent, Who met his well-earned chastisement.	
XXXVIII. lines 6229-6518, Fr. 6163-6440	211
Unto the Lover Reason shows Dame Fortune's wheel, and how it goes. Pointing that lack of power hath she O'er men, brave, resolute, and free.	
XXXIX. lines 6519-6576, Fr. 6441-6494	221
How Emperor Nero, in his mad And cruel unchecked fury, bade In daylight clear, before his eyes, His minions to anatomise His mother living, and the spot Disclose where he was erst begot.	

CHAP.	PAGE
XL. lines 6577-6794, Fr. 6495-6710	. 223
<p>How Seneca, that noble man, Succumbed beneath his pupil's ban; Set in a bath to die was he, By Nero's savage cruelty.</p>	
XLI. lines 6795-6884, Fr. 6711-6796	. 230
<p>This tells how Nero sought to hide Within a garden, where he died, Self-slain. Thus, coward-like, life's stage He fled, nor dared the people's rage.</p>	
XLII. lines 6885-7606, Fr. 6797-7526	. 233
<p>This tells how Phanie to the king Gave warning that his pride would bring Him shameful death. The dream but sung His knell, when he on gallows hung.</p>	

END OF VOL. I.