¶ The wozkes of Geffray Chaucer newlye printed, wyth dyuers wozkes whych were neuer in print before: As in the table moze playnly doth appere.

Cum Priuilegio ad imprimendum Solum.

¶ Prynted by John Reynes dwellynge at the sygne of saynte George in Pauls Churchyarde.
1542.

¶ To the Kynges

hyghnesse, my moost gratious souereaigne lorde Henry the eyght, by the grace of God Kynge of Englande Fraunce, and Irelande, defendour of the Fayth, and in erth supreme heed of the church of Englande and Irelande.

Amonges all other excellencies, moste gratious soueraigne lorde, wher with almyghty God hathe endowed mankynde, aboue the resydue of erthly creatures, as an outward declaration of reason or reasonablenesse, wherin consysteth the symilitude of man vnto Angels, and the dyfference betwene the same and brute beestes, I verryly suppose, that speche or langage is not to be reputed amonges the smallest or inferiours. For therby is expressed the conceyte of one to another in open and playne sentence, whych in the resydue of lyuely creatures, lacketh and is not shewed amonges them, but by certayn couert and derke sygnes, and that in fewe thynges hauynge course and operacion onely of nature. Thys speche or langage, after the confusyon of tonges, sente by goddes punyshment for pryde and arrogance of people, hath bene be a certayne instyncte and dysposyion naturall dyuysed and inuented in sondry partes of the worlde, as felowshyppes or cōpanyenges of folkes one wyth another chaunced, moche to the outward expressynge of the thynge in worde or sounde, accordynge to that wherof it had meanynge or sygnificacyon. But in processe of tyme, by dilygence or policy of people, after dyuers fourmes, fygures, and impressyons in metal barkes of trees, & other mater vsed for memorie and knowlege of thinges then present or passed, sondry letters or carectes were first amonges the Phenices dyuysed and founde, wyth suche knyttynges and ioynynges of one to another by a marueylous subtilte and crafte, as counterueyled was and is equiualent to the same langages. So as the conceyte of mannes mynde, whyche at the begynnynge was vsed to be declared by mouthe onely, came to suche poynt, that it was as sensybly and byuely expressed in wrytynge. Herbpon ensewed a great occasyon and corage vnto them that shulde wryte, to compone and adorne the rudenesse and barbariete of speche, and to forme it to an eloquent and ordynate perfection, where vnto many and many greate poetes and oratours haue hyghly employed theyr studyes and corages, leauynge therby notable renoume of them selues, and exsample perpetuel to theyr posterite. Amonges other the Grekes in all kyndes of sciences, semed so to preuayle and so to ornate theyr tonge, as yet by other of ryght noble langages can not be perfytelye ymitated or folowed. The Latyns by exsample of the Grekes, haue gotten or wonne to them no small glorie, in the fourmynge, order, and vttrynge of that tonge. Out of the whyche two, yf it be well serched, that is to saye Greke and Latin (though by corruption of speche it shulde seme moche otherwyse) haue bene derynued ꝑ resydue of the langages that be wrytten wyth the letters or carectes of eyther of them bothe: But of all speches, those whyche moost approche to the latinite, be the Italian and Spaynyshe tonges, of whome the one by corruption of the Gothes and Longobardes hadde her begynnynge, as latyn spoken by straungers of a barbare vnderstondyng. The other beinge also latyn was by Vandales, Gothes, Moores, Saracenes, and other so many tymes blemyshed, as maruayle it is to se nowe vnto what perfection these two formed out of the latyn & barbare speches be reduced. Next vnto them in similitude to the latyn is the French tonge whyche by diligence of people of the same, is in fewe yeares passed so amended, as well in pronunciation as in wrytynge, that an Englyshe man by a smale tyme exercysed in that tonge hath not lacked grounde to make a grammer or rule ordynarye therof.

Though of trouth (whyche some shall scarselye beleue) the Germayns haue so fourmed the order of theyr langage, that in the same, is both as moch plentie as nere concordaūce to the phrase of the latyn, as the Frenche

tongue hath. And verely, lyke as all these and the rest haue ben thus vigilant and studious to meliorate or amende their langages: so hath there not lacked amonges vs Englyshe men, whych haue ryghte well and notablye endeuoured and emploied them selues, to the beautifyenge and betteryng of thenglyshe tonge.

Amonges whome moost excellent prince, my most redoubted and gracious soueraigne lorde, I your moost humble vassall, subiecte and seruaunt Willyam Thynne, chefe clerke of your kechyn, moued by a certayne inclinacion and zele, whych I haue to heare of anye thynge soundynge to the laude and honoure of thys your noble realme, haue taken great delectation, as the tymes and layseres myght suffre, to rede & heare the bokes of that noble & famous clerke Geffray Chaucer, in whose workes is so manyfest comprobacion of hys excellent lernynge in all kyndes of doctrines and sciences, suche frutefulnesse in wordes, well accordynge to the mater and purpose, so swete and pleasaunt sentences, such perfection in metre, the composition so adapted, such freshnesse of inuention, compendiousnesse in narration, suche sensyble and open style, lackynge neyther maiesty ne mediocrite couenable in dysposition, & suche sharpnesse or quyckness in conclusyon, that it is moch to be marvayled, howe in hys tyme, when doutlesse al good letters were layde a slepe throughoute the worlde, as the thynge whyche eyther by the dysposition and influence of the bodyes aboue, or by other ordinaunce of God, semed lyke and was in daunger to haue vtterly perysched, suche an excellent poete in our tonge shuld as it were (nature repugnyng) sprynge and aryse. For thoughe it had ben in Demosthenes or Homerus tymes, whē al learnyng and excellency of sciences florysched amonges the Grekes, or in ꝑ season that Cicero prince of eloquence amonges latyns lyued, yet had it ben a thynge ryght rare and straunge and worthye perpetuall laude, that any clerke by lernynge or wytte coulde then haue framed a tonge before so rude and imperfyte, to such a swete ornature and composition, lykely yf he had lyued in these dayes, beynge good letters so restored and reuyued as they be, yf he were not empeched by the enuye of suche as maye tollerate nothynge, whyche to vnderstande their capacite doth not extēde, to haue brought it vnto a full and fynall perfection. Wherfore gracious soueraygne lord, taking suche delyte and pleasure in the workes of thys noble clerke (as is afore mencioned) I haue of a longe season moche vsed to rede & vysite the same: & as bokes of dyuers imprynytes came vnto my handes, I easely and without great studye, myght and haue deprehended in them many errours, falsyties, and deprauations, whych euidently appered by the contrarietees and alteracions founde by collacion of the one wyth the other, wherby I was moued and styred to make diligēt serch, where I myght fynde or recouer any trewe copies or exēplaries of the sayd bokes, wherbnto in processe of tyme, not wythout coste & payne I attayned, and not onely vnto suche as seme to be very trewe copyes of those workes of Geffray Chaucer, whyche before had bene put in print, but also to dyuers other neuer tyll nowe imprinted, but remaynynge almoste vnknowen and in obliuion, wherupon lamentynge wyth my selfe, the negligence of people, that haue bene in thys realme, who doutlesse were verye remysse in the settynge forthe or auauncemēt eyther of the hystories therof, to the great hynderaūce of ꝑ renoume of suche noble princes and valyaunt conquerours and capitayns as haue ben in the same or also of the workes or memorye of the famous and excellente clerkes in all kyndes of sciences that haue florysched therin. Of whyche bothesortes it hath pleased God as hyghly to nobilitate thys yle as any other region of christendome: I thought it in maner appertenaūt vnto my dewtye, and that of very honesty and loue to my countrey I ought no lesse to do, then to put my helpyng hande to the restauracion and bryngynge agayne to lyght of the sayd workes, after the trewe copyes and exemplaryes aforekayde. And deuysynge wyth my selfe, who of all other were moost worthye, to whome a thynge so excellent & notable shulde be dedicate, whych to my conceyte semeth for the admiration, noueltye, and strangenesse that it myghte be reputed to be of in the tyme of the authour, in comparison, as a pure and fyne tryed precyous or polyced iewell out of a rude or indigest

digest masse or mater, none coulde to my thin kynge occurre, that syns, or in the tyme of Chaucer, was or is suffycient, but only your maieste royall, whyche by discrecyon and iugement, as moost absolute in wysedome and all kyndes of doctryne, coulde and of hys innate clemence and goodnesse, wolde adde or gyue any authorite her vnto.

For this cause most excellent and in all vertues most prestant prince, I as humbly prostrate before your kynglye estate, lowly supply and beseche the same, that it woll vouchsafe to take in good parte my poore study and desyrous mynde, in reducyng vnto light this so precious and necessary an ornament of the tonge of thys youre realme, ouer pytous to haue ben in anye poynt lost, falsifyed, or neglected: So that vnder the shylde of youre most royall protectyon and defence it may go forthe in publyke, & preuayle ouer those that wolde blemyshe, deface, and in manye thynges clerely abolyshe the laude, renoume, and glorie hertofore compared, and meritoriously adquired by dyuers prynces, and other of thys sayd most noble yle, whervnto nat onelye straungers vnder pretexte of hyghe lernyng and knowlege of theyr malycyous and peruers mindes, but also some of your owne subiectes, blynded in folye and ignorance, do wyth great study contende. Most gracious, victorious, and of god moste electe and worthy prynce, my most dradde soueraygne lord, in whom of very merite, dewtie, and successyon, is renewed the gloryous tytell of Defensor of the christen faythe, whyche by your noble, progenytour, the great Constantyne, somtyme kyng of this realme, and emperour of Rome was nexte god and hys apostels, chefely maynteyned, corroborate, and defended, almyghty Iesu sende to your hyghnesse the contynuall and euerlastyng habundaūce of hys infynite grace. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the preface.

A Table of all the

names of the workes contayned in thys volume.

¶ Thus endeth the fyrst table, and here foloweth the seconde.

In this table ye may fynde any thyng that ye woll haue in this volume by the folio, as folowetb.

¶ Troylus and Creseyde is deuyded in to fyue bookes.

¶ The legende of good women hath all these folowyng. First.

¶ Boetius de Consolatione is deuyded in to fyue bokes.

¶ All these workes folowynge be workes by them selfe.

¶ The house of Fame is deuyded in to thre bookes.

¶ The

¶ The Testament of Loue is deuyded in to thre bokes.

¶ All these workes folowynge be workes by them selfe.

¶ Thus endeth the table of all the workes.

¶ Eyght goodly questions, with theyr aunsweres.

SOmtyme in Grece that noble region
There were eight clerkes of grete science
Philosophers of notable discretion
Of whom was asked, to proue theyr prudence
Eyght questions, of derke intellygence
To whiche they answered after theyr entent
As here dothe appere playne and euydent

¶ The first questyon, what erthly thyng
Is best, and to god moost commendable
The first clerke answered without tarying
A mannes soule, euer ferme and stable
In ryght, from trouthe nat varyable
But nowe alas full sore may we wepe
For couetyse hath brought trouthe a slepe

¶ The seconde, what thing is moost odious
A double man sayd the philosophre
wyth a virgyn face and a tayle venomous
wyth a fayre vieu, and a false profre
A corrupte caryen in a golden tree
It is a monster in natures lynage
One man to haue a double vysage

¶ The thyrde, what is the best dower
That maye be to a wyfe appropriate
A clene lyfe, was the clerkes aunswer
wythout synne, chast, and inuyolate
From all disceytes, and speches inornate
Or countenaunce, whyche shall be to dispyse
No fyre make, and no smoke woll aryse

¶ The fourth questyon, what maydē may
Be called clene in chastyte
The fourth clerke answerd, whiche alway
Euery creature is a shamed on to lye
Of whom euery man reporteth gret honeste
Good maydens kepe your chastyte forthe
And remēbre that good name is gold worth

¶ Who is a poore man euer full of wo
A couetouse man, whyche is a nygon
He that in his herte can neuer saye ho
The more good, the lesse distributyon
The richer, the worse of condityon
Men in this cost, clepen him a nygarde
Sir Guy the bribour is hys steward

¶ Whiche is a ryche man withouten fraude
He that can to hys good suffyse
what soeuer he hath, he yeueth god the laude
And kepeth hym clene from all couetyse
He desyreth nothyng in vngoodly wyse
His body is here, hys mynde is aboue
He is a ryche man, for god dothe hym loue

¶ Who is a foole, is the seuenth demaunde
He that wolde hurte, and hath no power
Myght he mykell, moche wolde he cōmaūde
His malyce great, his myght nought were
He thretteth full faste, full lytell may he dere
Thynketh nat howe men haue sayd before
God sendeth a shrewde cowe a shorte horne

¶ Who is a wyse man, is the eyght question
He that myght noye, and dothe no noyaūce
Myght punyshe, and leaueth punyssyon
A man mercyfull without vengeaunce
A wyse man putteth in remembraunce
Sayeng, had I venged all myne harme

My clocke

My cloke had nat be furred halfe so warme.
¶Explicit.

¶ To the kynges most noble grace, and to the lordes and knyghtes of the garter.

O you wele of honour and of worthynesse
Our Christen kyng, the heire and successour
Unto Justinians deuout tendernesse
In faythe of Jesu our redemptour
And to you lordes of the garter floure
Of cheualry, as men you clepe and cal
The lorde of vertue, and of grace authour
Graunt the frute of your rose neuer appal

O liege lorde that haue eke the lykenesse
Of Constantyne, thensample and myrrour
To princes all, in humble buxumnesse
To holy churche o veray sustaynour
And pyller of our fayth, and werryour
Agayne the heresyes bytter galle
Do forthe do forthe, contynue your socour
Holde vp Christes baner lette it nat falle

This yle or this had ben but hethnesse
Nad be of your fayth the force and vigour
And yet this day the fendes crabbydnesse
weneth fully to catche a tyme and hour
To haue on vs your lieges a sharpe shoure
And to hys seruytude vs knytte and thralle
But aye we trust in you our protectour
On your constaunce we awayten alle

Cõmaundeth that no wight haue hardinesse
O worthy kyng, our Christen Emperour
Of the fayth to dispute more or lesse
Openly amonge people: Her errour
Spryngeth all day, and engendreth rumour
Maketh such lawe, and for ought may befal
Obserue it wele, there to be ye dettour
Doth so, and god in glorye shall you stall

Ye lordes eke, shynyng in noble fame
To whiche appropred is the mayntenaunce
Of Christes cause, in honour of hys name
Shoue on, and put his foes to vttraunce
God wolde so, so wolde eke your legiaunce
To tho two prycketh you your duite
who so nat kepeth this double obseruaunce
Of meryte and honour naked is he

Your style sayth, ye be foes to shame
Nowe kyth of your fayth the perseueraunce
In whiche an hepe of vs be halte and lame
Our christen kyng of Englande & of Fraũce
And ye my lordes wyth your alyaunce
And other faythfull people that there be
Trust I to god, shal quench al this noysaũce
And this lande sette in hyghe prosperite

Conquest of hyghe prowesse is for to tame
The wylde woodnesse of these myscreaunce
Ryght to the rote repe ye that same
Slepe nat this, but for goddes plesaunce
And hys mother, and in sygnifyaunce
That ye ben of saynt Georges lyuere
Doth hym seruyce and knyghtly obeysaunce
For Christes cause is hys, well knowen ye

Stiffe stand in that, & ye shal greue & grame
The foe to peace, the norice of distaunce
That nowe is ernest, tourne it in to game
Nowe kythe of your beleue the constaunce
Lorde liege, & lordes haue remembraunce
Lorde of all is the blyssfull Trinyte
Of whose vertue the mighty habundaunce
You herte and strength in faythfull vnyte.
¶Explicit.

Han faythe fayleth in preestes sawes
And lordes hestes are holden for lawes
And robbery is holden purchace
And lechery is holden solace
Than shall the londe of Albyon
Be brought to great confusyon

It falleth for euery gentylman
To saye the best that he can
In mannes absence
And the sothe in hys presence
It cometh by kynde of gentyll blood
To caste away all heuynesse
And gader togyder wordes good
The werke of wysedome beareth wytnesse
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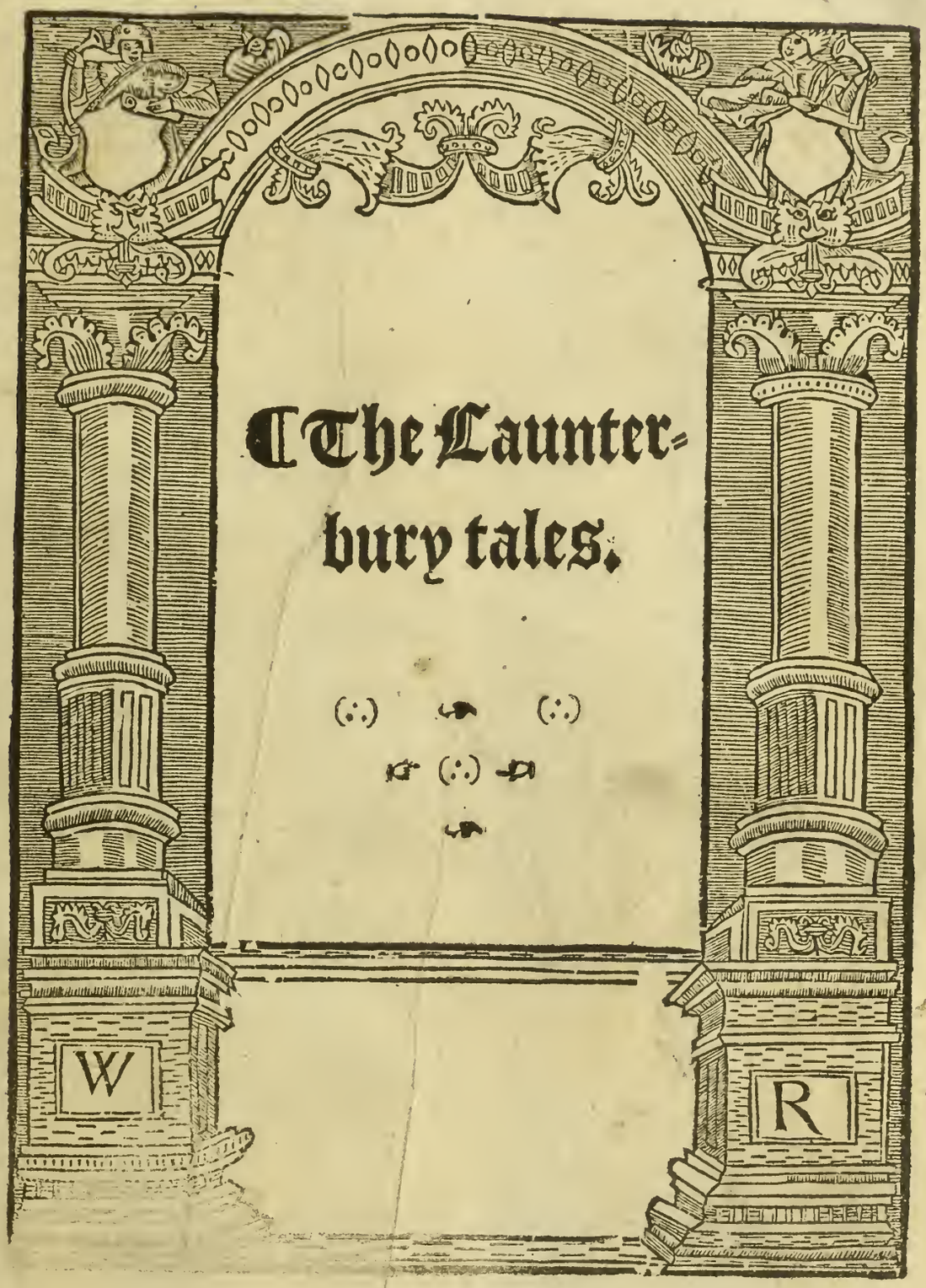


¶ The Canterbury tales.

When that Aprylle
wyth hys shoures sote
The drought of Marche
had perced the rote
And bathed euery vayne
in suche lycoure
Of whych vertue, engendred is the floure
When zephirus eke wyth hys sote breth
Enspyred hath euery holte and heth
The tendre croppes, and the yong sonne
Hath in the Ram halfe hys course ronne
And smale foules maken melodye
That slepen al nyght with open eye
So prycketh hem nature in her courage
Than longen folke to go on pylgrymage
And palmers to seken straunge strondes
To serue halowes couth in sondry londes
And specially fro euery shyres ende
Of Englonde to Caunterbury they wende
The holy blyssfull martyr for to seke
That hem hath holpen, when they were seke.

It befell that season on a day
In Southwarke at the taberde as I lay
Redy to go in my pylgrymage
To Caunterbury with deuoute courage
That nyght was come into that hostelry
Well nyne and twenty in a company
Of sondry folke by auenture yfall
In felyshyp, and pylgrymes were they all
That towarde Caunterbury wolde ryde
The chambres and stables weren wyde
And well weren they eased at the best
And shortly whan the sonne was at rest
So had I spoken with hem euerychone
That I was of her felyshyp anone
And made forwarde early for to ryse
To take our way there as I you deuyse
But netheles, whyle I haue tyme and space
Or that I ferther in this tale pace
Me thynke it accordaunt to reason
To tell you all the condycyon
Of eche of hem so as it semed me
And whyche they were, and of what degree
And eke in what araye that they were in
And at a knyght then wyll I fyrst begyn.

¶ The knyght. i.

A knyght there was, & that a worthy man
That fro the tyme that he fyrst began
To ryden out, he loued cheualrye
Trouth, honoure, fredom, and curtesye
Full worthy was he in hys lordes warre
And therto had he rydden no man farre
As well in christendome as in Hethynesse
And euer had honoure for hys worthynesse
At Alysaundre he was, when it was won
Full ofte tyme he had the bourde begon
Aboven all nations in Pruce
In Lettowe had he rydden and in Luce
No christen man so ofte of hys degre
In Garnade at the syege had he be
At Algezer, and rydden in Belmarye
At Leyes was he, and also at Satalye
When they were wonne, and in the great see
At many a noble armye had he be
At mortall battaylles had he bene fyftene
And foughten for our fayth at Tramyssene
In lystes thries, and aye slayne hys fo
Thys ylke worthy knyght had ben also
Somtyme wyth the lorde of Palathye
Ayenst another hethen in Turkye
And euermore he had a souerayne prysse
And though he was worthy he was wyse
And of hys porte as meke as is a mayde
He neuer yet no vylanye ne sayde
In all hys lyfe, vnto no maner wyght
He was a very perfyte gentyll knyght
For to tell you of hys aray
Hys horse were good, but he was nothynge gay
Of fustyan he wered a gyppon
All besmottred wyth hys haubergion
For he was late come fro hys vyage
And wente for to done hys pylgrimage.

¶ The Squyer. ij.

Wyth him there was his sonne a yōge squyre
A louer and a lusty bachelere
With his lockes crul as they were layd in presse
Of twenty yere of age he was I gesse
Of hys stature he was of euen length
And wonderly delyuer, and of great strength
And he had be somtyme in chyuauchye
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and in Pycardye
And borne hym well, as of so lytell space
In hope to stande in hys ladyes grace

Enbrouded was he, as it weren a mede
All full of freshe floures, whyte and rede
Syngynge he was, or floytynge all the daye
He was freshe as is the moneth of Maye
Short was hys gowne, w̃ sleues longe & wyde
Well coude he sytte on a horse, and fayre ryde
He coude songes make, and well endyte
Juste and eke daunce, portray and well wryte
So hote he loued, that by nyghter tale
He slept nomore then doth the nyghtyngale
Curteys he was, lowly and seruysable
And kerft before hys father at the table.

¶ The Squyers yoman. iij.

A yoman had he and seruauntes no mo
At that tyme, for hym lyst to ryde so
And he was clad in cote and hode of grene
A shefe of pecocke arowes bryght and shene
Under hys belt he barelfull thryftely
Well coude he dresse hys tackle yomanly
Hys arowes drouped not wyth fethers lowe
And in hys hande he bare a myghtye bowe
A not heed had he, wyth a browne vysage
Of wodde crafte well couth he all the vsage
Upon hys arme he bare a gaye bracer
And by hys syde a swearde and a bokeler
And on that other syde a gay dagger
Harneysed well, and sharpe as poynte of spere
A Christofer on hys brest of syluer shene
An horne he bare, the baudryche was of grene
A foster was he sothly as I gesse.

¶ The Priorresse. iiij.

There was also a Nonne a Priorresse
That of her smylynge was symple and coye
Her greatest othe was by saynt Loye
And she was called dame Eglentyne
Full well she songe the seruyce deuyne
Entewned in her voyce full semely
And Frenche she spake full fetously
After the schole of Stratforde at bowe
For frenche of Parys was to her vnknowe
At meate was she well ytaught wythall
She let no morsell fro her lyppes fall
Ne wete her fyngers in her sauce depe
well couth she cary a morsell and well kepe
That no drop ne fell vpon her brest
In curtesye was set full moche her lest
Her ouerlyp wyped she so clene
That in her cup was no ferthynge sene
Of grece, when she dronken had her draught
Full semely after her meate she raught
And sykerly she was of great dysporte
And full pleasaunt, and amyable of porte
And payned her to counterfete chere
Of courte, and to be statelyche of manere
And to bene holden dygne of reuerence.
But for to speake of her conscience
She was so charitable and so pytous
She wolde wepe yf that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe, yf it were deed or bledde
Of smale houndes had she that she fedde
Wyth roste flesche, mylke, or wastell breed
But sore wepte she yf any of hem were deed
Or yf men smote hem wyth a yarde smerte
And all was conscience and tender herte
Full semely her wymple pynched was
Her nose tretes, her eyen gray as glas
Her mouth smale, and therto softe and reed
But sekerly she had a fayre forheed
It was almost a spanbroede I trowe
For hardely she was not vnder growe
Full fetyse was her cloke as I was ware
Of smale coral about her arme she bare
A payre of bedes, gauded all wyth grene
And theron honge a broche of golde full shene
On whych ther was fyrst wrytten a crowned. A
And after that (Amor vincit omnia)
Another Nonne wyth her hath she
That was her chapeleyn, and preestes thre.

¶ The Monke. v.

A Monke there was, fayre for the maystry
An out ryder, that loued venery
A manly man to bene an abbot able
Full many a deynte horse had he in stable
And when he rode men myght hys brydle here
Gyngelynge in a whystlynge wynde as clere
And eke as loude, as doth the chapell bell
There as thys lorde was keper of the cell
The rule of saynt Maure and of saynt Benet
Because it was olde and somdele streyt
Thys ylke monke let olde thynges pace
And helde after the newe worlde the space
He yaue not of the texte a pulled henne

That

That sayeth, that hunters be not holy men
Ne that a monke when he is recheleſſe
Is lykened to a fyſche that is waterleſſe
Thys is to ſaye, a monke out of hys cloyſtre
Thys ylke texte helde he not worth an oyſtre
And I ſaye hys opinion was good
Wherto ſhulde he ſtudy, & make him ſelfe wood
Upon a boke alwaye in cloyſtre to powre
Or ſwynke wyth hys handes, or labowre
As Auſtyn byd, how ſhulde the worlde be ſerued
Let Auſtyne haue hys ſwynke to hym reſerued
Therfore he was a pryckſoure a ryght
Greyhoūdes he had as ſwyft as foule of flyght
Of pryckynge and of huntynge for the hare
was all hys luſt, for no coſt wolde he ſpare
I ſawe hys ſleues purfled at the hande
wyth Grice, and that the fyneſt in a lande
And for to faſt hys hoode vnder the chynne
He had of golde wrought a curious pynne
A loue knot in the greater ende there was
Hys heed was balde, and ſhone as any glas
And eke hys face, as he had bene anoynte
He was a lorde full fatte and in good poynte
Hys eyen ſtepe, and rollynge in hys heed
That ſtemed as a furneys of a leed
Hys bootes ſowple, hys horſe in great eſtate
Nowe certaynly he was a fayre prelate
He was not pale as a forpyned ghoſt
A fatte ſwane loued he beſt of any roſt
Hys palfray was as browne as is a bery

¶The Frere. vi.

A Frere there was a wanton and a mery
A lymytour, a full ſolempne man
In all the ordres foure is none that can
So moche of daliaunce and fayre langage
He had made full many a mariage
Of ponge women at hys owne coſt
Untyll hys order he was a noble poſt
Full welbyloued and kamplyer was he
wyth frankeleyns ouer all in hys countre
And wyth worthy women of the toun
For he had power of confeſſyoun
As he ſayd hymſelfe, more then a curate
For of hys ordre he was lycenciate
Full ſwetely herde he confeſſyon
And pleaſaunt was hys abſolucyon
He was an eaſye man to gyue penaunce
There as he wyſt to haue a good pytaunce
For vnto a poore ordre for to gyue
Is ſygne that a man is well yſhryue
For yf he gaue, he durſt make auaunt
He wyſt that a man was repentaunt
For many a man is ſo harde of herte
That he maye not wepe though hym ſmerte
Therfore in ſtede of wepynge and prayres
Men mote gyue ſylver to the poore freres
Hys typpet was aye faſſed full of knyues
And pynnes, for to gyue fayre wyues
And certaynly he had a mery note
well coude he ſynge and playen on a rote
Of yeddynge he bare vtterly the pryce
Hys necke was whyte as the floure delyce
Therto ſtronge he was as a champioun
And knewe the tauernes well in euery toun
And euery hoſteler and tapſter
Bet then a lazer or a begger
For vnto ſuche a worthye man as he
Accordeth nought, as by hys faculte
To haue wyth lazers ſuche acquayntaunce
It is not honeſt, it maye not auaunce
For to deale wyth ſuche porayle
But all wyth ryche, and ſellers of vytayle
And ouer all there as profyte ſhulde aryſe
Curteys he was, and lowly of ſeruyſe
There nas no man no where ſo vertuous
He was the beſt begger in hys hous
And gaue a certayne ferme for the graunte
None of hys brethren came in hys haunte
For though a wydowe had but a ſhoo
(So pleaſaunt was hys In principio)
Yet wolde he haue a ferthynge er he wente
Hys purchace was better then hys rente
And rage he couth as it were a whelpe
In louedayes there coude he mykell helpe
For there he was not lyke o cloyſtrere
wyth a threde bare cope, as a poore frere
But he was lyke a mayſter or a pope
Of double worſtede was hys ſemy cope
So rounded was as a bell out of preſſe
Somwhat he lyſped for hys wantonneſſe
To make hys Englyſhe ſwete vpon hys tonge
And in harpynge, when he had ſonge
Hys eyen twynkeled in hys heed aryght
As done the ſtarres in a froſty nyght
Thys worthye frere was called Huberde

¶The Marchaunt. vij.

A marchaunt was there wyth a longe berde
In motley, on hygh on hys horse he sat
Upon hys heade a Flaundres beuer hat
Hys botes clasped fayre and fetously
Hys reasons he spake full solempnely
Shewynge alway the encrease of his wynnyng
He wolde the See were kepte for any thynge
Betwyxe Middelborough and Orewell
Well coude he in eschaunge sell
Thys worthy man full well hys wyt byset
There wyst no wyght that he was in det
So stately was he of hys gouernaunce
Wyth hys bargayns, and wyth hys cheuysaũce
Forsoth he was a worthy man wythall
But sothly to sayne, I not what men hym call.

¶ The clerke of Oxenforde. viij.

A clerke there was of Oxenforde also
That vnto logyke had longe ygo
As leane was hys horse as a rake
And he was nothynge fatte I vndertake
But loked holowe, and therto soberly
Full thredebare was hys ouercourtpy
For he had yet getten hym no benefyce
Ne was nought worthy to haue none offyce
For hym was leuer to haue at hys beddes heed
Twenty bookes, cladde wyth blacke or reed
Of Aristotle, and of hys philosophie
Then robes ryche, or fyddell or gaye sautry
But all be that he was a phylosophre
Yet had he but a lytle golde in cofre
But all that he myght of hys frendes hente
On bookes and on learnynge he it spente
And besely gan for the soules praye
Of hem that helpen hym to scholaye
Of studye toke he moste cure and hede
Not a worde spake he more then nede
And that was sayd in fourme and reuerence
And shorte and quycke, and of hye sentence
Sownyng in morall vertue was hys speche
And gladly wolde lerne, and gladly teche

¶ The sergiaunte at lawe. ix.

A sergiaunt of lawe, ware and wyse
That often had bene at the peruyse
That was also full ryche of excellence
Discrete he was, and of great reuerence
He semed suche, hys wordes were so wyse
Justyce he was full often in assyse
By patent, and by playne commyssyoun
For hys science, and hys hye renoun
Of fees and robes had he many one
So great a purchasour was no where none
All was fee symple to hym in effecte
Hys purchasynge myght not be to hym suspecte
Nowhere so besy a man as he there nas
And yet he semed besyer then he was
In termes had he case and domes all
That fro the tyme of kynge Wylliam was fall
Therto he could endyte, and maken a thynge
There coude no wyght pynche at hys wrytynge
And euery statute coude he playne by rote
He rode but homely in a medley cote
Gyrte wyth a seynt of sylke, with barres smale
Of hys arraye, tell I no lenger tale.

¶ The Frankeleyn. x.

A Frankeleyn there was in hys companye
Whyte was hys berde, as is the deysye
And of hys complexion he was sanguyne
Well loued he by the morowe a soppe in wyne
To lyuen in delyte was euer hys wonne
For he was Epycures owne sonne
That helde opinion, that playne delyte
Was very felicitye perfyte
An householder, and that a great was he
Saynt Julian he was in hys countre
Hys breed, hys ale, was alwaye after one
A better vyended man was no where none
Wythout bake meate was neuer hys house
Of fyshe and fleshe, and that so plenteous
It snewed in hys house of meate and drynke
Of all deyntes that men coude thynke
After the sondrye seasons of the yere
So chaunged he hys meate, and hys suppere
Full many a fatte partryche had he in mewe
And many a breme, and many a luce in stewe
Wo was hys coke, but hys sauce were
Poynante and sharpe, and redy all hys gere
Hys table dormaunt in hys hall alwaye
Stode redy couered all the longe daye
At cessions there was he lorde and syre
Full ofte tyme he was knyght of the shyre
An anelace and a gepsere all of sylke
Hynge at hys gyrdell, whyte as morowe mylke
A shyryfe had he bene, and a countour
Was nowhere suche a worthy vauesour.

The

¶ The Haberdasher. xi.

An Haberdasher there was and a carpenter
A webbe, a dyer, and a tapyser
All they were yclothed in o lyuere
Of a solempne and a great fraternyte
Full freshe and newe her geare ipyked was
Her knyues ychaped nere not wyth bras
But all with syluer wrought ful clene and wele
Her gyrdels and her pouches euerydele
Wel semed eueryche of hem a fayre burgeys
To sytten at a yelde hal, on the hye deys
Eueryche for the wysdome that he can
Was shape lyche for to ben an alderman
For catayle had they ryght ynough and rent
And eke her wyues wolde it well assent
And els certayne they were to blame
It is full fayre to ben yeleped madame
And gon to vigylles al before
And haue a mantel royallyche ybore.

¶ The Coke. xij.

A Coke they had wyth hem for the nones
To boyle the chykens and the mary bones
And pouder merchaunt, tarte, and galyngale
Well coude he knowe a draught of London ale
He couthe rosthe, sethe, boyle, and frye
Make mortreys, and wel bake a pye
But great harme was it, as it thought me
That on hys shynne a mormal had he
And blynke manger made he wyth the beste.

¶ The Shypman. xiij.

A Shipman was ther, wonnyng fer by west
For aught I wote, he was of Derthemouthe
He rode vpon a rowncy, as he couthe
In a gowne of faldyng to the kne
A dagger hangyng by a lace had he
Aboute hys necke, vnder hys arme downe
The hote sommer had made his hew a browne
And certayne he was a good felawe
Full many a draught of wyne had he drawe
From Burdeux ward, whiles ỳ chapmen slepe
Of nyce conscience toke he no kepe
If that he faught, and had the hygher honde
By water he sent hem home to euery londe
But of hys crafte, to recken wel hys tydes
Hys streames and his daungers hym besydes
Hys herbrough, hys moone, a hys lodemanage
There was none suche from Hul to Cartage
Hardy he was, and wyse to vndertake
Wyth many a tempest had hys berde be shake
He knewe all the hauens as there were
Fro Scotlande to the Cape de fenestere
And euery creke in Britayne and in Spayne
Hys barge was called the Maudelayne.

¶ The doctour of Phisyke. xiiij.

Wyth vs there was a doctour of phisyke
In thys worlde ne was there none hym lyke
To speke of phisyke, and of surgerye
For he was grounded in Astronomye
He kepte hys pacyent a full great del
In houres, by hys magyke naturel
Wel couthe he fortune the assendent
Of hys ymage for hys pacyent
He knewe the cause of euery maladye
Were it of colde, hete, moyste, or drie
And wherof engendred what humour
He was a very perfyte practysour
The cause yknowe, and of hys harme the rote
A none he gaue to the sycke man his bote
Full redy had he hys apotecaries
To sende hym dregges and hys lectuaries
For eche of hem made other for to wynne
Her frendshyp was not newe to begynne
Wel knewe he the olde Esculapius
And Dioscorides, and eke Ruffus
Olde Hippocrates, Haly, and eke Gallen
Serapion, Rasis, and also Auicen
Auerroys, Damascene, and Constantyn
Bernarde, Gatisden, and Gylbertyn
Of hys dyete meserable was he
For it was of no superfluyte
But of great nourysshynge, and digestyble
Hys study was but lytel on the Byble
In sangwyne and in perce he clad was al
Lyned wyth Taffata, and wyth sendal
And yet he was but easy of dispence
He kepte that he wanne in tyme of pestylence
For golde in Physyke is a cordyal
Therfore he loued golde in specyal.

¶ The wyfe of Bathe. xv.

A good wyfe there was besyde Bathe
But she was somdel dese, and that was scathe

In

Of clothe makynge she had suche an haunte
She passed hem of Ipre, or of Gaunte
In all the parysshe wyfe ne was there none
That to the offrynge before her shulde gone
And yf there dyd, certayn ryght wrothe was she
That she was al out of charite
Her kerchers ful fyne were of grounde
I durst swere they wayden ten pounde
That on a Sonday were vpon her heed
Her hosen were of fyne scarlet reed
Full strayte ystrayned, and shoes ful newe
Bolde was her face, and reed was her hewe
She was a worthy woman al her lyue
Husbandes at the churche dore had she fyue
Withouten other company in youthe
But therof nedeth not to speke as nouthe
And thryse had she ben at Hierusalem
She had passed many a stronge streme
At Rome had she ben, and at Boloyne
In Galys at saynt James, and at Coloyne
She couth moche of wandrynge by the waye
Gat tothed was she sothely for to saye
Upon an ambler easely she sat
Ywympled well, and on her heed an hat
As brode as is a bokeler or a targe
A foot mantel aboute her hyppes large
And on her fete a payre of spurres sharpe
In felyshyp well couth she laughe and carpe
Of remedyes of loue she coude perchaunce
For she couth of that arte the olde daunce.

¶ The Person. xvi.

A Good man there was of relygyoun
And was a poore person of a toun
But riche he was of holye thought and werke
He was also a lerned man, a a clerke
That Christes gospels truely wolde preche
Hys parisshens deuoutly wolde he teche
Benygne he was and wonder dilygent
And in aduersyte full pacyent
And suche he was proued ofte sythes
Ful lothe were hym to curse for his tythes
But rather wolde he yeuen out of doute
Unto hys poore parysshens aboute
Of hys offrynge, and of hys substaunce
He couth in lytel thynge haue suffysaunce
Wide was hys parisshe, a houses ferre a sondre
But he ne lefte neyther for rayn ne thondre
In sycknesse ne in mysche for to vysyte
The ferrest in hys parysshe, moche or lyte
Upon hys fete, and in hys hande a stak
Thys noble ensample to hys shepe he yak
That fyrst he wrought, and afterwarde taught
Out of the gospel he the wordes caught
And thys fygure he radde eke therto
That yf golde ruste, what shulde yron do
For yf a preest be foule, on whom we trust
No wonder is a leude man to rust
And shame it is, yf a preest take kepe
To se a shytten shepherde, and a clene shepe
Wel ought a preest ensample for to yeue
By hys clennesse, howe hys shepe shulde lyue
He sette not hys benefyce to hyre
And lette hys shepe acombre in the myre
And renne to London to saynt Poules
To seken hym a chauntry for soules
Or with a brotherhede to be with holde
But dwelte at home, and kept wel hys folde
So that the wolfe ne made hem not miscarye
He was a shepeherde, and not a mercenarye
And though he holy were and vertuous
He was not to synfull men dispytous
Ne of hys speche daungerous ne digne
But in hys techyng discrete and benigne
To drawen folke to heuen wyth fayrnesse
By good ensample, thys was hys besynesse
But yf it were any person obstynate
whether he were of hye or lowe estate
Hym wolde he snybbe sharply for the nonis
A better preest I trowe no where none is
He wayted after no pompe ne reuerence
Ne maked hym no spyced conscience
But Christes lore, and hys Apostels twelue
He taught, but fyrst he folowed it hym selue.

¶ The Plowman. xvij

With him there was a Plowmã his brother
That had yladde of donge many a fother
A trewe swynker and a good was he
Lyuynge in peace, and parfyte charyte
God loued he best with al hys herte
At all tymes, thoughe hym gamed or smerte
And than hys neyghbours ryght as hym selfe
He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delfe
For Christes sake, for euery poore wyght
withouten hyre, yf it lay in hys myght
Hys tythes payde he full fayre and well
Bothe of hys propre swynke, and of hys catel

In a

In a tabarde he rode, vpon a mare
There was also a Reue, and a Myllare
A Sompnour, and a Pardoner also
A Manciple, and my selfe, there was no mo.

¶ The Myller. xviij.

The Myller was a stoute carle for ÿ nones
Full bygge he was of brawne, and eke of bones
That proued wel, for ouer al there he cam
At wrastlyng, he wolde haue away the Ram
He was shorte sholdred, a thicke gnarre
Ther nas no dore, but he wold heue of the bar
Or breke it, at a rennyng wyth hys heed
Hys berde as any sowe or fore was reed
And therto brode, as it were a spade
Vpon the coppe ryght of hys nose he hade
A werte, and theron stode a tufte of heeres
Reed as the bristels of a sowes eeres
Hys nostrels blacke were and wyde
A swerde and a bokeler bare he by hys syde
Hys mouthe as great was as a furneys
He was a iangler and a golyerdeys
And that was moste of synne & of harletryse
Well couthe he steale corne, and tolde it thryse
And yet he had a tombe of golde parde
A whyte cote and a blewe hoode weared he
A bagge pype wel couthe he blowe and sowne
And therwith al brought he vs out of towne.

¶ The Manciple. xix.

A gentle Manciple there was of the temple
Of whiche al catours myght taken ensemple
For to ben wyse, in byeng of vitayle.
For whether he payde, or toke by tayle
Algate he wayted so in hys acchate
That he was aye before, in good estate
Nowe is not that of god a full fayre grace
That suche a leude mans wyt shall pace
The wysedome of an heape of lerned men
Of maysters had he mo than thryse ten
That were of lawe experte, and curyouse
Of whyche there was a doseyn in that house
Worthy to ben stewardes of rente and lande
Of any lorde that is in Englande
To maken hym lyue by hys propre good
In honour detlesse, but yf he were woode
Or lyue as scarsly as hym lyste desyre
And able to helpen al a shyre
In any case that might fallen or happe
And yet the Manciple set all her cappe.

¶ The Reue. xx.

The Reue was a sclender colerike man
Hys berde was shaue as nye as euer he can
Hys heere was by his eeres rounde yshorne
Hys toppe was docked lyke a preest byforne
Full longe were his legges and full lene
Ilyke a staffe, there was no calfe ysene
Wel couth he kepe a garner and a bynne
There was non auditour coude on hym wyn
Wel wyst he by the drought, and by the rayne
The yeldynge of his seed, and of his grayne
His lordes shepe, hys neet, and his deyrie
His swyne, his hors, his store, and his pultrie
Were hooly in his Reuys gouernynge
And by his couenaunt yaue he rekenynge
Sithe hys lorde was twenty yere of age
There coude no man brynge hym in a rerage
There nas baylly, heerd, ne none other hyne
That he ne knewe hys sleyght and his couyne
They were a drad of hym as of the dethe
Hys dwellynge was full fayre vpon an hethe
With grene trees shadowed was his place
He couthe better than hys lorde purchace
Full riche he was astored prynely
His lorde he coude wel please subtylly
To yeue and lene hym of hys owne good
And haue a thanke, and yet a cote and hode
In youthe he had lerned a good mystere
He was a well good wryght, a carpentere
This Reue sat vpon a ryght good stot
That was al pomel grey, and hyght Scot
A longe surcote of perce vpon he hade
And by hys syde he bare a rusty blade
Of Norfolke was this Reue, of which I tel
Besyde a towne, men clepen it Baldeswel
Tucked he was, as is a frere aboute
And euer he rode hynderest of the route.

¶ The Sompnour. xxi.

A Sompnour was there wyth vs in ÿ place
That had a fyre redde cherubyns face
For saulsseme he was, with eyen narowe
As hote he was, and lecherous as a sparowe
With skaled browes blacke, and pylled berde
Of hys visage chyldren were sore aferde

There

There nas quicksyluer, lytarge, ne brymstone
Borace, ceruse, ne oyle of tarter none
Ne oyntement that wolde clense or byte
That hym myght helpe of hys whelkes white
Ne of his knobbes syttynge on hys chekes
Wel loued he garlyke, onyons, and eke lekes
And for to drynke stronge wyne reed as blood
Then wold he speke and crye as he were wood
And whan he had wel ydronke the wyne
Than wolde he speke no worde but latyne
A fewe termes had he, two or thre
That he had lerned out of some degre
No wonder is, he herde it al the daye
And ye knowen wel eke howe that a iaye
Can clepe what, as wel as can the pope
But who so couthe in other thyng hym grope
Than had he spent al hys philosophye
(A questio quid iuris) wolde he crye
He was a gentle harlot and a kynde
A better felawe shulde a man nat fynde
He wolde suffre for a quarte of wyne
A good felawe to haue hys concubyne
A twelue monthe, and excuse hym at the ful
Ful priuely eke a fynche couthe he pul
And yf he fonde o where a good felawe
He wolde teche hym to haue none awe
In suche case, of the archedekyns curse
But yf mans soule were in hys purse
For in hys purse he shulde ypunyshed be
Purse is the archedekens hel, sayd he
But wel I wote he lyed ryght in dede
Of cursyng ought eche synful man drede
For cursyng wol slee, ryght as assoylyng saueth
And also ware hym of a Significauit
In daunger had he at hys owne gyse
The yonge gyrles of the diocyse
And knew her counsayle, and was of her reed
A garlonde had he set vpon hys heed
As great as it were for an alestake
A buckeler had he maked hym of a cake.

¶ The Pardoner. xxij.

Wyth hym there rode a gentle Pardonere
Of Rounceual, hys frende and hys compere
That streight was come fro the court of Rome
Ful loude songe he, come hyther loue tome
Thys Sompnour bare hym a styffe bourdoun
was neuer trompe of halfe so great a soun
This Pardoner had heere as yelowe as wexe
But smothe it hynge, as doth a stryke of flexe
By ounces hynge hys lockes that he had
And therwith he his sholders ouerspread
But thynne it lay by culpons one and one
But hode for iolyte weared he none
For it was trussed vp in hys walet
Hym thought he rode al the newe iet
Discheuylde saue his cappe he rode al bare
Suche glaryng eyen had he as an hare
A vernacle had he sowed vpon hys cappe
Hys wallet before hym in hys lappe
Brette ful of pardone come from Rome al hote
A voyce he had as smale as hath a gote
No berde had he, ne neuer shulde haue
As smoth it was as it were newe shaue
I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare
But of hys crafte fro Berwyke vnto ware
Ne was there suche another pardonere
For in hys male had he a pyllowe bere
Wyche as he sayd, was our ladyes veyle
He sayd he had a gobbet of the seyle
That saynt Peter had whan that he went
Vpon the see tyl Jesu Chryst hym hent
He had a crosse of laten ful of stones
And in a glasse he had pygges bones
But with these relykes whan that he fonde
A poore person dwellyng vplonde
Vpon a day he gate hym more money
Than that person gate in monthes twey
And thus wyth fayned flateryng and iapes
He made the person and the people hys apes
But trewly to tellen at the laste
He was in churche a noble ecclesyast
Wel couthe he rede a lesson or a storie
But alderbest he sange an offytorie
For wel he wyst, whan that songe was songe
He muste preche, and wel afyle hys tonge
To wynne syluer as he wel coude
Therfore he songe so meryly and loude.

Nowe haue I tolde you sothly in a clause
The state, the aray, eche nōbre, and eke the cause
Why that assembled was this company
In Suthwerke at thys gentyl hostelry
That hyght the Tabarde fast by the Belle
But nowe is tyme to you for to telle
Howe that we baren vs that ylke nyght
Whan we weren in that hostry a lyght
And after wol I tel of our vyage
And al the remenaunt of our pylgrymage

But

But fyrste I praye you of your curtesy
That ye ne arette it nat my folly
Thouhg that I playnly speke in this matere
To tellen you her wordes and eke her chere
Ne though I speke her wordes properly
For thys ye knowen as wel as I
Who shal tellen a tale after a manne
He mote reherce as nye as euer he canne
Euerych worde, yf it be in hys charge
Al speke he neuer so rudely ne large
Or els he mote tellen hys tale vntrewe
Or feyne thynges, or fynde wordes newe
He may nat spare altho he were hys brother
He mote as wel saye o worde as another
Chryst spake hym selfe full brode in holy writte
And wel I wotte no vyllayne is itte
Eke Plato sayth, who so can hym rede
The wordes mote ben cosyn to the dede
Also I pray you for yene it me
Al haue I nat sette folke in her degree
Here in thys tale as they shulde stande
My wytte is shorte ye may wel vnderstande.

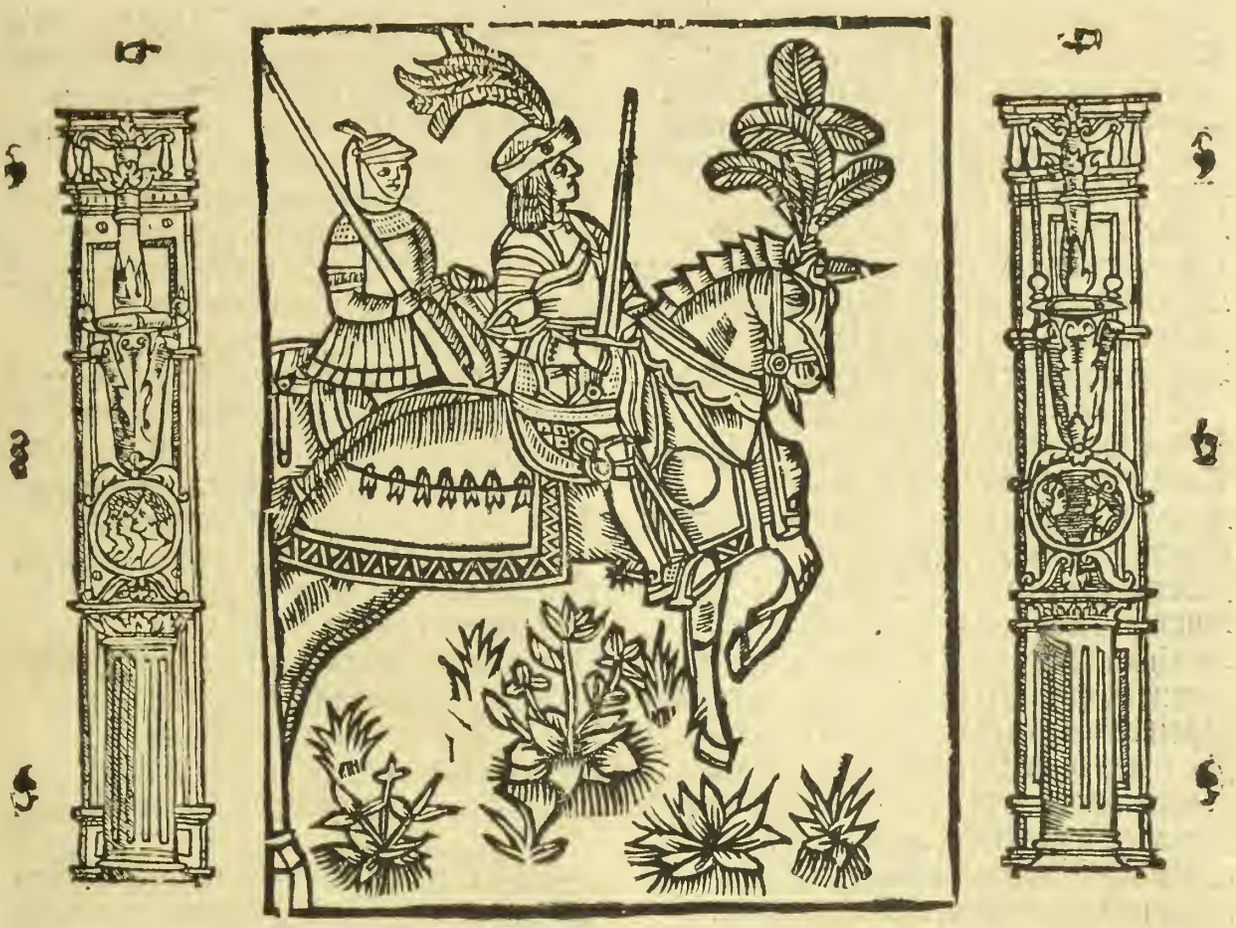
Great chere made our host vs euerychon
And to the supper sette he vs anon
And serued vs wyth vitayle at the best
Strong was the wyne, and wel drynke vs lest
A semely man our host was wyth all
For to ben a marshal in a lordes hall
A large man he was with eyen stepe
A fayrer burgeys is there none in chepe
Bolde of hys speche, wyse and wel ytaught
And of manhode hym lacked ryght naught
Eke therto he was a right mery man
And after supper playen he began
And spake of myrthe among other thynges
Whan that we had made our rekenynges
And sayd thus, nowe lordynges trewly
Ye ben to me welcome ryght hertely
For by my trouthe yf I shuld nat lye
I sawe nat thys yere so mery a company
Atones, in this herborowe as is nowe
Fayne wolde I don you myrth & I wyst howe
And of a myrthe I am ryght nowe bethought
To done you ease, and it shall coste nought
Ye gone to Canterbury god mote you spede
The blyssful martyr quyte you your mede
And wel I wote as ye gone by the way
Ye shapen you to talken and to play
For trewly comforte ne myrthe is there none
To ryden by the waye as dombe as a stone
And therfore wolde I maken you disporte
As I sayd erst, and done you some comforte
And yf you lyke al by one assent
For to stonden at my iugement
And for to worchen as I shall you say
To morowe whan we ryden on the way
Nowe be my fathers soule that is deed
But ye be mery I wol gyue you myne heed
Holde vp your handes without more speche
Our counsayle was nat longe for to seche
Vs thought it was nat worth to make it wyse
And graunted hym without more auyse
And badde hym say hys verdit as hym lest
Lordinges (qꝯ he) nowe herkene for the best
But take it nat I praye you in disdayne
Thys is the poynt to speke it platte & playne
That eche of you to shorte with others way
In this vyage, shall tel tales tway
To Canterbery warde I meane it so
And homwardes he shal tel tales other two
Of auentures whilom that han befal
And whiche of you that beareth hym best of al
That is to sayne, that tellen in thys case
Tales of best sentence and most solace
Shall haue a supper at our alder cost
Here in thys place sytyng by thys post
Whan that we commen ayen from Canterbery
And for to make you the more mery
I wol my seluen goodly with you ryde
Ryght at myne owne coste and be your gyde
And who that wol my iugement withsay
Shall paye al that we spende by the way
And yf ye vouchsafe that it be so
Telle me anon wythout wordes mo
And I woll early shape me therfore
Thys thyng was graunted & our othes swore
Wyth full gladde herte, and prayden hym also
That he wolde vouchsafe for to do so
And that he wolde ben our gouernour
And of our tales iuge and reportour
And sette a supper at a certayne prise
And we wollen ben demed at hys deuyse
In hye and lowe, and thus by oue assent
We ben accorded to the iugement
And ther vpon the wyne was fette anone
We dronken, and to rest wente ylke one
Withouten any lenger taryeng
A morowe whan they gan to spryng
Up rose our host, and was our alder cocke

And

And gadered vs al in a flocke
And forthe we ryden a lytel more than paas
Unto the wateryng of saynt Thomas
And there our host began hys horse arest
And sayd: lordes herkene yf you lest
Ye wote your forwarde, and I it recorde
If eue songe and morowe songe acorde
Lette se nowe who shall tell the fyrst tale
As euer I mote drynke wyne or ale
Who so is rebel to my iugement
Shall paye for all that by the way is spent
Nowe draweth cutte or that ye farther twyn
The whiche that hath the shortest shal begyn.

Sir knyght (q̃ he) my maister and my lorde
Nowe draweth cutte, for that is myne acorde
Cometh nere (q̃ he) my lady prioresse
And ye sir clerke, lette be your shamefastnesse
Ne studyeth nat, lay hande therto euery man
Anone to drawe euery wyght began
And shortely for to tellen as it was
Were it by auenture, or by shorter caas
The sothe is thys, the cutte fyll to the knyght
Of which ful blyth and glad was euery wyght
And tellen he must hys tale as it was reason
By forwarde, and by composyion
As ye han herde, what nedeth wordes mo
And whan thys good man sawe ẏ it was so
As he that wyse was and obedyent
To kepen hys forwarde by hys free assent
He sayd, sithen I shall begyn the game
What welcome cutte a goddes name
Nowe let vs ryde, and herkeneth what I say
And with that worde we ryden forth our way
And he began wyth ryght a mery chere
Hys tale anone, ryght as ye shal here.

¶ Thus ende the prologues of the Caunterbury tales, and here foloweth the knyghtes tale.



Here begynneth the Knyghtes tale.

WHylom, as olde stories tellen vs
There was a duke that hyght Theseus
Of Athenes he was lorde & gouernour
And in hys tyme suche a conquerour
That greater was non vnder the son
Full many a riche countrey had he won
What with his wysedom, and his cheualry
He conquered all the reigne of Feminy
That whylom was icleped Cythea
And wedded the quene Ipolyta
& brought her home w̃ him, in to his contre
Wyth mykell glory and solempnyte
And eke her yonge suster Emely.
And thus with victory and melody
Let I thys worthy duke to Athenes ryde
And all hys host, in armes hym be syde
And certes, yf it nere to longe to here
I wolde haue tolde fully the manere
Howe wonnen was the reygne of Feminy
By Theseus, and by his cheualry
And of the great batayle for the nones
Betwene Athenes and Amasones
And howe beseged was Ipolyta
The yonge hardy quene of Cythea
And of the feest, ẏ was at her weddynge
And of the tempest at her home comyng
But al ẏ thyng, I mote as nowe forbere
I haue god wotte, a large felde to ere
And weked ben the oxen in the plowe
The remenaunt of my tale is long ynowe
I wyll nat letten eke, non of thys rout
Let euery felowe tell hys tale about
And let se nowe, who shall the supper wyn
And there I lefte, I wyll agayne begyn.

Thys duke, of whom I make mencyoune
Whan he was come, almost to the towne
In all hys wele and hys most pride
He was ware, as he cast hys eye aside
where that there kneled in the hyghe wey
A company of ladys, twey and twey
Eche after other, cladde in clothes blake
But such a crye and such a wo they make

That in thys worlde, nys creature lyuinge
That euer herde suche a waymentynge
And of thys crye, they nolde neuer stynten
Tyll they the reynes of hys bridell henten
What folke be ye, ý at myn home cõmyng
Perturben so my feest with cryeng
Quod Theseus. Haue ye so great enuy
Of myne honour, that thus cõplayne & cry.
Or who hath you myslbode, or offended.
Nowe telleth me, yf it may be amended.
And why that ye be clothed thus in blake.
The oldest lady of them all spake
Whan she had swowned with adeedly chere
That it was ruthe for to se and here
She sayd lorde, to whom fortune hath yeue
Vyctory, and as a conquerour to lyue
Nought greueth vs your glory and honour
But we beseke you of mercy and socour
And haue mercy on our wo and distresse
Some drope of pyte, through thy gẽtylnesse
Upon vs wretched wymen, let thou fall
For certes lorde, there nys none of vs all
That she ne hath be a duchesse or a quene
Nowe be we caytyfes, as it is well isene
Thanked be fortune, and her false whele
That non estate assureth for to be wele.
Now certes lorde, to abyde your presence
Here in this temple of the goddesse Clemẽce
We haue be waytyng all this fourtenyght
Helpe vs lorde, sythe it lyeth in thy myght.

I Wretche, that wepe and wayle thus
whylom wyfe to kyng Campaneus
That starfe at thebes, cursed be ý day
And all we that ben in thys aray
And makeu all thys lamentacyon
We losten all our husbondes at that town
whyle that the syege there aboute laye
And yet the olde Creon (wel awaye)
That lorde is nowe of Thebes cyte
Fulfilled of yre and of iniquite
He for dispyte, and for hys tyranny
To done the deed bodyes vyllanye
Of all our lordes, whiche that ben slawe
Hath all the bodyes on an heape ydrawe
And wyll nat suffre hem, by none assent
Neyther to be buryed, ne to be brent
But maketh houndes to eate hem in dyspyte
And ẇ that worde, wythout more respyte
They fallen grosly, and cryen pytously
Haue on vs wretched wymen some mercy
And let our sorowe synke in thyn hert

This gentle duke down frõ his hors stert
Wyth hert pytous, whã he herde hem speke
Hym thought that hys herte wolde breke
Whan he sawe hem so pytous and so mate
That whylom were of so great astate
And in hys armes, he hem all vp hent
And hem comforted in full good entent
And swore hys othe, as he was true knyght
He wolde don so ferforthly hys myght
Upon the tyrante Creon hem to wreake
That al the people of Grece shulde speake
Howe Creon was of Theseus yserued
As he that had his dethe full well deserued
And ryght anon wythouten more abode
His baner he displayed, and forthe rode
To Thebes warde, and all hys hoost besyde
No nere Athenes nolde he go ne ryde
Ne take hys ease fully halfe a day
But onward on hys way that nyght he lay
And sent anone Ipolita the quene
And Emely her yonge syster shene
Unto the towne of Athenes to dwell
And forth he rydeth, ther nys no more to tell.

The red statu of Mars ẇ spere & targe
So shyneth in hys whyte baner large
That all the feldes glyttren vp & doun
And by hys baner, borne is hys penon
Of golde ful rych, in which there was ybete
The mynotaure, that he wan in Crete
Thus rydeth this duke, this conquerour
And in his hoste of chyualry the flour
Tyl that he came to Thebes, and alyght
Fayre in a felde, ther as he thought to fyght
But shortly for to speken of thys thyng
With Creon, whiche was of Thebes kyng
He faught, & slewe hym manly as a knyght
In playne bataylle, & put hys folke to flyght
And at a saute he wan the cyte after
And rente adowne wall, sparre, and rafter
And to the ladyes, he restored agayn
The bodyes of her husbandes ý were slayn
To done obsequies, as tho was the gyse
But it were al to longe for to deuyse
The great clamour, and the weymentyng
That the ladyes made at the brennyng
Of the bodyes, and the great honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour
Doth to ý ladies, whan they from him went
But shortly to tellen is myne entent
Whan ý this worthy duke, this Theseus
Hath Creon slayne, and wan Thebes thus

Styll

Styl in the felde he toke al nyght hys rest
And dyd with al the countre as hym lest
To ransake in the taas of bodyes dede
(Hem for to strype of harneys and of wede)
The pyllours dyd her busynesse and cure
After the batayle and the discomfyture.
And so befell, that in the taas they founde
Through gyt w̄ many a greuous wounde
Two yonge knyghtes lyeng by and by
Bothe in armes same, wrought full richely
Of whiche two, Arcyte hyght that one
And that other hyght Palamon
Not fully quycke, ne fully deed they were
But by her cote armours, and by her gere
The heraudes knewe hem best in specyall
As tho that weren of the bloode ryall
Of Thebes, and of systren two yborne
Out of the taas ý pyllours hath hem torne
And han hem caryed softe in to the tent
Of Theseus, and he full sone hem sent
To Athenes, to dwellen there in prison
Perpetuall, he nolde hem not raunson
And whan thys worthy duke had thus idon
He toke his hoost, and home he gothe anon
With laurer crowned, as a conquerour
And there he lyueth in ioye and honour
Terme of his lyfe, what nedeth wordes mo-
And in a towre, in anguysse and in wo
Dwelleth Palamon, and hys felowe Arcyte
For euermore, ther may no gold hem quyte.

(day

THus passeth yere by yere, and day by
Til it fel ones in a morowe of May
That Emely, ý fayrer was to sene
Than is the lylly, vpon the stalke grene
And fresher than May, with floures newe
For with the rose colour strofe her hewe
I not whiche was the fayrer of hem two.
Er it was day, as was her won to do
She was arysen, and all redy dyght
For May wol haue no slogardy a nyght
The season pricketh euery gentell herte
And maketh it out of her slepe sterte
And saythe aryse, and do May obseruaunce
Thys maketh Emely to haue remēbraūce
To don honour to May, and for to ryse
I clothed was she fresshe for to deuyse
Her yelowe heare was broyded in a tresse
Behynde her backe, a yerde longe I gesse
And in the gardyn at sonne vprysst
She walketh vp and downe as her lyst
She gadreth floures, party whyte and reed
To make a subtell garlande for her heed
And as an angell, heuenly she songe
The great tour, that was so thicke & stronge
Whiche of the castell was ý chefe dungeon
Wherin the knyghtes were in pryson
Of whiche I tolde you, and tell shall
Was euyn ioynaunt to the garden wall
There as thys Emely had her playeng
Bright was the son, & clere the mornynge
And Palamon, thys wofull prisoner
As was hys won, by leaue of hys gayler
was rysen, & romed in a chambre on hyghe
In whiche he all the noble cyte syghe
And eke the gardyn, full of braunches grene
There as thys fresshe Emely the shene
was in her walke, & romed vp and doun
This sorowfull prisoner, this Palamon
Gothe in hys chambre romyng to and fro
And to hym selfe complaynyng of hys wo
That he was borne, full ofte sayd alas
And so befell by auenture or caas
That thrugh a window thick of many a bar
Of yren gret, and square as any spar
He caste hys eyen vpon Emelia
And therwith he blent and cryed, ha.
As though he stongen were to the herte
And with that crye Arcite anon vp sterte
And sayd, Cosyn myne, what eyleth the
That arte so pale and deedly for to se-
why cryest thou- who hath do the offence-
For goddes loue, take all in pacience
Our prison, for it may none other be
Fortune hath yeuen vs thys aduersyte,
Some wycked aspect or disposycion
Of Saturne, by some constellacion
Hath yeuen vs this, altho we had it sworn
So stode the heuen, whan ý we were born
we mote endure, thys is short and playn.
This Palamon answerde, & sayd agayn:
Cosyn forsoth, of thys opinyon
Thou hast a bayne ymagynacyon
Thys prison caused me nat to crye
But I was hurt right now thrugh myne ey
Into myne herte, that woll my bane be
The fayrnesse of a lady that I se
Yonde in the gardyn, romyng to and fro
Is cause of all my cryeng and wo
I not wher she be woman or goddesse
But Venus it is, sothly as I gesse
And therwyth all on knees down he fyl
And sayd: Venus, yf it be thy wyl
You in thys gardyn, thus to transfigure

Before me, sorowfull wretched creature
Out of thys prison helpe that we may scape
And yf our desteny be so ishape
By eterne worde, to dyen in pryson
Of our lynage haue some compassion
That is so lowe ybrought by tyranny.
And wyth that worde Arcyte gan espy
Where as the lady romed to and fro
And wyth that syght her bewte hurt hym so
That yf that Palamon were wounded sore
Arcyte was hurt as moche as he, or more
And with a syghe he sayd pitously
The freshe beutie sleeth me sodenly
Of her that rometh in the yonder place
And but I haue her mercy and her grace
That I may seen her at the leste way
I nam but deed, there nis no more to say.

This Palamō, whā he these wordes herd
Dispytously he loked, and answerd:
Whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play
Nay quod Arcite, in ernest by my fay
God helpe me so, me lyst full yuell to pley
This Palamō gan knyt his browes twey
It were (q̃ he) to the no great honour
To be false ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosen and thy brother
Isworne full depe, and eche of vs to other
That neuer for to dyen in the payne
Tyll that the dethe departe vs twayne
Neyther of vs in loue to hyndre other
Ne in none other case my leue brother
But that thou shuldest truly further me
In euery case, as I shulde further the
This was thyn othe, and myn also certayn
I wote it well, thou darst it not withsayn
Thus arte thou of my counsell out of doute
And nowe thou woldest falsly ben aboute
To loue my lady, whom I loue and serue
And euer shall, tyll that myn herte sterue
Nowe certes false Arcite thou shalt not so
I loued her fyrst, and tolde the my wo
As to my counsell, and to my brother sworne
To further me, as I haue tolde before
For whiche thou art ibounden, as a knyght
To helpen me, yf it lye in thy might
Or els arte thou false, I dare well sayne
This Arcite full proudly spake agayne.
Thou shalt (q̃ he) be rather fals than I
And thou arte false I tell the vtterly
For paramour I loued her fyrst or thou
what wilt thou sayn, thou wist it nat or now
Whether she be woman or goddesse
Thyne is affection of holynesse
And myne is loue, as to a creature
For whiche I tolde the myne auenture
As to my cosyn, and my brother sworne
Suppose that thou louest her byforne
Wost thou not well the olde clerkes sawe
That, who shall gyue a louer any lawe
Loue is a gretter lawe by my pan
Than may be yeuen to any erthly man
And therfore posityfe lawe, and suche decre
Is broken all day for loue in eche degre
A man mote nedes loue maugre hys heed
He may nat fleen it though he shulde be deed
All be she mayde, wydowe, or wyfe
And eke it is not lykely all thy lyfe
To stonden in her grace, nomore shall I
For well thou wodst thy selfe verely
That thou and I be dampned to prison
Perpetuall, vs gayneth no raunson
We stryuen, as did the houndes for ÿ bone
That faughtē al day, ⁊ yet her part was non
Ther cam a cur, while ÿ they wer so wroth
And bare away the bone from hem bothe
And therfore, at kynges court my brother
Eche man for hym selfe, there is non other
Loue if thou lyst, for I loue and ay shall
And sothly lefe brother thys is all
Here in thys prison mote we endure
And euerychе of vs taken hys auenture
Gret was the strife betwix hem twey
If that I had leyser for to sey
But to theffect, It happed on a day
To tell it you shortly as I may.
A worthy duke that hyght Perithous
That felowe was to duke Theseus
Syth thylke day ÿ they were chyldren lyte
Was come to Athenes, hys felow to visyte
And for to play, as he was wonte to do
For in this worlde he loued no man so
And he loued hym as tenderly agayne
So well they loued, as olde bokes sayne
That whē that one was deed, sothly to tell
His felow went ⁊ sought hym downe in hell
But of that story lyst me not to write
Duke Perithous loued well Arcite
And had hym know at Thebes yere by yere
And fynally at request and prayere
Of Perithous, withouten any raunson
Duke Theseus let hym out of pryson
Frely to gon, whither hym lyst ouer all
In suche a gyse, as I you tellen shall.

Thys was the forewarde, playnly to endyte
Betwyx duke Theseus and hym Arcite
That yf so were, that Arcite were yfounde
Euer in hys lyfe, by daye, nyght or stounde
In any countre of thys duke Theseus
And he were caught, it was accorded thus
That wyth a swerde he shulde lese hys heed
There nas none other remedy ne reed
But taketh hys leaue, and homward hym sped
Let hym beware, hys necke lyeth to wedde
Howe great sorowe suffreth nowe Arcite
The death he feleth through hys herte smyte
He wepeth, wayleth, and cryeth pyteously
To sleen hym selfe he wayteth priuely
And sayd, alas the daye that I was borne
Nowe is my preson worse then beforne
Nowe is me shappen eternally to dwell
Not in purgatory, but in hell
Alas that euer I knewe Perithous
For els had I dwelt wyth Theseus
Ifetered in hys prison euer mo
Then had I be in blysse, and not in wo
Onely the syght of her, whom that I serue
Though that I neuer her grace maye deserue
Wolde haue suffyced ryght ynough for me
O dere cosyn Palamon (quod he)
Thyne is the victory of thys auenture
Full blyssfull in prison mayst thou endure
In prison, Nay certes but in paradyse
Well hath fortune to the tourned the dyse
That hast the syght of her, and I thabsence
For possible is, sythnes thou hast her presence
And arte a knyght, a worthy man and able
That by some case, syn fortune is chaungeable
Thou mayst some tyme to thy desyre attayne
But I that am exiled, and barayne
Of all grace, and in so great dyspeyre
That ther nys water, erth, fyre, ne eyre
Ne creature, that of hem maked is
That maye me heale, or done comforte in thys
Well ought I sterue in wanhope and dystresse
Farwell my lyfe, my lust and my gladnesse
Alas, why playnen men so in comune
Of purueyaunce of God, or of fortune
That yeueth hem full ofte in many a gyse
Well bette then hem selfe can deuyse
Some man desyreth to haue rychesse
That cause is of her murdre or sycknesse
And some man wolde out of hys prison fayne
That in hys house, is of hys meyne slayne
Infinite harmes bene in thys matere
We wote not what thynge we prayen here
We faren as he, that dronke is as a mouse
A dronken man wote well, he hath an house
But he wote nat, whych the ryght waye thyder
And to a dronken man the waye is slyder
And certes in thys worlde so fare we
We seken fast after felicite
But we go wronge ful ofte truly
Thus may we saye al, and namely I
That wenden, and had a great opinion
That yf I myght scape fro prison
Then had I bene in ioye and parfyte hele
There nowe I am exiled fro my wele
Syth that I maye not sene you Emely
I nam but deed, there nys no remedy
Upon that other syde Palamon
When that he wyst Arcite was gone
Such sorowe he maketh, that the great toure
Resowned of hys yellynge and clamour
The pure fetters on hys shynnes grete
Were of hys bytter salte teares wete
Alas (qꝯ he) Arcite cosyn myne
Of all our stryke, god wote the frute is thyne
Thou walkest nowe in Thebes at large
And of my wo, thou yeuest lytle charge
Thou mayst, syth thou hast wisedome & mãhed
Assemble al the folke of our kynred
And make warre so sharpe in thys countre
That by some auenture, or by some treate
Thou mayst haue her to lady and to wyfe
For whom I must nedes lese my lyfe
For as by waye of possibilite
Syth thou arte at thy large of prison fre
And arte a lorde, great is thyne auauntage
More then is myne, that sterue here in a cage
For I maye wepe and wayle, whyles ý I lyue
Wyth all the wo that prison maye me yeue
And eke wyth payne, that loue yeueth me also
That doubleth al my tourment and my wo
Therwyth the fyre of ielousy vp stert
Wythin hys brest, and hent hym by the hert
So woodly, that he lykely was to beholde
The bore tree, or the athen deed and colde
Then sayd he. O cruell goddes, that gouerne
Thys worlde wyth your worde eterne
And wrytten in the table of Athamant
Your parliament and eterne graunt
What is mankynde more vnto you yholde
Then is the shepe, that rouketh in the folde
For slayne is man, ryght as another beest
And dwelleth eke in prison, and in arrest
And hath sycknesse, and great aduersite
And ofte tyme gyltlesse parde

What gouernaunce is in thys prescience
That gyltlesse turmenteth innocence
And encreaseth thus all my penaunce
That man is bounden to hys obseruaunce
For goddes sake, to letten of hys wyll
There as a beest maye all hys lustes fulfyll
And when a beest is deed, he hath no payne
But after hys death mā mote wepe and playne:
Though in thys worlde he haue care and wo
wythout doute it maye standen so.
The answere of thys lete I to diuines
But well I wote, in thys worlde great pyne is
Alas I se a serpent or a theke
That many a true man hath do mysche
Gone at hys large, & where hym lyst may turne
But I mote bene in prison through Saturne
And eke through Juno, ielous and eke wood
That hath stroyed well nye all the blood
Of Thebes, wyth hys wast walles wyde
And Venus sleeth me on that other syde
For ielousye, and feare of hym Arcite.
Nowe wyll I stynte of Palamon a lyte
And let hym in hys prison styll dwell
And of Arcite forth woll I you tell
The sommer passeth, and the nyghtes longe
Encreaseth double wyse the paynes stronge
Both of the louer, and of the prisoner
I not whych hath the wofuller mysser
For shortly to saye, thys Palamon
Perpetuall is dampned to prison
In chaynes and feters to the deed
And Arcite is exiled on hys heed
For euermore as out of that countre
Ne neuer more shall hys lady se
You louers aske I now thys question
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamon
That one maye se hys lady daye by daye
But in prison mote he dwell alwaye
That other where hym lyst maye ryde or go
But sene hys lady shall he neuer mo
Nowe demeth as ye lyst, ye that can
For I woll tell forth my tale as I began
When that Arcite to Thebes comen was
Full ofte a daye he swelte and sayd alas
For sene hys lady shall he neuer mo
And shortly to conclude all hys wo
So mykell sorowe made neuer creature
That is or shalbe, whyle the worlde maye dure
Hys slepe, hys meate, hys drynke is hym byraft
That leane he wareth, and drye as a shaft
Hys eyen holowe, and grysly to beholde
Hys hewe pale, and falowe as asshen colde
And solitary he was, and euer alone
And waylynge all the nyght, makynge mone
And yf he herde songe or instrument
Then wolde he wepe, he myght not stent
So feble were hys spirites, and so lowe
And chaūged so, ẏ no man coude hym knowe
Hys speche ne hys voyce, though men it herde
As in hys gyre, for all the worlde it ferde
Nought comly lyke to louers maladye
Of Hereos, but rather lyke manye
Engendred of Humours melancolyke
Before hys fell fantastyke
And shortly was turned all vp so doun
Both habyte and dysposicion
Of hym, thys wofull louer Arcyte
What shulde I all daye of hys wo endyte
When he endured had a yere or two
Thys cruell torment, and thys payne and wo
At Thebes in hys countre, as I sayd
Upon a nyght in slepe as he hym layde
Hym thought howe that the wynged Mercury
Before hym stode, and bad hym to be mery
Hys slepy yerde in hande he bare vpryght
An hatte he wered vpon hys heares bryght
Arayed was thys god, as he toke kepe
As he was, when Argus toke hys slepe
And said him thus: to Athenes shalt thou wend
There is the shapen of thy wo an end
And wyth that worde Arcite awoke and stert
Nowe truly howe sore that me smert
Quoth he, to Athenes ryght nowe wyll I fare
Ne for no drede of death shall I spare
To se my lady, that I loue and serue
In her presence recke I not to sterue
And with that word he caught a great myrrour
And sawe that chaūged was al hys colour
And sawe hys vysage all in another kynde
And ryght anone it ran hym in hys mynde
That syth hys face was so dysfygured
Of maladye, the whych he had endured
He myght well, yf that he bare hym lowe
Lyue in Athenes euermore vnknowe
And sene hys ladye well nyghe daye by daye
And ryght anone he chaunged hys araye
And clad hym as a poore labourer
And all alone, saue only a squyer
That knewe hys priuitie and all hys caas
whych was dysgysed poorely as he was
To Athenes is he gone the nexte waye
And to the courte he wente vpon a daye
And at the gate he profered hys seruyce
To druge and drawe, what so men wold deuyse

And

And shortely of thys mater for to sayne
He fell in office with a chamberlayne
The whiche was dwellyng with Emelye
For he was wyse, and sone couth espye
Of euery seruaunt, whiche that serued here
Well couthe he hewen wodde, & water bere
For he was yong and myghty for the nones
And therto he was strong & bygge of bones
To done that any wyght can him deuyse.
A yere or two he was in thys seruyse
Page of the chambre, of Emely the bright
And Phylostrate he sayd that he hyght
But halfe so well beloued man as he
Ne was there none in court, of hys degre
He was so gentyll of condicyon
That through all the court was hys renoun
They sayd that it were a charyte
That Theseus wolde enhauncen hys degre
And put hym in a worshyp full seruyse
There as he myght hys vertue exercyse
And thus win a whyle hys name is sprongе
Bothe of hys dedes, and of hys good tonge
That Theseus had taken hym so nere
That of hys chambre he made hym squyere
And yaf hym golde to maynteyn hys degre
And eke men brought hym out of hys coutre
Fro yere to yere full priuely hys rent
But honestly and slyly he it spent
That no man wondred howe he it had
And thre yere in thys wyse hys lyfe he ladde
And bare hym so in peace and eke in werre
Ther was no man that Theseus hath der.
And in thys blysse lette I nowe Arcyte
And speke I woll of Palamon a lyte.
In derknesse horryble and stronge prison
Thys seuen yere hath sytten thys Palamon
Forpyned, what for wo and distresse
who feleth double sore and heuynesse
But Palamon: that loue distrayneth so
That wode out of hys wit, he gothe for wo
And eke therto he is a prisonere
Perpetuall, and not onely for a yere.
Who coude ryme in Englysshe properly
Hys martyrdom: forsoth it am nat I
Therfore I passe as lyghtly as I may
It befell that in the seuenth yere in May
The thyrde nyght, as olde bokes sayne
(That all thys story tellen more playne)
were it by auenture or by destayne
As whan a thyng is shapen, it shall be
That soon after mydnight, Palamon
By helpyng of a frende brake hys prison
And fleethe the cyte, as fast as he may go
For he had yeue hys gayler drynke so
Of a clarrey, made of certen wyne
Wyth narcotise and opye, of Thebes fyne
That al ý night, thogh mē wolde hym shake
The gayler slept, he mught nat awake
And thus he fleeth as fast as he may.
The nyght was short, & fast by the day
That nedes cost he mote hym selfe hyde
And to a groue faste there beside
with dredfull foote than stalketh Palamon
For shortly thys was hys opinyon
That in ý groue he wolde hym hyde al day
And in the nyght then wold he take his way
To Thebes warde, hys frendes for to prey
On Theseus to helpe hym to wattrey
And shortly, eyther he wolde lese hys lyfe
Or wynne Emelye vnto hys wyfe
Thys is theffecte, and hys entent playne.
¶ Nowe woll I torne to Arcite agayne
That lytell wyst howe nye was hys care
Tyl ý fortune had brought hym in her snare
The mery larke, messanger of day
Saleweth in her songe the morowe gray
And firy Phebus aryseth vp so bright
That all the orisont laugheth of the syght
And with hys streames, drieth in the greues
The syluer dropes, hangyng in the leues
And Arcite, that in the courte ryall
with Theseus hys squier principall
Is rysen, and loketh on the mery day
And for to don hys obseruaunces to May
Remembryng on the poynt of hys desyre
He on hys courser, startlyng as the fyre
Is rydden in to the feldes hym to play
Out of the court, were it a myle or twey
And to the groue, of whyche I you tolde
By auenture, hys way he gan holde
To maken hym a garlonde of the greues
were it of wodbynde, or of hauthorn leues
And loude he songe ayenst the sonne shene.
May, wyth all thy floures and thy grene
welcom be thou, fayre freshe May
I hope that I some grene get may
And from hys courser, wyth a lusty herte
In to the groue full hastely he sterte
And in a pathe he romed vp and doun
There, as by auenture thys Palamon
was in a bushe, that no man myght hym se
For sore aferde of hys dethe was he
Nothyng ne knewe he, that it was Arcite
God wote he wolde haue trowed full lyte

But sothe is sayd, go sythen many yeres
That felde hath eyen, and wodde hath eres
It is full fayre a man to beare hym euyn
For al day men mete at vnset steuyn
Full lytell wote Arcyte of hys felawe
That was so nyghe to herken of hys sawe
For in the bussche sytteth he nowe full styll
Whan that Arcyte had romed all hys fyll
And songen all the roundell lustely
In to a studyhe fell sodenly
As don these louers in theyr quyent gyres
Now in the croppe, & now down in ý bryres
Nowe vp nowe downe, as boket in a well
Ryght as the friday, sothly for to tell
Nowe it rayneth, nowe it shyneth fast
Ryght so gan gery Venus ouer cast
The hertes of her folke, ryght as her day
Is geryfull, ryght so chaungeth she aray
Selde is the friday all the weke ilyke
Whan ý Arcite had songe, he gan to syke
And set hym downe wythouten any more
Alas (q he) the day that I was bore
Howe longe Juno through thy cruelte
Wylt thou warren Thebes the cyte?
Alas ybrought is to confusyon
The blode ryall of Cadmus and Amphyon
Of Cadmus, whiche was the fyrst man
That Thebes buylt, or fyrst the town began
And of the cyte fyrst was crowned kyng
Of hys lynage am I, and of hys ofspring
By very lyne, as of the stocke ryall
And nowe I am so caytife and so thrall
That he that is my mortal enemy
I serue hym, as hys squire poorly
And yet dothe me Juno well more shame
For I dare not be knowe myne own name
But there as I was wont to hyght Arcyte
Now hyght I Philostrat nat worth a myte
Alas thou fell Mars, alas thou Juno
Thus hath your yre our lynage all for do
Saue only me, and wretched Palamon
That Theseus martreth in pryson
And ouer all thys, to sleen me vtterly
Loue hath hys firy darte so bremyngly
Ystycked through my true carefull herte
That shapen was my deth erst my sherte
Ye sleen me wyth youre eyen Emelye
Ye ben the cause wherfore I dye
Of all the remenaunt of myne other care
Ne set I nat the mountaunce of a tare
So ý I coude do ought to your plesaunce
And with ý worde he fell down in a traunce
A longe tyme, and afterwarde he vp stert
This Palamon thought ý thrugh his hert
He felte a colde sworde sodenly glyde
For yre he quoke, no lenger wolde he abyde
And whan that he had herde Arcites tale
As he were wood, with face deed and pale
He sterte hym vp, out of the bussches thycke
And sayd: Arcyte false traytour wycke
Nowe art thou hent, that louest my lady so
For whom that I haue thys payne and wo
And art my bloode, & to my counsell sworn
As I haue full ofte tolde the here beforn
And hast be iaped here duke Theseus
And falsly hast chaunged thy name thus
I wyll be deed, or els thou shalt dye
Thou shalt nat loue my lady Emelye
But I woll loue her onely and no mo
For I am Palamon thy mortall foe
Though ý I haue no weapen in thys place
But out of pryson am astert by grace
I drede not, that eyther thou shalt dye
Or thou ne shalt not louen Emelye
Chese which thou wilt, or ý shalt not astert
This Arcite, with full dispytous hert
Whan he hym knewe, & had hys tale herde
As fiers as a lyon, pulled out his swerde
And sayd: By god that sytteth aboue
Ne were it ý thou art syck, & wood for loue
And eke ý thou no wepen hast in thys place
Thou shuldest neuer out of this groue pace
That thou ne shuldest dyen of myne honde
For I defye the suretie and the bonde
Whiche ý thou sayst ý I haue made to the
What very fole, thynke wel that loue is fre
And I wyl loue her maugre all thy myght
But for as moche as thou arte a knyght
And wylnest to darrayne here by batayle
Haue here my trouth, to morow I wyll nat (fayle
Without wetyng af any other wyght
That here I woll be founden as a knyght
And bryngen harneys, ryght ynough for the
And chese the best, & leaue the worst for me.
And meate & drynke, this night wyl I bring
Inough for the, and clothes for thy beddyng
And yf so be that thou my lady wyn
And slee me in thys wodde ther I am in
Thou mayst wel haue thy lady as for me.
This Palamon answerde: I graunt it the
And thus they ben departed tyll a morowe
whã ech of hem had laid his faith to borowe
O Cuppyde out of all charyte
O regne, ý woldest haue no felowe with the

Full

Ful soth is sayd, that loue ne lordshyp
woll not hys thankes haue any felyshyp
we fynde that of Arcite and of Palamon
Arcite is ryden anone into the toun
And on the morowe or it were daye lyght
Ful priuely two harneys hath he dyght
Both sufficient and mete to darreygne
The batayle in ý felde betwyxe hem tweine
And on hys horse, alone as he was borne
He caryeth all hys harneys hym before
And in the groue, at tyme and place yset
Thys Arcite & thys Palamon bene mette
To chaungen gan the colour in her face
Ryght as the hunter, in ý regne of Trace
That standeth at a gappe wyth a speare
when hunted is the lyon or the beare
And hereth hym rushynge in the leaues
And breaketh the bowes in the greaues
And thiketh, here cometh my mortal enemy
wythout fayle, he must be deed or I
For eyther I mote slee hym at the gappe
Or he mote slee me, yf me myschappe
So ferden they, in chaungynge of her hewe
As farre as euerych of other knewe
There nas no good daye, ne no saluyng
But streyght, wythout worde or rehersyng
Euerych of hem helpeth for to arme other
As frendly, as he were hys owne brother
And after that, wyth sharpe speares stronge
They foynen eche at other wonder longe
Thou myghtest wene, that thys Palamon
In hys fyghtynge, were a wood Lyon
And as a cruel Tygre was Arcyte
As wylde bores gan they fyght and smyte
That frothen whyte as fome for yre woode
Up to the ancle foughten they in her bloode
And in thys wyse, I let hem fyghtyng dwell
And forth I wol of Theseus you tel.
The destenye and the minister general
That executeth in the worlde ouer al
The purueyaũce that god hath sayd before
So strõge it is, ý though ý world had sworn
The contrary of thynge be yea or naye
Yet somtyme it shall fall on a daye
That fell neuer yet in a thousande yere
For certaynly our appetytes here
Be it of warre, peace, hate, or loue
Al is ruled by the syght aboue
Thys meane I nowe by myghty Theseus
That for to hunt is so desyrous
And namely at the great harte in May
That in hys bed there daweth hym no day
That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde
Wyth hunt and horne, & houdes hym besyde
For in hys huntyng hath he such delyte
That it is all hys ioye and appetyte
To bene hym selfe the great hertes bane
For after Mars, he serueth nowe Dyane
Clere was the day, as I haue told or this
And Theseus, wyth al ioye and blys
Wyth hys Ipolita, the fayre quene
And Emely, yclothen all in grene
An huntynge ben they rydden ryally
And to the groue, that stode there fast by
In which ther was an herte, as mẽ him told
Duke Theseus the streyght waye hath hold
And to the lande, he rydeth hym ful ryght
For thider was ý hert wõt to haue his slight
And ouer a broke, and so forth on hys way
This duke wol houe a cours at him or twey
With houdes, such as hym lyst cõmaunde
And when ý duke was comen into ý launde
Under the sonne he loked, and that anon
He was ware of Arcyte and Palamon
That foughtẽ breme, as it were bulles two
The bryght swordes wenten to and fro
So hydously, that wyth the leste stroke
It semed, that it wolde haue fellen an oke
But what they weren, nothynge he ne wote
This duke w̃ his spores his courser smote
And at a sterte he was bytwyxt hem two
And pulled out hys sworde, and cryed, ho
Nomore, on payne of lesyng of your heed
By myghty Mars, he shall anone be deed
That smyteth any stroke, that I maye sene
But telleth me, what myster men ye bene
That ben so hardy for to fyghten here
Wythout iudge, or other offycere
As though it were in lystes rially.
Thys Palamon answered hastely
And sayd: syr, what nedeth wordes mo
We haue the death deserued both two
Two wofull wretches ben we & caytyues
That ben encombred of our owne lyues
And as thou arte a ryghfull lorde and iuge
Ne yeue vs neyther mercy ne refuge
But slee me fyrst, for sayntcharite
But slee my felowe as wel as me
Or slee hi fyrst, for though thou know it lite
This is thy mortal foe, thys is Arcite
That fro thy lande is banyshed on hys heed
For whych he hath deserued to be deed
For thys is he, that came vnto thy yate
And sayd, that he hyght Philostrate

Thus

Thus hath he iaped full many a yere
And thou hast made hym thy chefe squire
And thys is he, that loueth Emely.
For sythe the day is come that I shall dye
I make playnly my confessyon
I am thylke woful Palamon
That hath thy prison broke wyckedly
I am thy mortall foe, and he am I
That loueth so hotte Emelye the bright
That I wol dye here present in her syght
wherfore I aske dethe and my iewyse
But slee my felowe in the same wyse
For bothe we haue deserued to be slayn
This worthy duke answerde anon agayn
And sayd, this is a shorte conclusyon
Your owne mouthe, by your confessyon
Hath dampned you, and I woll it recorde
It nedeth not to pyne you wyth a corde
Ye shall be deed by myghty Mars the reed
The quene anone, for very woman heed
Gan for to wepe, and so dyd Emelye
And all the ladyes in the companye
Great pyte was it, as thought hem all
That euer suche a chaunce shulde befall
For gentylmen they were of great estate
And nothyng but for loue was thys debate
And sawe her blody woundes wyde & sore
And all cryden bothe lesse and more
Haue mercy lorde vpon vs wymen all
And on her bare knees downe they fall
And wolde haue kyst his fete there he stode
Tyl at the last, a slaked was hys mode
For pyte renueth sone in gentle herte
And though he fyrst for yre quoke & sterte
He hath consydred shorthly in a clause
The trespas of hem bothe, & eke the cause
And al though hys yre her gylt accused
Yet in hys reason he hem bothe excused
As thus: he thought well that euery man
woll helpe hym selfe in loue al that he can
And eke delyuer hym selfe out of a prison
And eke hys herte had compassyon
Of wymen, for they wepen euery in one
And in hys gentle herte he thought anone
And sokte vnto hym selfe he sayd: fy
Upon a lorde, that woll haue no mercy
But be a lyon, bothe in worde and dede
To hem that ben in repentaunce & in drede
As well as to a proude dispytous man
That wyll mayntayne that he fyrst began
That lorde hath lytell of discretyon
That in suche case can no diffynition
But wayeth pride and humblesse after one
And shortly, whan hys yre was thus agone
He gan to loken vp with eyen lyght
And spake these wordes al on hyght
The god of loue, ah, benedicite
Howe myghty, & howe great a lorde is he
Agayn hys myght ther gayneth no obstacles
He may be cleaped a god for hys miracles
For he can maken at hys owne gyse
Of euerych hert, as hym lyst deuyse
Lo here thys Arcyte, and thys Palamon
That quitely were out of my prison gon
And myght haue lyued in Thebes ryally
And knowen I am her mortall enemy
And that her dethe is in my power also
And yet hath loue, maugre her eyen two
Brought hem hyther bothe for to dye
Nowe loketh, is not this a great folye
Who may be a fole, but yf he loue
Beholde for goddes sake, that sytteth aboue
Se howe they blede, be they nat wel arayde
Thus hath her lord, ý god of loue hem payd
Her wages, and her fees for her seruyse
And yet they wenen to be full wyse
That serue loue, for aught that may be fall
But yet is this the best game of all
That she, for whom they haue thys iolyte
Can hem therfore, as moche thanke as me
She wotte nomore of all this hote fare
By God, than wotte a cokowe or an hare
But all mote ben assayed hote and colde
A man mote ben a foole other yong or olde
I wote it by my selfe full yore agone
For in my tyme, a seruaunte was I one
And therfore syth I knowe of loues payne
I wote howe sore it can a man distrayne
As he that ofte hath be caught in her laas
I you forgeue all hooly this trespaas
At the request of the quene, ý kneleth here
And eke of Emely, my syster dere
And ye shall bothe anon anto me swere
That ye shal neuer more my countre dere
Ne make warre vpon me nyght ne day
But ben my frendes in all that ye may
I you for yeue thys trespas euery dele
And they hym sware his asking fair & wele
And him of lordshyp and of mercy prayde
And he hem graunted grace, & thus he sayde.
To speake of worthy lynage & rychesse
Though ý she were a quene, or a princesse
Ilke of you bothe is worthy doutless
To wedde whan tyme is, but netheles

I speke

I speake, as for my syster Emely
For whom ye haue thys stryfe and ielowsy
Ye wote your selfe, she maye not wedde two
At ones, though ye fyghten euer mo
But one of you, all be hym loth or lefe
He mote go pype in an yue lefe
Thys is to saye, she maye not haue both
Ne ben ye neuer so ielous, ne so wroth
And therfore, I you put in thys degre
That eche of you shall haue hys destyne
As hym is shape, and herken in what wyse
Lo here your ende, of that I shall deuyse
My wyll is thys, for plat conclusion
Wythout any replicacion
Yf that you lyketh, taketh it for the best
That euerych of yon shall go where him lyst
Frely, wythout raunsome or daungere
And thys daye fyftye wekes, ferre ne nere
Euerych of you shall bryngе an. C. knyghtes
Armed for the lystes vp all ryghtes
Al redy to darreyne here by batayle
And thys behote I you wythouten fayle
Upon my trouth, as I am true knyght
That whether of yon both, hath that myght
That is to saye, that whether he or thou
May wyth his hūdred, as I spake of now
Slee hys contrary, or out of lystes dryue
Hym shall I yene Emely to wyue
To whom ȳ fortune yeueth so fayre a grace.
The lystes shall I maken in thys place
And god so wysely on my soule rewe
As I shal euyn iudge be and trewe
Ye shall none other ende wyth me make
That one of you shalbe deed or take
And yf ye thynken, thys is wel ysayd
Sayeth your aduyse, & holde you wel apayd
Thys is your ende, and your conclusion.
Who loketh lyghtly now but Palamon
Who spryngeth vp for ioye but Arcite
Who coude tel, or who coude endyte
The ioye that is made in thys place
When Theseus had done so fayre a grace
But doun on knees wēt euery maner wight
And thanked him, wyth al her hert & myght
And namely these Thebans many sythe
And thus wyth good hope & herte blythe
They takē her leue, & hōward gan they ryde
To Thebes warde, wyth olde walles wyde
I trowe men wolde deme it negligence
Yf I forgetten to tell the dyspence
Of Theseus, that goeth so busely
To maken vp the lystes royally
That suche a noble Theatre, as it was
I dare well saye, in thys worlde ther nas
The circute a myle was about
Walled wyth stone, and dyched al about
Roūde was the shape, in maner of a compas
Full of degrees, the heygth of syxty paas
That when a man was set on one degre
He letted not hys felowe for to se
Estward there stode a gate of marble whyte
Westward ryght suche another in thopposite
And shortly to conclude, suche a place
was none in erth, as in so lytle space
For in the lande, there nas no craftes man
That gemetry, or arsmetyke can
Ne portriture, ne caruer of ymages
That Theseus ne gaue hym mete & wages
The theatre for to make and deuyse
And for to do hys ryte and sacrifyce
He estwarde hath vpon the yate aboue
In worshyp of Venus, goddes of loue
Do make an auter, and an oratory
And on the westsyde, in memory
Of Mars, he hath maked such another
That cost of golde largely a fother
And northwarde, in a turret in the wal
Of alabastre whyte, and redde coral
An oratorye, ryche for to se
In worshyp of Diane, goddes of chastite
Hath Theseus do wrought in noble wyse
But yet had I forgetten to deuyse
The noble caruynges and the portratures
The shap, the countenaunce, & the fygures
That weren in the oratories thre
Fyrst in the tēple of Venus thou mayst se
wrought on the wal, ful pytously to beholde
The broken slepes, and the syghes colde
The sault teares, and the waymentyng
The fyre strokes, and the desyryng
That loues seruauntes in thys lyke enduren
The othes, that her couenauntes assuren
Plesaunce and hope, desyre, foolehardynesse
Beauty and youth, baudry and rychesse
Charmes and sorcery, leasynges and flatery
Dyspence, busynesse, and ielousy
That weared of yelowe goldes a garlande
And a cokowe syttynge on her honde
Feestes, instrumentes, carolles, and daunces
Justes and araye, and al the circumstaunces
Of loue, whych I reken and reken shal
By ordre, were paynted on the wal
And mo then I can make of mencion
For sothly all the mounte of Cytheron

where

Where Venus hath her principal dwellyng
was shewed on the wall in portreyng
wyth all the ioye, and the lustynesse
Nought was forgetē the portresse ydelnesse
Ne Narcissus the fayre of yore agon
Ne yet the folye of kynge Salomon
Ne yet the great strength of Hercules
Thenchauntement of Medea and Circes
Ne of Turnus, wyth his hardy fyers corage
The ryche Cresus caytyfe in seruage
Thus may ye sene, that wisdome ne richesse
Beaute ne sleyght, strength ne hardynesse
Ne may wyth Venus holde champartye
For as her lyst the worlde maye she gye
Lo, al these folke so caught were in her laas
Tyll they for wo full ofte sayd alas
Suffyseth here one ensample or two
And though I coude reken a thousande mo
The statue of Venus glorious to se
was maked fletynge in the large see
And fro the nauyll downe al couered was
wyth wawes grene, and bryght as any glas
A cytriole in her ryght hande had she
And on her heed, ful semely for to se
A rose garlande, fresche and wel smellynge
Aboue her heed doues flytterynge
Before her stode her sonne Cupido
Upon hys shoulders wynges had he two
And blynde he was, as it is ofte sene
A bowe he had, and arowes bryght and kene
why shulde I not as wel tellen al
The purgatory that was ther about ouer al
within the temple of myghty Mars the rede
Al paynted was the wal in length & in brede
Lyke to the Estris of the grysly place
That hyght ȳ gret tēple of Mars in Trace
In thylke colde frosty regyon
Ther Mars hath hys soueraynemancion
First on the wall was paynted a forest
In whych ther wonneth nother mā ne beest
Wyth knotty and knarry trees olde
Of stubbes sharpe, and hydous to beholde
In whych ther was a romble & a showe
As though a storme shuld breke euery bowe
And downward vnder an hyl vnder a bent
Ther stode the temple of Mars armipotent
wrought all of burnt stele, of whych thentre
was longe and streyght, and gastly for to se
And ther out came suche a rage & such a vyse
That it made all the gates for to ryse
The northren lyght in at the dores shone
For wyndowe on the wall was there none
Thrugh which mē might any lyght discerne
The dores were al of athamant eterne
yclensed ouerthwarte and endlonge
wyth yren toughe, for to maken it stronge
Euery pyller, the temple to sustene
was tonne great, of yren bright and shene
¶ There sawe I first the derke ymagynyng
Of felony, and eke the compassyng:
The cruel yre, redde as any glede
The pyckpurse and eke the pale drede
The smyler, wyth the knyfe vnder the cloke
The shepen brennynge wyth ȳ blacke smoke
The treason of the murdrynge in the bede
The open warre, with woundes all be blede
Cōteke with blody knyues, & sharpe manace
All full of chyrkyng was that sory place
The sleer of hym selfe yet saw I there
His herte blood hath bathed all his here
The nayle ydriuen in the shode on hyght
with colde deth, w̄ mouth gapyng vpright
Amyddes of the temple sate Mischaunce
with Discomfort, and sory Countenaunce
yet saw I wodnesse, laughyng in his rage
Armed complaynte on theft & fyers courage
The carrayne in the bushe, w̄ throte ycorue
Athousande slayne, & nat of qualme ystorue
The tyraunt with the pray by force yraft
The town destroyed ther was nothing ylaft
Yet sawe I brent the shyppes hoppesteres
The hunter ystrangled with ȳ wylde beares
The sowe frettyng the chylde in the cradyll
The coke yscaulded, for al his longe ladyll
Naught was foreten ȳ in fortune of Marte
The carter ouer rydden by his owne carte
Under the whele full lowe he laye a down
There were also of Martes diuysyon
The barbour, the boucher, and the smyth
That forgeth sharpe swordes on the styth
And all aboue depaynted in a toure
Sawe I Cōquest, syttyng in great honoure
with the sharpe sworde ouer his heed
Hangyng by a subtyl twyned threde
Depaynted was ther, ȳ slaughter of Julius
Of great Nero, and of Anthonius
Al be that thylke tyme they were vnborne
yet was her death depaynted there before
By manacynge of Mars, ryght by fygure
So was it shewed in that portreture
As is depaynted in the certres aboue
Who shalbe deed or els slayne for loue
Suffyseth one ensample in storyes olde
I may not reken them al, though I wolde

The

The statue of Marce vpon a carte stode
Armed, and loked grym as he were wode
And ouer hys heed ther shynen two fygures
Of sterres, that ben cleped in scryptures
That one (Puella) hyght, ý other (Rubeus)
Thys god armes was arayed thus
A wolke there stode before hym at hys fete
Wyth eyen reed, and of a man he ete
wyth subtyl pensyl was paynted thys storie
In redoutynge of Marce and of hys glorye.
Nowe to the temple of Dyane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wol me haste
To tel you al the dyscripcyoun
Depaynted ben the walles vp and doun
Of huntyng and of shamfast chastyte
There sawe I howe woful Calistope
when that Dyane greued was wyth her
was turned fro a woman to a bere
And afterwarde was she made ý lode sterre
Thus was it paynted, I can saye no ferre
Her sonne is eke a sterre, as men may se
There sawe I Dane turned vnto a tre
I meane not the goddesse Dyane
But Venus doughter, which ý hight Dane
There sawe I Atheon an herte ymaked
For vengeaũce ý he sawe Dyane al naked
I sawe how ý his houndes haue hym caught
And freten him, for they knewe hym naught
Yet ypaynted was a lytel ferthermore
Howe Athalant hunted the wylde bore
And Meliager, and many other mo
For whych Dyane wrought hym care & wo
There sawe I many another wonder storye
whych me lyst not to drawe in memorye
This goddesse ful wel vp an harte she is sete
wyth smale houndes al aboute her fete
And vnderneth her fete, she had a moone
waryng it was, and shulde wane soone
In gaudy grene, her statue clothed was
wyth bowe in hande, and arowes in a caas
Her eyen cast she ful lowe adoun
There Pluto hath hys darke regioun
A woman trauelynge was her before
But for her chylde, so longe was vnbore
Ful pytously Lucyna gan she cal
And sayd helpe, for thou mayst best of al
wel coude he paynte lyuelye that it wrought
wyth many a floreyn he the hewes bought

Now then these lystes made, & Theseus
That at hys great cost hath arayed thus
The temples, and the theatre euery del
When it was done, it lyked him wōder wel
But shynte I wol of Theseus a lyte
And speke of Palamon and of Arcyte
The daye approcheth of her returnynge
That euerych shulde an. C. knyghtes brynge
The batayle to darreyne, as I you tolde
And to Athenes, her couenaũtes to holde
Hath euerich of hem brought an. C. knightes
wel armed for the warre, at al ryghtes
And sykerly, there trowed many a man
That neuer sythnes the worlde began
As for to speake of knyghthode, of her honde
As farre as god hath made see or londe
Nas of so fewe, so noble a company
For euery wyght, that loued chyualry
And wolde hys thākes haue a passing name
Hath prayed, that he myght be of that game
And wel was him, that therto chosen was
For yf there fel to morowe such a caas
Ye knowe wel, that euery lusty knyght
That loueth paramours, & hath hys myght
wete it in Englande, or els where
They wolde fayne wyllen to be there
To fyght for a lady, ah, benedicite
It were a lusty syght for to se
And ryght so fardē they wyth Palamon
wyth hym there went knyghtes many on
Some wolde ben armed in an habergeon
And in a brest plate, wyth a lyght gyppion
And some wold haue a payre of plates large
And some wold haue a pruce sheld or a targe
Some wolde be armed on hys legges wele
And haue an axe, & some a mace of stele
There nas none newe gyse, that it nas olde
Armed were they, as I haue you tolde
Euerych after hys opinion
¶ Ther mayst ý se comyng wyth Palamon
Lygurge hym selfe, the great kinge of Trace
Blacke was his berde, & māly was his face
The sercles of hys eyen in hys heed
They glouden betwyxte yelowe and reed
And lyke a lyon loked he aboute
wyth kemped heeres on his browes stoute
His lymmes great, hys brawnes stronge
His shoulders brode, his armes roūde & lōge
And as the gyse was in hys countre
Ful hye vpon a chare of golde stode he
wyth foure whyte bulles in the trays
In stede of a cote armure, ouer hys harnays
wyth nayles yelowe, & bryght as any golde
He hath a beares skyn, cole blacke for olde
His lōge heare was kempt behynd his backe

As any rauens fether it shone for blacke
A wreth of gold arme great, of huge weight
Upon his heed, set ful of stones bryght
Of fyne rubyes and of dyamandes
About hys chare ther wente whyt allaundes
Twenty and mo, as great as any stere
To hunten at the lyon, or at the wilde bere
And folowed hym, wyth mosel fast ybounde
Colers of golde, and torrettes yfyled rounde
An hundred lordes had he in hys route
Armed ful wel, with hertes sterne and stoute

Wyth Arcite, in storyes as men fynde
The great Emetrius, the kynge of Ynde
Upon a stede bay, trapped in stele
Couered wyth a cloth of golde diapred wele
Came rydyng lyke the god of armes Marce
Hys cote armure was of cloth of Trace
Couched wyth perle, whyte, rounde & gret
His sadel was of brent golde newe ybet
A mantel vpon hys shoulders hangyng
Bret full of rubyes, reed as fyre sparklyng
Hys cryspe heere lyke rynges was yronne
And ý was yelowe, & gletering as ý Sonne
Hys nose was hye, hys eyen bryght cytryn
Hys lyppes ruddy, hys colour was sanguyn
A fewe frekles in hys face yspreynte
Betwexte yelowe, & somdele blacke ymeynte
And as a lyon he hys eyen ceste
Of fyue and twenty yere hys age I geste
Hys berde was wel begonne for to sprynge
Hys voyce was as a trompet sownynge
Upon hys heed he weared of laurer grene
A garlande fresche and lusty for to sene
Upon hys hande he bare for hys delyte
An Egle tame, as any lylly whyte
An hundred lordes had he wyth hym there
All armed saue her heedes in her gere
Ful rychely in al maner thynges
For trusteth wel, that erles, dukes, & kynges
were gathered in thys noble companye
For loue, and for encreace of chyualrye
About this kinge there ran on euery parte
Ful many a tame lyon and lyberte
And in thys wyse, these lordes al & some
Ben on the sonday to the cytie come
About prime, and in the towne alyght.
¶ This Theseo, this duke this worthy knizt
when he had brought hem into hys cyte
And inned hem, euerych after hys degre
He feesteth hem, and doth so great laboure
To easen hem, and done hem al honoure
That yet men wenen that no mans wyt
Of none estate coude amende it
The mynstralcye, the seruyce at the feest
The great gyftes, to the moste and leest
The rich array, throughout Theseus paleys
Ne who sat fyrst ne last vpon the deys
what ladyes fayrest ben or best daũcyng
Or whych of hem can best daunce or syng
Ne who moste felyngly speketh of loue
Ne what haukes sytten or perchen aboue
Ne what houndes lyggen on ý floure adoun
Of al thys now make I no mencion
But al the effecte, that thynketh my the best
Now cometh ý point, herkeneth yf you lest

The sonday at night, or day begã to spryng
when Palamon the larke herde syng
Although it were not day by houres two
Yet songe the larke, & Palamon rygh tho
with holy herte and with an hye corage
He rose vp towenden on his pylgrimage
Unto the blysful Cytherea benygne
I meane Venus honorable and dygne
And in her hour, he walketh forthe a paas
Unto the lystes, there the temple was
And downe he kneleth, & with humble chere
And herte sore, he sayd as ye shal here
¶ Fayrest of fayre: O lady myne Venus
Doughter of Joue, and spouse to Vulcanus
Thou glader of the mount of Cytheron
For thylke loue thou haddest to Adon
Haue pyte of my bytter teares smerte
And take my humble prayer at thyne herte
Alas, I ne haue no langage to tel
The effecte, ne the turment of myne hel
Myne hert may not myne harmes bewraye
I am so confused, that I can not saye
But mercy lady bryght, that wost wele
My thought, & seest what harmes ý I fele
Consyder al thys, and rue vpon my sore
As wysly as I shal for euermore
Emforth my myght, thy true seruaunt be
And holde warre alwaye wyth chastite
That make I myne auowe, so ye me helpe
I kepe not of armes for to yelpe
Ne I ne aske to morowe to haue victory
Ne renome in thys case, ne vayne glory
Of pryse of armes, to blowen vp & doun
But wolde haue fulle possessyoun
Of Emely, and dye in her seruyce
Finde thou ý maner how, & in what wyse
I retche not, but it may better be

To

To haue victory of hem, or they of me
So that I haue my lady in myn armes
For though so be that Mars is god of armes
Your vertue is so great in Heuen aboue
That yf you lyst, I shall wel haue my loue
Thy temple shal I worshyp euer mo
And on thyn auter, where I ryde or go
I wol don sacrifyce, and fyres bete
And yf ye wol not so, my lady swete
Than pray I you, to morowe with a spere
That Arcyte me through the herte bere
Than recke I not, whan I haue lost my lyfe
Thoughe Arcyte wynne her to wyfe
Thys is the effecte and ende of my prayere
Yeue me my lady, thou blyssful lady dere
whan the orison was done of Palamon
His sacrifyce he dyd, and that anon
Ful pytously, with al circumstaunces
All tel I nat as nowe hys obseruaunces.
But at the laste, the statue of Venus shoke
And made a sygne, wherby that he toke
That hys prayere accepted was that day
For though the sygne shewed a delay
Yet wist he wel, that graunted was his bone
And wo glad hert he went him hom ful sone

The thyrde houre in equal that Palamon
Began to Venus temple for to gon
Up rose the sonne, and up rose Emelye
And vnto the temple of Dyane gan hye
Her maydens, the whiche thyder were lad
Ful redely with hem the fyre they had
The ensence, the clothes, & the remenaunt al
That to the sacrifyce longen shall
The hornes ful of meethe, as was the gyse
There lacked nought to don her sacrifyce
Smokyng the temple, ful of clothes fayre
This Emely, with herte debonayre
Her body wyshe, with water of a wel
But how she dyd ryght I dare nat tel
But it be any thyng in generall
And yet it were a game to here it all
To him that meaneth wel, it were no charge
But it is good a man be at his large
Her bright heare was vnkēpt & vntressed all
A crowne of a grene oke vnseryall
Upon her heed set ful fayre and mete
Two fyres on the aulter gan she bete
And dyd her thynges, as men may beholde
In Stace of Thebes, and these bookes olde
whan kenled was the fyre, wo pitous chere
Unto Dyane she spake as ye may here

O chaste goddesse of the woddes grene
To whom both heuen & erthe and see is sene
Queene of the reygne of pluto, derke & lowe
Goddesse of maydēs, ỏ myn hert hath know
Ful many a yere, and woste what I desyre
As kepe me fro the vengeaunce of thyn yre
That Acteon abought cruelly
Chaste goddesse, wel woste thou that I
Desyre to ben a mayde al my lyfe
Ne neuer wol I be loue ne wyfe
I am thou (woste wel) of thy company
A mayde, and loue huntyng and venery
And for to walken in the woddes wylde
And not for to ben a wyfe, & ben with chylde
Nought wyl I knowe companye of man
Nowe helpe me lady sythe ye may and can
For tho thre formes that thou haste in the
And Palamon, that hath suche a loue to me
And eke Arcyte, that loueth me so sore
This grace I pray the, withouten more
And sende loue and peace bytwyxt hem two
And fro me turne away her hertes so
That al her hotte loue, and her desyre
And al her busy turment, and al her fyre
Be queynt, or turned in an other place
And if so be thou wolte not do me that grace
Or yf so be my desteny be shapen so
That I shal nedes haue one of hem two
As sende me hym that moste desyreth me.
Beholde goddesse of clene chastyte
The bytter teares, that on my chekes fal
Syn thou arte a mayde, and keper of vs all
My maydenhede thou kepe, and wel cōserue
And whyle I lyue, a mayden wol I ỏ serue.
The fyres brenne vpon the auter clere
whyle Emely was thus in her prayere
But sodenly she sawe a thyng queynte
For ryght anon, one of the fyres queynte
And quycked agayn, and after that anon
That other fyre was queynte, and al agon
And as it queynte it made a whystlyng
As don these wete brondes in her brennyng
And at the brondes ende, out ran anone
As it were bloddy droppes many one
For whiche so sore agaste was Emelye
That she was wel nye madde, & gan to crye
For she ne wyste what it sygnyfyed
But onely for the feare thus she cryed
And wepte, that it was pyte for to here
And therwithal Dyane gan to apere
With bowe in honde, right as an huntereſſe
And sayd doughter, stynte thyn heuynesse

Amonge the goddes hye it is affyrmed
And by eterne worde, wrytten & confyrmed
Thou shalt be wedded to one of tho
That haue for the so much care and wo
But vnto whych of hem I may not tel
Farewel, for I may no lenger dwel
The fyres, whych on myne auter brenne
Shal declaren, er that thou gon henne
Thys auenture of loue, as in thys case
And with ý worde, the arowes in the case
Of the goddes, clattered fast and ryngе
And forth she went, and made vaneshynge
For whych thys Emely astonyed was
And sayd: what mounteth thys, alas
I put me vnder thy protection
Dyane, and vnder thy dysposycion
And home she goth the next waye
This is the effect, there is nomore to saye.
The nexte houre of Mars folowyng this
Arcite vnto the temple walked is
On fyers Mars, to done hys sacrifyse
wyth al the myght of hys paynem wyse
wyth pytous herte, and hye deuocion
Ryght thus to Mars he sayd hys orison
¶ O stronge god, that in the reygnes colde
Of trace honoured arte, and lorde yholde
And hast in euery reygne and euery lande
Of armes, al the bridle in thyne hande
And hem fortunest, as thy lyst deuyse
Accepte of me my pytous sacrifyce
yf so be my thought may deserue
And that my might be worthy for to serue
Thy godhede, that I maye ben one of thyne
Then praye I the, that thou rue on my pyne
For thylke payne, and thylke hotte fyre
In whech thou brentest whylom for desyre
when thou vsedest the fayre beaute
Of fayre yonge freshe Venus fre
And haddest her in thyne armes, at thy wyll
Al though thou ones on a tyme myslyll
when Vulcanus had caught the in hys laas
And founde thy lyggynge by hys wyfe alas
For thylke sorowe, that was in thyne herte
Haue ruth as wel on my paynes smerte
I am yonge and vnconning, as thou wost
And as I trowe, wyth loue offended most
That euer was any lyues creature
For she that doth me al thys wo endure
Ne retcheth neuer, where I synke or flete
And wel I wote, or she me mercy hete
I mote wyth strength wyn her in this place
And wel I wote, wythout helpe or grace
Of the, ne may my strength not auayle
Thē helpe me lorde to morow in my batayle
For thylke fyre, that whylom brent the
As well as the fyre nowe brenneth me
And do, that I to morowe haue victorye
Myn be the trauayle, and thyn be the glorye
Thy souerayne tēple wol I moste honouren
Of any place, and alwaye most labouren
In thy pleasaunce, and in thy craftes strōge
And in thy temple, I wol my baner honge
And al the armes of my conpanye
And euermore, vntyl the daye I dye
Eterne fyre I wol before the fynde
And eke to thys auowe I wyl me bynde
My berd, my heare, ý hongeth lowe adoun
That neuer yet felte offensioun
Of rasour ne of shere, I wol the yeue
And bene thy true seruaunt whyle I lyue
Now lorde haue ruth vpon my sorowes sore
Yeue me the victory, I aske the nomore
¶ The prayer stynte of Arcite the stronge
The ringes on the temple dore they ronge
And eke the dores clatren ful faste
Of whych Arcite somwhat him agast.

The fyres brennen vpon the auter bryght
That it gan al the temple lyght
A swete smel anone the grounde vp yafe
And Arcite anone hys honde vp hafe
And more ensence into the fyre he caste
wyth other rytes mo, and at the laste
The statue of Mars begā his hauberk ryng
And with that soūde he herde a murmuryng
Ful lowe and dym, that sayd thus: victory
For which he yaue to Mars honour & glory
And thus wyth ioye, and hope wel to fare
Arcite anone into hys ynne is fare
As fayne as foule is of the bryght sonne
And ryght anone such a stryfe is begonne
For thylke grauntynge, in the heuen aboue
Betwyxt Venus, the goddes of loue
And Mars the sterne god armypotent
That Iupiter was busy it to stynte
Tyl that the pale Saturnus the colde
That knewe so many auentures olde
Founde in hys experience and arte
That he ful sone hath pleased euery parte
And soth is sayd, elde hath great auauntage
In elde is both wysedome and vsage
Men maye the olde out ren, but not out rede
Saturne anone, to stynte stryfe and drede
Al be it that it be agayne hys kynde

Of al thys stryffe he can remedy kynde
My dere doughter Venus, q Saturne
My course that hath so wyde for to turne
Hath more power then wote any man
Myn is the drenchynge in the see so wan
Myne is the prison in the derke cote
Myn is ꝑ strãglyng & ꝑ hãgyng by ꝑ throte
The murmure, and the churles rebellyng
The groynyng, and the priuy enpoysonyng
I do vengeaũce and playne correction
whyle I dwell in the sygne of the lyon
Myne is the ruyne of the hye halles
The fallyng of the toures and of the walles
Upon the mynor, or vpon the carpenters
I slewe Sampson shakyng the pylleres
And myne ben the maladyes colde
The derke treasons, and the castels olde
My lokynge is the father of pestilence
Nowewepe nomore, I shal do my diligence
That Palamon, that is thyne owne knyght
Shal haue hys lady, as thou hym behyght
Thogh Mars shal helpe his knizt natheles
Betwixt you it mote somtyme be pees
Al be ye not of one complection
That causeth al daye such deuision
I am thyne ayle, redy at thy wyl
wepe nomore, I wol thy lust fulfyl
¶ Now wol I stynte of these goddes aboue
Of Mars, and of Venus goddes of loue
And playnly I wol tellen you as I can
The great effecte, of whych that I began.

Great was ꝑ feest in Athenes that day
And eke that lusty season in May
Made euery wyght to ben in such pleasaũce
That al that day iusten they and daunce
And spenten it in Venus hye seruyce
But bycause that they shulden aryse
Erly, for to se the great syght
Unto her rest went they at nyght
And on the morowe when day gan sprynge
Of horse & harneys, noyse and clateryngne
There was in the hostelryes al aboute
And to the palays rode there many a route
Of lordes, vpon stedes and palfreys
There mayst thou se deuysyng of harneys
So vncouth, so rych, & wrought so wele
Of goldsmethry, of braudry, and of stele
The sheldes bryght, testers, and trappers
Gold hewẽ helmes, hauberkes & cot armers
Lordes in paramentes, on her coursers
Knyghtes of retenue, and eke squyers
Naylynge the speares, and helmes bokeling
Gyggyng of sheldes with layners lacynge
There as nede is, they were nothynge ydel
The fominge stedes on the golden brydel
Gnawyng, and fast the armurers also
wyth fyle and hammer, rydyng to and fro
Yemen on fote, and comunes many one
wyth shorte staues, thycke as they may gone
Pypes, trompes, nakoners, and clarions
That in the batayle blowen blody sowns
The palays ful of people vp and doun
Here thre, there ten, holdynge her question
Deuinyng of these Theban knyghtes two
Some sayd thus, some sayd it shulde be so
Some helde wyth hym with ꝑ blacke berde
Some ẃ the balled, some ẃ the thick herde
Some sayd he loked grym, and wold fyght
He hath a sparth of twenty poũde of weight
Thus was the hal ful of deuinynge
Longe after the sonne gan to sprynge
The great Theseus of hys slepe gan wake
wyth mynstralsye & noyse that they make
Helde yet the chambre of hys palays ryche
Tyl that the Theban knyghtes, both yliche
Honoured weren, and into the place yfette.
¶ Duke Theseus is at the wyndowe sette
Arayed ryght as he were a god in trone
The people preased thyderwarde ful sone
Hym for to sene, and done hym hye reuerẽce
And eke for to here hys hest and hys sentence
An heraude on a scaffolde made an oo
Tyl al the noyse of the people was ydo
And when he sawe the people of noyse styl
Thus shewed he the myghty dukes wyl.

¶ The lorde hath of hys hye dyscrecion
Consydred, that it were dystruccion
To gentle bloode, to fyghten in thys gyse
Of mortal batayle, now in thys empryse
wherfore to shapen, that they shal not dye
He wol hys fyrst purpose modefye
No man therfore, vp payne of losse of lyfe
No maner shotte, polaxe, ne shorte knyfe
In to the lystes sende, or thytherbrynge
Ne short sword to stycke with point bytynge
No man ne drawe, ne beare it by hys syde
Ne no man shal to hys felow ryde
But one course, wyth a sharp groũden spere
Foyne yf hym lyst on fote, hym selfe to were
And he that is at myschefe, shall be take
And not slayne, but brought to the stake
That shall bene ordeyned on eyther syde
But thyther he shal by force, and there abyde
And yf so fal, that the chieftayne be take

On eyther syde, or els sleene hys make
No lenger shal the turnament laste
God spede you, goeth and layeth on faste
With swordes & lōge maces fyghtē your fyl
Goth now your waye, this is the lordes wyl
¶ The voyce of the people touched heuen
So loude cryed they wyth mery steuen
God saue suche a lorde, that is so good
He wylleth no destruction of blood.
Up goeth the trompes and the melodye
And to the lystes, rydeth so the companye
By ordynaunce, throughout the cytie large
Hōged wyth cloth of golde, & not wyth sarge
Ful lyke o lorde thys noble duke gan ryde
These two Thebans on euery syde
And after rode the quene and Emelye
And after that an other companye
Of one and other, after her degre
And thus they passen throughout the cytie
And to the lystes comen they be by tyme
It nas not of the daye yet fully pryme
When set was Theseus full ryche and hye
Ipolita the quene, and Emelye
And other ladyes in degrees aboute
Unto the seates preaseth al the route
And westward, thrugh ý yates vnder marte
Arcite and eke an hundred of hys parte
Wyth baner reed, is entred ryght anon
And in the selue momet entred Palamon
Is, vnder Venus, estwarde in that place
Wyth baner whyte, & hardy chere & face
And in al the worlde, to seken vp and doun
So euen wythout variacion
There nas such companyes twey
For there nas none so wyse that coude sey
That any had of other auauntage
Of worthynesse, ne of estate, ne age
So euen were they chose to gesse
And in to the renges fayre they hem dresse
When that her names red were euerychone
That in her nombre, gyle were there none
Tho were the gates shyt, & cryed was loude
Do now your deuer yonge knightes proude
¶ The heraudes left her prycking vp & doun
Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun
There is nomore to saye, este and weste
In goth the sharpe speres sadly in the arrest
In goth the sharpe spurres into the syde
There se men who can iust, & who can ryde
There shyueren shaftes, vpon sheldes thycke
He feleth through the herte spoune the pryck
Up springeth ý speres, twenty fote on hyght
Out goth the swordes, as the syluer bryght
The helmes they to heawe, and to shrede
Out burst ý blood, wyth sterne stremes rede
Wyth myghty maces, the bones they to breke
He through ý thyckest of ý thrōge gan threke
Ther stomblen stedes strōge, & down g on al
He rolled vnder the foote as dothe a bal
He foyneth on hys fete wyth a tronchoun
And he hurleth wyth hys horse adoun
He through the body is hurte, and syth ytake
Maugre hys heed, & brought vnto the stake
As forward was, ryght there he must abyde
An other is ladde on that other syde
And somtyme doth hem Theseus to reste
Hem to refeche, and drynke yf hem leste
Full ofte a day haue these Thebans two
Togyther met, and done eche other wo
Unhorsed hath eche other of hem twey
Ther was no tygre, in the vale of Galaphey
When her whelpe is stole, when it is lyte
So cruel on the hunte, as is Arcite
For ielous herte, vpon thys Palamon
Ne in Belmary, there is no fel lyon
That hunted is, or for hys honger woode
Ne of hys prey, desyreth so the bloode
As Palamon to slee hys foe Arcite
The ielouse strokes on her helmes byte
Out renneth ý bloode on both her sydes rede
Somtyme an ende there is of euery dede
For er the Sunne vnto the rest wente
The stronge kynge Emetrius gon hente
Thys Palamon, as he fought wō this Arcite
And made hys swordе depe in hys flesh byte
And by force of twenty is he take
Un yolden, and drawen to the stake
And in the rescous of thys Palamon
The stronge kynge Lygurge is borne adoun
And kynge Emetrius, for al hys strength
Is borne out of hys sadle a swordes length
So hurte hym Palamon or he were take
But al for nought, he was brought to ý stake
Hys hardy herte myght hym helpe naught
He must abyde, when that he was caught
By force, and eke by composycion
Who sorowetb now but woful Palamon
That mote no more gon agayne to fyght
¶ And when that Theseus had sene ý syght
He cryed hoe: no more, for it is don
Ne none shal lenger to hys felowe gon
I wol be true iuge, and not partye
Arcite of Thebes shal haue Emelye
That by hys fortune hath her fayre ywonne

Anone

Anon there is a noyse of people bygonne
For ioye of thys, so loude and hye withall
It seined that the lystes shulde fall
What can nowe fayre Venus done aboue:
What sayth she now: what doth ý quene of
But wepeth so, for wātyng of her wil (loue
Tyl that her teares on the lystes fyll
She sayd: I am a shamed doutles
Saturne sayd: doughter holde thy pees
Mars hath al his wil his knizt hath his bone
And by myn heed, thou shalt be eased sone
¶ The trompes with the loude mynstralcye
The heraudes, that so loude yel and crye
Ben in her wele, for loue of dan Arcyte
But harkeneth me, & stynteth noyse a lyte
whyche a myracle there bykell anon
The fyers Arcyte had hys helme of ydon
And on a courser, for to shewe hys face
He pricketh endlonge the large place
Lokyng vpwarde vpon Emelye
And she ayen hym caste a frendly eye
(For women, as to speke in comune
They folowen al the fauour of fortune)
And was all hys chere, as in hys herte
Out of the grounde a fyre infernal sterte
From Pluto sent, at the request of Saturne
For whiche his horse for feare gan to turne
And lepe a syde, and foundred as he lepe
And er that Arcyte may taken kepe
He pyght hym on the pomell of hys heed
That in the place he lay, as he were deed
Hys brest to brosten wyth his sadel bowe
As blacke he lay as any cole or crowe
So was the bloode yronne in his face
Anon he was brought out of the place
wyth herte sore, to Theseus paleys
Tho was he corven out of hys harneys
And in a bedde ybrought ful fayre and blyue
For he was yet in memorye, and on lyue
And alway cryeng after Emelye.
¶ Duke Theseus, with al hys companye
Is comen home to Athenes hys cyte
with al blysse and great solempnyte
Al be it that this auenture was fall
He wolde not discomforte hem all
Yen sayd eke, that Arcyte shulde not dye
He shulde ben yhealed of hys maladye
And of an other thyng they were as fayne
That of hem al there was none slayne
Al were they sore hurte, and namely one
That ẃ aspere was thronled hys brest bone
Two other woundes, & two broken armes
Some had salues, and some had charmes
Fermaces of herbes and eke saue
They drouken. for they wold her lyeues haue
For whiche this noble duke, as he wel can
Comforteth and honoureth euery man
And made reuel al the longe nyght
Unto the straunge lordes, as it was ryght
Ne there nas holde no discomfortyng
But as iustes or a tourneyng
For sothly there nas no discomfyture
For fallyng is holde but an auenture
Ne to be ladde by force vnto a stake
vnyolden and with twenty knyghtes take
One person a lone withouten any mo
And haryed forth by arme, foote, and too
And eke hys stede driuen forthe with staues
With footemen, bothe yemen and knaues
It was aretted hym no vilanye
There may no man cleape it cowardye
For whiche anon, duke Theseus dyd crye
To stynten al rancour and enuye
They grete as wel of one syde as of other
And eyther syde ylyke, as others brother
And yaue hym ryghtes after her degre
And fully helde a feest dayes thre
And coueyed the knyghtes worthyly
Out of hys towne, a dayes iourney largely
And home went euery man the ryght way
Ther was no more, but farwel & haue good (day.
Of this batayle, I wol no more endyte
But speke of Palamon and Arcyte
Swelleth the brest of Arcyte, and the sore
Encreaseth at his herte more and more
The clotered bloode, for any leche crafte
Corrumped, and is in hys body lafte
That neyther veynbloode, ne ventousyng
Ne drynke of herbes, may be helpyng
By vertue expulsed, or anymall
For thylke vertue cleaped naturall
Ne may the venym voyde, ne expell
The pypes of hys longes began to swell
And euery lacerte, in hys brest adown
Is shent wyth venym and corruption
Hym gayneth neyther, for to get hys lyfe
Vomyte vpwarde, ne downwarde laxatyfe
All is to bruste thylke regyon
Nature hath no dompnacyon
And certainly ther as naturewol nat wirche
Farwel phisyke, go beare the corse to chirche
Thys is al & some, that Arcyte muste dye
For whiche he sendeth after Emelye

And Palamon hys cosyn dere
Than sayd he thus, as ye shall after here.
¶ Nought may my woful spyrit in my herte
Declare a poynte of al my sorowes smerte
To you my lady, that I loue moste
But I bequethe the seruyce of my goste
To you abouen any creature
Syn that my lyfe may no lenger dure
Alas the wo, alas my paynes stronge
That I for you haue suffred and so longe
Alas the dethe, alas myn Emely
Alas the partyng of our company
Alas myn hertes quene, alas my lyues wyfe
Myn hertes lady, ender of my lyfe
What is the worlde, what asken mē to haue
Nowe with his loue, now in his colde graue
Alone withouten any company
Farwel my swete foe, myn Emely
And softe take me in your armes twey
For the loue of god, herkeneth what I sey.
¶ I haue here with my cosyn Palamon
Had stryfe and rancour, many a day agon
For loue of you, and for my ielousye
And Jupiter so wysely my soule gye
To speken of a seruaunt properly
with cyrcumstaunces al trewly
That is to say, trouth, honour, & knyghthede
wysedom, humblesse, estate, and hye kynrede
Fredom, and all that longeth to that arte
So Jupiter haue of my soule parte
As in this worlde ryght now knowe I non
So worthy to be loued as Palamon
That serueth you, and woll don all hys lyfe
And yf that ye shall euer ben a wyfe
Foryet not Palamon, the gentyll man
And with that worde his speche fayle begā
For from hys fete vnto hys brest was come
The colde of dethe, that had hym nome
And yet more ouer; for in hys armes two
The vytal strength is loste, and al ago
Saue onely the intellecte, without more
That dwelled in his herte sycke and sore
Gan faylen, whan the herte felte dethe
Dusked hys eyen two, and fayled brethe
But on hys lady, yet caste he hys eye
Hys laste worde was, mercy Emelye
Hys spyrit chaunged, and out went there
whytherwarde I can not tel, ne where
Therfore I stynte, I am no diuynystre
Of soules fynde I not in this regystre
Ne me lyst not thylke opinyon to tell
Of hem, though they writen wher they dwel
Arcyte is colde, that Mars hys soule gye
Nowe woll I speke forthe of Emelye.
¶ Shryght Emely, and howlen Palamon
And Theseus his suster vp toke anon
Swounyng, & bare her fro hys corse away
what helpeth it to tarry forthe the day
To tellen how she wept bothe euē & morowe
For in suche case women haue suche sorowe
whan that her husbandes ben fro hem go
That for the more parte they sorowen so
Or els fallen in suche maladye
That at the laste, certaynly they dye
Infinyte ben the sorowes and the teres
Of olde folke, and folke of tender yeres
In al the towne, for dethe of this Theban
For hym there wepeth bothe chylde and mā
So great wepyng was there not certayne
whan Hector was brought, al fresche islayn
To Troy alas, the pyte that was there
Cratchyng of chekes, rentyng eke of here
why woldest thou be deed, thus women crye
And haddest golde ynoughe, and Emelye.
No man myght glade Theseus
Sauyng hys olde father Egeus
That knewe thys worldes transmutacion
As he had sene it, bothe vp and doun
Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse
And shewed hym ensamples and lyknesse
Ryght as there dyed neuer man, q̃ he
That he ne lyued in erthe in some degre
Ryght so there lyued neuer man, he sayde
In al thys world, that somtyme he ne deyde
Thys world is but a thorowfare full of wo
And we ben pylgrymes, passyng to and fro
Deth is an ende of euery worldes sore.
And ouer al thys yet sayd he moch more
To thys effecte, ful wysely to exhorte
The people, that they shulde hem recomfort
Duke Theseus with al hys busy cure
Casteth nowe, where that the sepulture
Of good Arcyte, shall best ymaked be
And eke moste honorable of degre
And at the laste he toke conclusyon
That there as Arcyte and Palamon
Had for loue, the batayle hem bytwene
That in the same selue groue, swete & grene
There as he had his amerous desyres
Hys complaynte, & for loue hys hotte fyres
He wolde make a fyre, in whiche the offys
Funeral he myght hem al accomplys
He hath anon comaunded to hacke and hewe
The okes olde, and lay hem al on arewe

And

In culpons, wel arayed for to brenne
His offycers with swyfte foote they renne
And ryght anon at hys commaundement
And after Theseus hath ysente
After a beere, and it all ouer spradde
Wyth clothe of golde, the rychest that he had
And of the same sute he clothed Arcyte
Upon hys handes hys gloues whyte
Eke on hys heed a crowne of laurer grene
And in his hande a sworde ful bright & kene
He loyde hym bare the visage on the bere
Therwith he wepte, that pyte was to here
And for the people shulde sene hym all
Whan it was day, he brought hym to ý hall
That roreth of the cry & of the sorowes soun
Tho gan this wofull theban Palamon
with glytering berde, & ruddy shynyng heres
In clothes blacke, dropped al wyth teres
And passyng other of wepyng Emely
The rufullest of all the company.
And in as moche as the seruyce shulde be
The more noble, and ryche in hys degre
Duke Theseus let forthe the stedes bryng
That trapped were in stele all gleteryng
And couered with the armes of dan Arcyte
Upon these stedes great and whyte
Ther saten folke, of which one bare his sheld
Another hys speare, in hys hande helde
The thyrde bare with him a bowe turkes
Of brent golde was the case & eke the harnes
And ryden forthe a pace with sory chere
Towarde the grove, as ye shal after here.
¶ The noblest of the grekes, that there were
Upon her shuldres caryed the bere
With slacke pace, and eyen reed and wete
Throughout the cyte, by the mayster strete
That spread was al w̄ blak, & that wōder hye
Ryght of the same is the strete ywrye
Upon the ryght hande wente Egeus
And on the other syde duke Theseus
With vessels in her hande, of golde full fyne
Al ful of hony, mylke, bloode, and wyne
Eke Palamon, with full great company
And after that, came wofull Emely
With fyre in hande, as was ý tyme the gyse
To don the offyce of funeral seruyse
Hye labour, and ful great apparaylyng
Was at seruyce, and at fyre makyng
That with his grene toppe the heuē raught
And twenty fadome of brede armes straught
This is to sayn, the bowes were so brode
Of strawe first ther was layde many a lode.
But how the fyre was maked vp on height
And eke the names, howe the trees heyght
As oke, firre, beche, aspe, elder, elme, popelere
Wyllo, holm, plane, boxe, chesteyn, laulere
Maple, thorne, beche, ewe, hasel, whipultre
How they were felde, shal nat be tolde for me
Ne howe the goddes ronne vp and doun
Disheryted of her abytacioun
In whiche they wonned in rest and pees
Nymphes, Fauny, and amadriades
Ne howe the beeste, ne the bryrdes all
Fledden for feare, whan the trees fall
Ne how the grounde agast was of the lyght
That was nat wonte to se the sonne bryght
Ne how the fyre was couched first with stre
And than with drye stryckes clouen a thre
And than with grene wodde, and spicery
And than with clothe of golde and perry
And garlondes hāgyng with many a floure
The myrre, the ensence, with swete odoure
Ne howe Arcyte lay amonge al this
Ne what rychesse aboute hys body is
Ne howe that Emely, as was the gyse
Put in the fyre of funeral seruyse
Ne how she swouned whā maked was ý fyre
Ne what she spake, ne what was her desyre
Ne what iewelles men in the fyre caste
Whan that the fyre was great & brent faste
Ne how some cast her sheld, & some her spere
And of her vestementes, whiche ý they were
And cuppes full of wyne, mylke, and bloode
In to the fyre, that brent as it were woode
Ne howe the grekes with a huge route
Thryse rydden all the fyre aboute
Upō the lefte hande, with a loude showtyng
And thryse with her speares clateryng
And thryse howe the ladyes gan crye
Ne how that ladde was homwarde Emelye
Ne howe that Arcite is brent to asshen colde
Ne howe the lyche wake was holde
All that nyght, ne howe the grekes play
The wake playes, kepe I nat to say
Who wrestled best naked, wyth oyle anoynt
Ne who bare hym best in euery poynt
I woll not telleu howe they gone
whom to Athenes, whan the play is doue
But shortly to the poynt than woll I wende
And make of my longe tale an ende.

By processe and by length of yeres
All stynten is the mornyng and the teres
Of grekes, by one generall assent

Then

Than semed me there was a parlement
At Athenes, vpon a certayne poynt and caas
Amonge the whiche poyntes yspoken was
To haue with certayne countres alyaunce
And haue of Thebans fully obeysaunce
For whiche thys noble Theseus anon
Let sende after thys gentyl Palamon
Unwyste of him what was ý cause & why:
But in his blacke clothes sorowfully
He came at hys commaundement on hye
Tho sent Theseus after Emelye.
Whan they were set, & hushte was ý place
And Theseus abydden hath a space
Or any worde came from his wyse brest
Hys eyen sette he there hym lest
And with suche a sadde vysage, he syked styll
And after that, right thus he sayd hys wyll.
¶ The first mouer of the cause aboue
Whan he first made the fayre chayne of loue
Great was theffecte, & hye was hys entente
Wel wyste he why, & what therof he mente
For with that fayre chayne of loue he bonde
The fyre, the eyre, the water, and the londe
In certayne bondes, that they may nat fle
That same prince and that mouer, q̃ he
Hath stablisshed i this wretched world adoũ
Certen dayes and duracion
To al that are engendred in thys place
Ouer the whiche day they may not pace
Al mowe they yet the dayes abredge
There nedeth none auctorite to ledge
For it is proued by experyence
But that me lyst declaren my sentence
Than may men by thys ordre discerne
That thylke mouer stable is and eterne
wel may men knowe, but he be a fole
That euery party is deryued from hys hole
For nature hath not taken hys begynnyng
Of one parte or cantell of a thyng
But of a thyng that perfyte is and stable
Discendyng so, tyl it be corrumpable
And therfore of hys wyse purueyaunce
He hath so wel byset hys ordynaunce
That spaces of thynges and progressyons
Shullen endure by successyons
And not eterne, wythout any lye
Thus mayst thou vnderstande and se at eye.
Lo the oke, that hath so longe a norishyng
Fro the tyme that it beginneth first to spring
And hath so longe a lyfe, as ye may se
Yet at the last, wasted is the tre
Consyderth eke, howe that the harde stone
Under our fete, on whiche we treade & gone
Yet wasteth it, as it lyeth in the wey
The brode ryuer somtyme wexeth drey
The great townes, se we waue and wende
Than ye se that al thys thyng hath ende
And man and woman se shal we also
That nedeth in one of the termes two
That is to sayne, in youthe orels in age
He mote be deed, a kyng as wel as a page
Some in his bedde, some in the depe see
Some in the large felde, as ye may se
It helpeth not, al gothe that ylke wey
Than may ye se that al thyng mote dey
what maketh this, but Jupiter the kyng:
That is prince, and cause of al thyng
Conuertyng al to hys propre wyl
From whiche it is deryued sothe to tel
And here agayne, no creature on lyue
Of no degre, auayleth for to stryue
Than is it wysedome, as thynketh me
To make vertue of necessyte
And take it wel, that we may not eschewe
And namely that to vs al is dewe
And who so grutcheth aught, he dothe folye
And rebel is to hym that al may gye
And certaynly, a man hath moste honour
To dyen in hys excellence and flour
whan he is syker of hys good name
Thã hath he don his frendes ne him no sham
And gladder ought his frendes be of his deth
whan with honour y polde is vp the breth
Than whan his name apalled is for age
For al forfeten is hys vassellage
Than is it best, as for a worthy fame
To dyen, whan he is best of name
The contrarye of al thys is wylfulnesse
why grutchen we, why haue we heynesse
That good Arcite, of cheualry the floure
Departed is, with dutye and with honoure
Out of this foule prison, of thys lyfe
why grutchen here his cosyn and hys wyfe
Of his welfare, that loueth hym so wele:
Can he hem thãke, nay god wot neuer a dele
That bothe his soule, and eke hem offende
And yet they mowe not her lustes amende:
¶ what may conclude of thys longe story
But after sorowe, I rede vs be mery
And thanke Jupiter of al his grace
And er we departen from thys place
I rede we maken of sorowes two
One perfyte ioye, lastyng euer mo
And loke nowe where most sorowe is heryn

There

There wol I fyrst amende and begyn.
Suster quod he, thys is my ful assent
Wyth al the people of my parlement
That gentle Palamon, your owne knyght
That serueth you with wyl, herte, & myght
And euer hath done, sythe ye fyrst hym knew
That ye shal of your grace vpon hym rewe
And take hym for husbonde and for lorde
Lene me your honde, for thys is our accorde.
Let se nowe of your womanly pyte
He is a kynges brother sonne parde
And though he were a poore bachelere
Syn he hath serued you so many a yere
And had for you so great aduersyte
It muste ben consydred, leueth me
For gentle mercy ought to passen ryght.
Than sayd he thus to Palamon ý knight
I trowe there nede lytel sermonyng
To make you to assenten to thys thyng
Cometh nere, & taketh your lady by ý honde
Bytwyxt hem was maked anon the bonde
That hyght matrimony or maryage
By all the counsayle of the baronage
And thus with al blysse and melodye
Hath Palamon ywedded Emelye.
¶ And god that al this world hath wrought
Sende him his loue, ý it hath so dere bought
For nowe is Palamon in al wele
Lyuyng in blysse, in richesse, and in hele
And Emelye hym loueth so tenderly
And he her serueth so gentelly
That neuer was ther no worde hē bytwene
Of ielousye, or of any other tene
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye
And god saue al thys fayre companye.

¶ Here endeth the Knyghtes tale, and here foloweth the Mylers Prologue.

Han that the knight had thus hys tale ytolde
In al the companye nas ther yong ne olde
That he ne sayd, it was a noble story
And worthy to be drawen in memory
And namely the gentyls euerychone
Our hoste lough and sware, so mote I gone
This gothe a right, vnbokled is the male
Let se nowe who shal tel another tale
For truely, the game is wel begonne
Nowe telleth syr monke yf ye conne
Somwhat, to quyte with the knyghtes tale
¶ The myller for dronken was al pale
So that vnnethes vpon hys horse he satte
Ne nolde auale neyther hoode ne hatte
Ne abyde no man for hys curtesye
But in Pylates voyce he began to crye
And swore by armes, bloode, and bones
I can a noble tale for the nones (tale
With which I wol nowe quyte ý knight his
¶ Our hoste sawe that he was dronkē of ale
And sayd: abyde Robyn leue brother
Some better man shal tel vs fyrst an other
Abyde, and let vs wirche thriftely.
¶ By goddes soule (q̃ he) that wol not I
For I wol speke, or els go my way
Our hoste answerde: tel on a dyuelway
Thou arte a foole, thy wytte is ouercome.
Nowe herkeneth quod ý myller, al & some
But fyrst I make protestacion
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun
And therfore yf I mispeke or say
wyte it the ale of Sothwarke, I you pray
For I wol tel a legende and a lyfe
Bothe of a carpenter and hys wyfe
Howe that a clerke set a wrightes cappe.
¶ The Reue answerde & said, stynte thy clap
Let be thy leude dronken harlottry
It is a synne, and eke a great folye
To apayren any man, or hym defame
And eke to bryng wyues in suche blame
Thou mayst ynouge of other thynges sayn.
Thys dronkē myller spake ful sone agayn
And sayd: leue brother Oswolde
who hath no wyfe is no cokolde
But I say not therfore that thou arte one
There ben ful good wyues many one
why arte thou angry with my tale now
I haue a wyfe parde, as wel as thou
Yet nolde I for al the oxen in my plough
Take vpon me more than ynough
To demen of my selfe that I am one
I wol beleue that I am none.
An husbonde shulde not ben inquisytyfe
Of goddes priuete, ne of hys wyfe
For so he fynde goddes foyson there
Of the remenaunt, nedeth nat to enquere.
what shulde I more say, but this Mylere
He nolde his wordes for no man forbere
But tolde his chorles tale in this manere

Me forthynketh I shal reherce it here
And therfore, euery gentle wight I pray
Demeth not for goddes loue, that I say
Of yuel entent, but that I mote reherce
Her tales al, ben they better or werse
Or els falsen some of my matere
And therfore, who so lyst it not to here
Turne ouer the leke, and chose another tale
For ye shal fynde ynowe great and smale
Of hystorial thyng, that toucheth gentilnesse
And eke moralite, and holynesse
Blame not me, yf that ye chose amys
The Myller is a chorle, ye knowe wel this
So was the Reue eke, and other mo
And harlotry they tolde eke bothe two
Auyse you, and put me out of blame
And eke men shuld not make ernest of game.

Here endeth the Myllers prologue, and here after foloweth hys tale.

Whylom ther was dwellyng in Oxenforde
A ryche gnoffe, ý gestes helde to borde
And of his craft he was a carpenter
Wyth hym there was dwelling a poore scoler
Had yleerned arte, but al his fantasye
Was turned to lerne Astrologye
And coude a certayne conclusyons
To demen by interogacions
If that men asked hym in certayne houres
whan ý men shulde haue drought or shoures
Or yf men asked hym what shulde befall
Of euery thyng, I may not reken al.
Thys clerke was cleped hende Nycholas
Of derne loue he coude and of solas
And therto he was slye and ryght prime
And ylyke to a mayden meke to se
A chambre had he in that hostelry
Alone, withouten any company
Ful fetously dight with herbes sote
And he hym selfe as swete as is the rote
Of lycores, or of any sytuwale
His almagiste, and bokes great and smale
His asterlagour, longyng for hys arte
His augrym stones lyeng fayre a parte
On shelues couched at his beddes heed
Hys presse ycouered with a foldyng reed
And al aboue there lay a gay sautrye
On whiche he made on nyghtes melodye
So swetely, that al the chambre ronge
And Angelus ad virginem he songe

And after

And after that he songe the kynges note
Ful ofte blessed was hys mery throte
And thus the swete clerke hys tyme spente
After hys frendes fyndynge and hys rente.
¶ Thys carpenter had wedded new a wyfe
whych that he loued more then hys lyfe
Of eyghtene yere she was of age
Jelous he was, and kepte her strayte in cage
For she was wyld, and yonge: & he was olde
And demed hym selfe to ben a cokewolde
He knewe not Cato: for hys wytte was rude
That bad men wedde her similitude
Men shulde wedde after her astate
For youth and elde is often at debate
But syth he was fallen in the snare
He must enduren, as other folke hys care
Fayre was this yōge wyfe, & therwithal
As any wysele her body gentle and smale
A seynte she weared, barred al wyth sylke
A barme clothe, as whyte as morowe mylke
Upon her lendes, ful of many a gore
whyt was her smock, & embrouded al byfore
And eke behynde on her colere aboute
Of cole blacke sylke, within and eke without
The tapes of her whyte volypere
were of the same sute of her colere
Her fyllet brode of sylke, and set ful hye
And syker ly, she had a lykerous eye
Ful smale ypulled were her browes two
And tho were bent, and black as any sloo
She was moche more blysful for to se
Then is the newe Perienet tre
And softer then the wol is of a wether.
And by her gyrdel honge a purse of lether
Tassed wyth sylke, and perled wyth latoun
In al thys worlde, to seken vp and doun
There nys no man so wyse, ỳ couth thenche
So gay a popelote, or so gay a wenche
Ful bryghter was the shynyng of her hewe
Then in the towre the noble forged newe
But of her songe, it was so loude & erne
As any swalowe sytynge on a berne
Therto she couth skyppe, & make a game
As any kydde or calfe folowyng hys dame
Her mouth was swete, as braket or ỳ methe
Or horde of apples, lyeng in hey or hethe
wynsynge she was, as is a ioly colte
Longe as a maste, & vpryght as a bolte
A broche she bare on her lowe collere
As brode as the bosse of a bokelere
Her shoes were lased on her legges hye
She was a primrole, and a pyggesnye
For any lorde to lyggen in hys bedde
Or yet for any good yoman to wedde.
¶ Nowe sir and efte sire, so byfel the caas
That on a day thys hende Nycholas
Fel with thys yonge wyfe to rage and pley
whyle that her husbonde was at Oseney
As clerkes ben ful sotel and queynte
And priuely he caught her by the queynte
And sayd: I wys but I haue my wyll
For derne loue of the lemman I spyll
And helde her faste by the haunche bones
And sayd: lemman loue me wel at ones
Or I wol dyen also god me saue
And she sprynge as a colte in a traue
And wyth her heed she wrieth fast away
And sayd: I wol not kesse the by my fay
why let be quod she, let be Nycholas
Or I wol crye out harrowe and alas
Do way your handes for your curtesye
Thys Nycholas gan mercy for to crye
And spake so fayre, & prokered hym so faste
That she her loue graunted hym at laste
And swore her oth, by s. Thomas of Kent
That she wolde bene at hys cōmaundement
when that she may her leyser wel aspye
My husbonde is so ful of ielousye
That but ye wayte wel, and be priue
I wotte ryght wel I nam but deed, q̃ she
Ye mote ben ful derne as in thys caas.
Nay therof care ye not, quod Nycholas
A clerke had lytherly byset hys whyle
But yf he couth a carpenter begyle
And thus they were accorded, and yswore
To awayten a tyme, as I haue sayd byfore
And whē Nicholas had don thus euery dele
And thacked her aboute the lendes wele
He kysled her swete, then taketh hys sautry
And playeth faste, and maketh melody
Then fel it thus, that to ỳ parysh cherche
(Christes owne workes for to werche)
Thys good wyfe wente vpon an holydaye
Her forheed shone as bryght as any daye
So was it washe, when she let her werke
¶ Now was ther of ỳ chirch a parysh clerke
The whych that was cleaped Absolon
Crouille was hys heare, & as golde it shon
And strouted as a fanne large and brode
Ful streyght & euen lay hys ioly shode
Hys rode was redde, hys eyen gray as goos
with Poules wyndowes corue on his shoos
In hosen redde he wente fetously
Syde he was ful smale and properly

Al in a kyrtel of lyght waget
Ful fayre and thycke ben the poyntes set
And therupon he had a gay surplyse
As whyte as is the blosome on the ryse
A mery chylde he was, so god me saue
Wel coude he let bloode, clyppe, and shaue
And make a chartre of lande, & a quytaunce
In twenty maner coude he tryp and daunce
After the skole of Oxenforde tho
And wyth hys legges casten to and fro
And play songes on a smale rybyble
Therto he songe somtyme a loude quinyble
And as wel couth he playe on a geterne
In al the towne nas brewhouse ne tauerne
That he ne bysyted wyth hys solas
There any gay tapstere was
But soth to say he was somwhat squaimous
Of fartynge, and of speche daungerous.
¶ Thys Absolon, that was ioly and gaye
Goth wyth a censer on the sondaye
Cencyng the wyues of the paryshe faste
And many a louely loke on hem he caste
And namely on thys carpenters wyke
To loke on her hym thought a mery lyke
She was so proprę, and swete as lycorous
I dare wel sayne yf she had ben a mous
And he a catte, he wold haue her hente anon
Thys paryshe clerke, thys ioly Absolon
Hath in hys herte such a loue longynge
That of no wyke toke he none offerynge
For curtesye he sayd he wolde none
The moone, whē it was night bryght shone
And Absolon hys geterne hath ytake
For paramours he thought for to wake
And forth he goeth, ielous and amerous
Tyl he came to the carpenters hous
A lytle after the cockes had ycrowe
And dressed hym by a shot wyndowe
That was vpon the carpenters wall
He syngeth in hys voyce gentle and small
Nowe dere lady, yf thy wyl be
I pray you that ye wol rewe on me
Ful wel accordyng to hys geternynge.
¶ Thys carpenter awoke, & herde him synge
And spake vnto hys wyke anon
what Alyson, heres thou not Absolon
That chaūteth thus vnder our boures wal-
And she aunswerd her husbande ther withal
Yes god wot, I here hym euery dele
This passeth forth, what wil ye bet thē wele
Fro day to day, thys ioly Absolon
So woeth her, that hym was wo bygon
He waketh al the nyght, and al the day
He kēbeth hys lockes brode, & made him gay
He woeth her by meanes and brocage
And swore, he wolde ben her owne page
He syngeth brokkyng as a nyghtyngale
He sent her pyment, meth, and spyced ale
And wafres pypynge hotte out of the glede
And for she was of toun, he profred her mede
For some folke wol be wonne for rychesse
And some for strokes, & some with gētlenesse
Somtyme to shew his lyghtnes & mastrye
He playeth Herodes on a skaffolde hye
But what auayleth hym, as in thys caas.
So loueth she thys hende Nicholas
That Absolon may blowe the buckes horne
He ne had for hys laboure but a skorne
And thus she maketh Absolon her ape
And al hys request turneth to a iape
Forsoth thys prouerbe it is no lye
Men say thus alway, the nye slye
Maketh the ferre loue to be loth
For though ẏ Absolon be woode or wroth
Bycause that he ferre was from her syght
Thus nye Nycholas stode in hys lyght
But now beare the well hende Nycholas
For Absolon may wayle & synge alas
And so bysel it on a saterday
Thys carpenter was gone to Osnay
And hende Nicholas and Alyson
Accorded were to thys conclusion
That Nycholas shulde shapen hem a wyle
Thys sely ielous carpenter to begyle
And yf so be the game went aryght
She shulde slepe in hys armes al nyght
For thys was hys desyre, and hers also
And tyght anone, wythout wordes mo
Thys Nycholas no lenger wolde tarye
But doth ful softe vnto hys chambre carye
Both meate and drynke, for a day or twey
And to her husbande bade her for to sey
yf that he asked after Nycholas
She shulde saye she nyst where he was
Of al that daye she sawe hym not with eye
She trowed he was in some maladye
For no crye that her mayde coude cal
He nolde answere, for naught ẏ might befal
¶ Thus passeth forth al the ylke saterday
That Nycholas styl in hys chambre lay
And ete, dranke, & slept, & dyd what him lyste
Tyl sonday, that the Sunne goeth to reste
¶ Thys sely carpenter hath great maruayle
Of Nicolas, or what thinge might him eyle

And

And sayd: I am a drad by sayntc Thomas
It stondeth not aryght with Nycholas
God shylde that he dyed sodaynly
This worlde is nowe ful tykel sekerly
I sawe to day a corse borne to cherche
That now on mōday last I saw him werche
So vp (quod he vnto hys knaue) anone
Cleape at his dore, & knocke fast with a stone
Loke howe it is, and tel me boldely.
¶ This knaue wente vp ful sturdely
And at the chambre dore, whyle that he stode
He cryed and knocked as he were woode
What howe - what do ye maylster Nicholay -
Howe may ye slepe al this longe day -
But al for naught, he herde not a worde.
An hole he founde ful lowe vpon a borde
There as the catte was wonte in to crepe
And at that hole he loked in ful depe
And at the laste he had of hym a syght
¶ Thys Nicholas sate euer gapyng vpright
As he had keyked on the newe mone
A down he gothe, & tolde his maylster sone
In what aray he sawe thys ylke man
¶ This carpenter to blyssen hym began
And sayd: nowe helpe vs seynt Frideswyde
A man wot lytel what shal hym betyde
This man is fallen, with hys Astronomye
In some woodnesse, or in some agonye
I thought aye wel howe it shulde be
Men shulden not knowe of goddes priuete
Ye blessed be alway the leude man
That naught but onely his byleue can.
Right so ferde another clerke w astronomy
He walked in to the feldes for to pry
Vpon the sterres, to wete what shulde befal
Tyl he was in a marlpyt yfal
He sawe not that, yet by saynte Thomas
Me reweth sore on hende Nicholas
He shal be arated out of hys studyeng
If that I may, by Jesus heuen kyng.
Get me a staffe, that I may vnderspore
Whyle that thou Robyn heuest vp the dore
He shal out of hys studyeng, as I gesse
And to the chambre dore he gan hym dresse
Hys knaue was a stronge carle for the nones
And by the haspe bare vp the dore at ones
In to the flore the dore fel anone.
¶ This Nicholas sate as styl as any stone
And euer gaped vpwarde into the eyre.
This carpenter wende he were in dispeyre
And hente hym by the shulders myghtyly
And shoke hym harde, and cryed spytously
What Nicholas, what how loke adowne
Awake, and thynke on Christes passyon
I crouche ý from elues & fro wicked wightes
Therwith the nightspel he said anonrightes
On foure halues of the house aboute
And on the threshold of the dore without
Jesu Christ, and saynt Benedyght
Blysse this house from euery wycked wight
Fro the nyghtes mare the wyte Pater noster
Where wonnest thou saynt Peters suster -
¶ And at the laste thys hende Nicholas
Gan for to syke sore, and sayd alas
Shal al this worlde be loste eftsones nowe -
This carpēter answerde: what sayst thou -
what thinke on god, as we do men ý swynke
This Nicholas answerde: fetch my drinke
And after wol I speke in priuete
Of certayne thynges, that toucheth the & me
I wol tellen it none other man certayne.
This carpēter goth down, & cometh agayn
And brought of myghty ale a large quarte
And whan that eche of hem had dronkē hys (parte
This Nicholas, his dore faste shette
And downe the carpenter by hem sette
And sayd: John hoste myne lefe and dere
Thou shalte vpon thy trouthe swere me here
That to no wight thou shalt my coūsel wrey
For it is Christes counsayle that I say
And yf thou tel it any man, thou arte forlore
For this vengeaūce thou shalte haue therfore
That yf thou wray me, thou shalt be woode.
¶ Nay Christ it forbyd for hys holy bloode
Quod tho this sely man, I am no blabbe
Ne though I say it, I am not lefe to gabbe
Say what thou wolte, I shal it neuer tel
To childe ne wyfe, by him that harowed hel.
Nowe John (ý Nicholas) I wol nat lye
I haue yfounden in myn astrologye
As I haue loked in the moone bryght
That now on monday next, at quarter night
Shal fal a rayne, & that so wylde & woode
That halfe so great was neuer Noes floode
This world (he said) in lesse than in an houre
Shal al be dreynte, so hydous is the shoure
Thus shal mankynde drenche, & lese her lyfe.
This carpēter answerd & said: alas my wife
And shal she drenche - Alas myn Alyson
For sorowe of this he fel almoste adown
And said: Is there no remedye in thys caas -
Yes yes ful good (quod hende Nicholas)
If thou wolt werche after lore and rede
Thou maist not werchē after thyn own hede

For thus sayeth Salomon, ꝑ was ful trewe
Worke al by coũsayle, & thou shalt not rewe
And yf thou wylt werken by good counsayle
I vndertake, wythout mast or sayle
Yet shal I saue her, and the and me
Hast thou not herde howe saued was Noe
When ꝑ our lorde had warned hym byforne
That al ꝑ worlde with water shuld be lorne
Yes (quod the carpenter) ful yore ago
¶ Hast thou not herde (quod Nicholas) also
The sorowe of Noe wyth hys felowshyp
Or that he myght gete hys wyke to shyppe
Hym had leuer, I dare wel vndertake
At thylke tyme, then al hys wethers blake
That he had a shyp her selfe alone
And therfor wost thou what is best to done
Thys asketh haste, and of an hasty thynge
Men may not preche ne make taryenge
Anone go get vs fast into thys inne
A knedyng trowe or els a kemelyn
For eche of vs, but loke that they ben large
In which mẽ mowe swymmẽ as in a barge
And haue therin vytayles sufficiante
But for a day, fye on the remenante
The water shal aslake and gon awaye
Aboute prime vpon the nexte daye
But Robyn may not wetẽ of thys thy knaue
Ne eke thy mayde Gylle, I may not saue
Aske not why: for though thou aske me
I wol not tel goddes priuete
Suffyseth the, but yf thy wyttes be madde
To haue as great a grace as Noe hadde
Thy wyke shal I wel saue out of doute
Go nowe thy way, & spede the here aboute
But when thou hast for her, & the, and me
Ygetten vs these knedynge tubbes thre
Then shalt thou hange hem in ꝑ rofe ful hye
That no man of our purueyaunce espye
And when ꝑ hast done thus as I haue sayde
And hast our vytayle fayre in hem layde
And eke an axe to smyte the corde a two
When ꝑ the water cometh, that we may go
And breake an hole on hye vpon the gable
Unto the garden warde, ouer the stable
That we may freely passen forth our waye
When that the great shoure is gone awaye
Then shalt ꝑ swym as mery I vndertake
As doth ꝑ whyt ducke after her drake
Then wol I clepe, howe Alyson, how John
Be mery: for the floode wol passe anon
And thou wolt sayn, hayle master Nicholay
Good morowe: for I se wel that it is day
And then we shul be lordes al our lyfe
Of al the worlde, as was Noe and his wyfe
But of one thynge I warne the ful ryght
Be wel auysed on that ylke nyght
That we be entred into the shyppes borde
That none of vs ne speake not a worde
Ne clepe ne crye, but ben in hys prayer
For it is goddes owne heste dere.
¶ Thy wife & thou mot hãge farre a twinne
For that betwyxte you shalbe no synne
No more in lokynge then there shal in dede
Thys ordinaunce is sayd, go God the spede
To morowe at nyght, whẽ men be al asleepe
Into our knedynge tubbes wol we crepe
And sytten there, abydynge goddes grace
Go now thy waye, I haue no lenger space
To make of thys no lenger sermonyng
Men sayne thus: send ꝑ wyse, & say nothyng
Thou art so wyse, it nedeth the not to teche
Go saue our lyues, and that I the beseche
¶ Thys sely carpenter goeth forth his waye
Ful ofte he sayd, alas and welawaye
And to hys wyfe he tolde hys priuete
And she was ware, & knewe it bet then he
What al thys queynt cast was for to sey
But natheles, she ferde as she wolde dey
And sayd: alas, go forth thy way anone
Helpe vs to skape, or we be deed echone
I am thy trewe very wedded wyfe
Go dere spouse, and helpe to saue our lyfe
Lo, whych a great thynge is affection
Men may dye of ymagynacion
So depe may impression be take.
Thys sely carpenter begynneth to quake
Hym thynketh verely that he may se
Noes floode come waltrynge as the see
To drenchen Alyson, hys hony dere
He wepeth, waileth, and maketh sory chere
He syketh, wyth many a sory thought
He gothe, & getteth hym a knedyng trough
And after a tubbe, and a kemelyn
And priuely he sent hem to hys in
And hynge hem in the rofe ful priuely
Hys owne honde, he made hym ladders thre
To clymben by the ronges, & by the stalkes
Into the tubbes hongyng by the balkes
And hem vitayled, both trough and tubbe
Wyth breed and chese, & good ale in a iubbe
Suffysyng ryght ynowe, as for a daye
But er that he had made al thys arraye
He sent hys knaue, and eke hys wenche also
Upon hys nede to London for to go

And

And on ye monday, when it drowe to nyght
He shette his dore, without candel lyght
And dressed al thyng, as it shulde be
And shortly clomben vp al thre
They sytten styl not fully a furlonge way
Now pater noster clum, sayd Nicolay
And clum cy Johan, & cluom sayd Alison
Thys carpenter sayd hys deuocion
And styl he syt, and byddeth hys prayere
Awaytynge on the rayne, yf he it here.
¶ The deed slepe, for wery besynesse
Fel on thys carpenter, ryght as I gesse
Aboute curfewe tyme, or lytel more
For trauayle of hys gost he groneth sore
And efte he routeth, for hys heed myslay
And down of ye ladder the stalketh Nicolay
And Alyson ful softe after she spedde
wythout wordes mo they went to bedde
There as the carpenter was woned to lye
There was the reuel, and the melodye
And thus lyeth Alyson and Nycholas
In busynesse of myth and solas
Tyl that the bel of laudes gan to rynge
And freres in the chaunsel gon to synge.
¶ Thys parysh clerke, thys amerous Absolō
That is for loue alway so wo bygon
Upon the monday was at Osenay
wyth company, hym to dysporte and play
And asked vpon a case a cloysterere
Ful priuely, after John the carpentere
And he drewe hym a parte out of the chyrche
And said I not: I saw him not here wyrche
Syth saturday, I trowe that he be went
For tymbre, there our Abbot hath hym sent
For he is wont for tymbre for to go
And dwellen at the grange a day or two
Or els he is at hys house certayne
where that he be, I can not sothly sayne.
Thys Absolon, ful ioly was and lyght
And thourt, now is my time to walk alnight
For sekerly, I sawe hym not sterynge
About hys dore, syth day began to sprynge
So mote I thriue, I shal at cockes crowe
ful priuely knocke at hys wyndowe
That stant ful lowe vpon hys boures wal
To Alyson wol I nowe tellen al
My loue longynge: for yet I shal not mysse
That at the leest way I shal her kysse
Some maner comforte shal I haue parfaye
My mouth hath ytched al thys longe daye
That is a sygne of kyssynge at the leest
Alnyght me mette eke, that I was at a feest
Therfore I wol go slepe an houre or twey
And al the nyght then wol I walke & pley.
¶ When ye the fyrst cocke hath crowe anon
Up rysl thys ioly louer Absolon
And hym arayeth gay, and in queynt deuyce
But fyrst he cheweth greyns and lycorrye
To smellen sote, or he had kempt hys here
Under hys tonge a trueloue he bere
For therby he wende to ben gracious
He rometh to the carpenters house
And styll he stante vnder the shotwyndowe
Unto hys brest it raught, it was so lowe
And softe he knocked, wyth a semely soun.
what do ye honycombe, swete Alysoun.
My fayre byrde, my swete synamome
Awaketh lemman myne, and speaketh to me
Ful lytel thynken ye vpon my wo
That for your loue I swelt there as I go
No wonder is though I swelte and swete
I morne as dothe the lambe after the tete
I wys lemman, I haue suche loue longyng
That lyke a turtle trewe is my mornyng
I may not eaten no more then may a mayde
Go fro the wyndowe Jacke foole, she sayde
As helpe me God and swete saynt Jame
I loue another, or els I were to blame
wel bet then the (by Jesu) Absolon
Go forth thy waye, or I wol caste a ston
And let me slepe, a twenty dyuelway
¶ Alas quoth Absolon, and welaway
That trewe loue was euer so yuel bystette
Then kysse me, syn it may be no bette
For Jesus loue, and for the loue of me.
wylt ye then go thy waye therwith cy she.
¶ ye certes lemman, quoth thys Absolon
Then make the redy (cy she) I come anon
And vnto Nycholas she sayd styl
Nowe peace, and thou shalt laugh thy fyl
This Absolon down set him vpō his knees
And sayd: I am a lorde at al degrees
For after thys I hope there cometh more
Lemman thy grace, & swete byrde thy nore.
The wyndowe she vndoth, & that in haste
Haue do (cy she) and spede the faste
Let not our neyghbours the aspye.
This Absolō gan wype his mouth ful dry e
Derke was the nyght, as pytche or cole
And at ye wyndow she put out her ers hole
And Absolon him felte, neyther bet ne wers
But with his mouth he kyst her bare ers
Ful sauerly, or he were ware of thys.
A backe he sterte, & thought it was amys

For wel he wyste, a woman hath no berde
He felte a thyng al rowe, and longe herde
And sayd: fye, alas what haue I do?
¶ Te he quod she, & clapte the wyndowe to
And Absolon gothe forthe a sory paas
A berde a berde, sayd hende Nycholas
By goddes corpus, this gothe fayre & wele.
This sely Absolon herde it euery dele
And on hys lyppe he gan for angre byte
And to him selue he sayd, I shal the quyte
who rubbeth now, who frotetb now his lips
with dust, w̃ sonde, with strawe, with chyps
But Absolon: that saythe ful often alas
My soule betake I to Sathanas
But me were leuer thã al this town, quod he
Of this dispyte auenged for to be.
¶ Alas (quod he) alas ỳ I ne had ybleynt
His hotte loue is colde, and al yqueynt
For fro the tyme that he had kyste her ers
Of paramours he set not a kers
For he was healed of hys maladye
Ful ofte paramoures he gan defye
And wepe as dothe a chylde that is ybete
A softe pace he wente ouer the strete
Unto a smythe, men callen dan Gerueys
That in hys forge smyteth plowe harneys
He sharpeth shares, and culters besyly
This Absolon knocketh al easily
And said vndo Gerueys, and that anon
¶ What who arte thou? I am I Absolon
What Absolon, what for Christes swete tre
Why ryse ye so rathe? ey benedicite
what eyleth you? some gay gyrle god it wote
Hath brought you thus on the berytote
By saynte note, ye wote wel what I mene
¶ This Absolon ne raught not a bene
Of al his play, no worde agayne he gaffe
He hath more towe on hys distaffe
Than Geruays knewe, & sayd frende so dere
The hote cultre, in the chymeney here
As lene it me, I haue therwith to done
I wyl bryng it the agayne ful sone.
¶ Gerueys answerde: certes were it golde
Or in a poke nobles al vntolde
Thou shuldest it haue, as I am trewe smyth
Eye cristes fote, what wol ye don therwith?
Therof (quod Absolon) be as be may
I shal wel tellen the by to morowe day
And caught the culter by the colde stele
Ful softe out at the dore gan he stele
And went vnto the carpenters wal
He coughed fyrst, & knocked ther withal
Upon the wyndowe, right as he dyd ere.
¶ This Alyson answerde: who is there
That knocketh so? I warãte he his a theke.
Why nay (q̃ he) god wot my swete leke
I am thyn Absolon, thyn owne derlyng
Of golde (q̃ he) I haue ỳ brought a ryng
My mother yaue it me, so god me saue
Ful kyne it is, and therto wel ygraue
This wol I yeue the, yf thou me kysse.
This Nycholas was ryssen for to pysse
And thought he wolde amenden all the iape
He shulde kysse his ers er that he skape
And vp the wyndowe dyd he hastely
And out his ers he put ful priuely
And ouer the buttockt, to the haunche boon
And therwith spake this clerke, this Absolon
Speke swete byrde, I not where thou arte.
¶ This Nycholas anon let fleen a farte
As great as it had ben a thunder dent
That with the stroke he was weiny yblent
And he was redy with hys yron hote
And Nycholas in the arse he smote.
Of gothe the skyn an hondbrede about
The hotte cultor brende so hys toute
And for the smerte he wende for to dye
As he were woode, he gan for to crye
Helpe, water, water, for goddes herte
This carpenter out of hys slomber sterte
And herde one crye water, as he were wood
And thought, alas now cometh Noes flood
And sette hym vp without wordes mo
And with an axe, he smote the corde a two
And downe gothe al, he foũde neyther to sel
Breed ne ale, but downe shortly he fel
Upon the flore, and there a swowne he lay
¶ Up sterte than Alyson & hende Nycholay
And cryed out, and harrowe in the strete
The neyghbours, both smal and grete
In ronne, for to gauren on thys man
That a swoune lay, palyche and wan
For with that fal brosten hath he his arme
But stonden he muste vnto hys owne harme
For whan he spake, he was yborne adcun
Wyth hende Nycholas, and Alysoun
They told euery man, that he was woode
He was agaste so of Noes floode
Throughe fantasye, that of hys vanyte
He hath getten hym knedyng tubbes thre
And hath hem honged in the roke aboue
And that he prayed hem for goddes loue
To sytten in the rooke par compayne
The folke gan laughen at his fantasye

And in to the roofe they kyken and they gape
And turned al hys ernest in to a iape
For what so this carpenter answerde
It was for naught, no man his reason herde
With othes great, he was ysworne adowne
For euerych clerke anon helde with other
They said ỳ mã was wood, my leue brother
And euery wyght gan laughen at this strife.
¶ Thus swyued was the carpenters wyfe
For al hys kepyng, and hys ielousye
And Absolon hath kyst her neyther eye
And Nycholas is skalded in the toute
Thys tale is done, & God saue al the route.

Here endeth the Myllers tale, and here after foloweth the Reues Prologue.

When folke had laughed at thys nyce caas
Of Absolon & hende Nycolas
Dyuers folke dyuersly they sayde
But for the more parte they loughe & playde
Ne at thys tale I sawe no man hym greue
But it were onely Oswolde the reue
Bycause he was of carpenters craft
A lytel yre in hys herte ylafte
He gan to grutchen and blamen it a lyte
Sothly quod he, ful wel couthe I ỳ quyte
Wyth bleryng of a proude myllers eye
If that me lyst to speke of rybaudrye
But eke I am olde, me lust not play for age
Grasse tyme is done, my fodder is forage
This whyte toppe writeth myne olde yeres
For sõtyme yolow was, now white bẽ myn
But yet I fare as doth an open ers (heres
That ylke frute is euer lenger the wers
Tyl it be rotten in mollokе, or in stre
we olde men, I dreden so fare we
Tyl we be rotten can we not be rype
we hoppẽ alway, while the world wol pype
For in our wyl there styketh euer a nayle
To haue an hore heed and a grene tayle
As hath a leke, for though our myght be gone
Our wyl desyreth folye euer in one
For whã we may not don, thã wol we spekẽ
Yet in our asshen olde, is fyre yreken.
¶ Four gledes han we, whiche I shal deuyse
Auauntyng, lyeng, angre, and couetyse
These four sparkles longen on to elde
Our olde lymmes mowe wel ben vnwelde
But wyl ne shal not fayle, that is sothe
And yet haue I alway a coltes tothe
As many a yere as it is passed henne
Syn that my tappe of lyfe began to renne
For sikerly, whan I was borne anone
Dethe drowe the tappe of lyfe, & let it gone
And euer syns hath the tappe yronne
Tyl that almost al empty is the tonne
The streme of life now droppeth on ỳ chimb
The sely tonge may wel ringe and clymb
Of wretchednesse, that passed is ful yore
with olde folke saue dotage is no more
¶ Whan ỳ our host had herde this sermoning
He gan to speke as lordly as a kyng
And sayd: what amounteth al thys wyttes
what shal we speke al day of holy wyttes
The dyuel made a Reue to preche
Or a souter a shypman, or a leche.
Say forthe thy tale, and tary nat the tyme
Lo Depforde, and it is halfe way pryme
Lo Grenewyche, that many a shrewe is in
It were tyme thy tale for to begyn
¶ Nowe sirs quod this Oswolde the Reue
I pray you al, that ye not you greue
That I answere, and somdele set hys houfe
For leful it is with force, force of shoufe
This dronken myller hath ytolde vs here
Howe that begyled was a carpentere
Parauenture in skorne, for I am one
And by your leaue, I shal hym quyte anone
Ryght in his churles termes wol I speke
I pray to God hys necke mote breke
He can wel in myne eye sene a stalke
But in his owne he can not sene a balke

Here endeth the Reues Prologue.

Here begynneth the Reues tale.

AT Trompynton, not far fro
Cambridge
Ther gothe a broke, and ouer
that a bridge
Upon the whyche broke ther
stant a mell
And this is very sothe, as I you tel
A myller was there dwellyng many a day
As any pecocke he was proude and gay
Pypen he couthe, and kysshen, & nettes bete
And turne cuppes, & wel wrastle and shete
Aye by hys belte he bare a longe pauade
And of a sworde ful trenchaunt was ý blade
A ioly popere bare he in hys pouche
Ther was no mã for peryl durst hym touche
A Shefelde thwytel bare he in hys hose
Roũde was his face, & camysed was his nose
As pylled as an ape was hys skull
He was a market beater at the full
There durst no wyght honde on him ledge
But he ne swore he shulde abedge
A theke he was for sothe, of corne and mele
And that a slye, and vsaunt for to stele
His name was hoten deynous Symkyn
A wyfe he had, comen of noble kyn
The parson of the towne her father was
with her he yake ful many a panne of bras
For that Symkyn shulde in his bloode alye
She was yfostred in a nonnerye
For Symken wolde no wyfe, as he sayde
But she were wel ynourisshed, and a mayde
To sauen hys astate of yomanrye
And she was proude, and perte as a pye
A ful fayre syght was it vpon hem two
On holy dayes byforne her wolde he go
with hys typet wounden aboute his heed
And she came after in a gyte of reed
And Symken had hosen of the same
There durst no wyght clepen her but dame
was none so hardy, that wente by the way
That with her ones durst rage or play
But yf he wolde be slayne of Symkyn
with pauade, or with knyfe, or bodkyn
For ielous folkes ben perillous euermo
Algates they wolde her wyues wende so
And eke for she was somdele smoterlyche
She was as dygne as water in a dyche
And as ful of hoker, and of besmare
As thoughe that a lady shulde her spare
what for her kyndred, and her norterlye
That she had lerned in the nonnerye.
A doughter had they bytwyxt hem two
Of twenty yere, withouten any mo
Sauyng a chylde ý was of halfe yere of age
In cradell it lay, and was a proyre page
This wenche thicke and wel ygrowen was
wyth camysed nose, and eyen gray as glas

wyth

with buttockes brode, & brestes rounde & hye
But right fayre was her heare, I wol not lie
The parson of ý town, for she was so fayre
In purpose was to maken her hys heyre
Bothe of hys catell, and hys mesuage
And straunge he made it of her maryage
Hys purpose was to be stowen her hye
Into some worthy blode of auncetry
For holy churches good more ben dispended
On holy churches blode that is discended
Therfore he wolde, hys holy blode honour
Though that he holy churche shulde deuour
¶ Great soken hath this Myller out of dout
with whete and malte, of all the londe about
And namely ther was a great college
Men clepen it the Solere hall of Cambrege
Ther was her whete, & eke her malt igroũde
And on a day it happed in a stounde
Sicke lay the Manciple, on a malady
Men wenden wisely that he shulde dye
For which this myller stale both whete and (corn
An hundred tyme more than beforn
For there before, he stale but curteysly
But nowe he was a theke outrageously
For wiche the warden chydde and made fare
But therof sette the Myller nat a tare
He craked, bosted, and swore it nas nat so
Thã were there yonge poore scholers two
That dwelten in the hall, of whiche I say
Testife they were, and lusty for to play
And onely for her myrthe, and her reuelrye
Upon the warden besily they crye
To yeue hem leaue, but a lytel stounde
To gon to myl, to sene her corne ygrounde
And hardely they durst lay her necke
The myller shuld not steale hem half a pecke
Of corne by sleyght, ne by force hem reue.
And at the last the warden yaue hem leue
Johan hight that one, & Aleyn hight ý other
Of o town they were both, ý hight Strother
Farre in the northe, can I not tel where.
This Aleyn maketh al redy his gere
And on a horse, the sacke he caste anon
Forthe goth Aleyn the clerke, and also John
With good sworde and bockeler by her syde
John knewe the way, hym nedeth no gyde
And at the myl dore the sacke down he layth
¶ Aleyn spake first: alhayle Symkẽ in fayth
Howe fares thy fayre doughter, & thy wyfe?
Aleyn welcom (quod Symken) by my lyfe
And John also: how now? what do ye here?
By god Simõd (q̃ John) nede has no pere
Him behoueth serue him selfe ý has no swain
Or els he is a fole, as clerkes sayne
Our Manciple I hope he wyl be deed
Swa werkes aye the wanges in his heed
And therfore is I come, and eke Alayne
To grynde our corne & cary it home agayne
We pray you spede vs heme in that ye may
It shalbe don, quod Symkyn, be my fay
what wol ye don, while it is in hande
By god, ryght by the hopper wol I stande
Quoth John: & sen how gates ý corne goth
yet sawe I neuer by my father kyn (in
Howe that the hopper wagges to and fra
Alayne answerd: Johan wylte thou sa
Than wol I be byneth by my crowne
And se howe the mele falles adowne
Into the troughe, that shalbe my disporte
Quoth Johan, in fay I may ben one of your
I is as ill a myllere as is ye. (sorte
This Myller smyleth at her nycite
And thought al nys done but for a wyle
They wene that no man may hem begyle
But by my thrykte, yet shal I blere her eye
For al the sleyght in her philosofye
The more queynte clerkes that they make
The more wol I steale whan I take
In stede of floure yet wol I gyue hem brẽne
The greatest clerkes ben not the wysest men
As whilom to the wolfe spake the Mare
Of al her arte counte I not a tare.
¶ Out at the dore he gothe ful priuely
Whan that he sawe his tyme, subtelly
He loked vp & downe, tyl he had yfounde
The clerkes horse, there as he stode ybounde
Behynde the Mylle, vnder a lessel
And to the horse he gothe him fayre and wel
He strypeth of the bridel ryght anon.
And whã ý horse was loce, he gan to gon
Towarde the fen, there wylde mares rynne
And forth w̃ wehe, through thicke & thynne
The myller gothe agayne, no worde he saide
But doth his note, & w̃ these clerkes playde
Tyl ý her corne was fayre & wel ygrounde
And whan the meale was sacked & ybounde
This John goth out, & fonde her hors away
And gan to crye, harowe and welaway
Our horse is loste Aleyne for goddes banes
Steppe on thy fete mã, come forth al atanes
Alas our wardeyn has hys palfray lorne.
¶ This Aleyn al forgate bothe mele & corne
Al was out of mynde hys husbondrye
what, whylke way is he gon? he gan to crye.

The wyfe came leapyng inwarde at a rene
She sayd alas, he gothe to the fenne
with wylde mares, as faste as he may go
Unthãke come on hys honde, ý bonde him so
And he ý better shulde haue knyt the reyne.
Alas q John, Aleyn for Christes peyne
Lay downe thy swerde, & I shal myn aiswa
I is ful swyfte God wate as is a raa
By goddes sale he shal not skape vs bathe
why ne haddest thou put the capel in ý lathe
Il heyle Aleyn by god thou is a fonne.
¶ These sely clerkes han ful faste yronne
Towarde the fenne, Aleyn and eke John
And whan the myller sawe ý they were agõ
He halfe a bushel of her floure hath take
And bade hys wyfe knede it in a kake
He sayd, I trowe the clerkes were a ferde
Yet can a myller make a clerkes berde
For al her arte, yet let hem gon her way
Lo where they gon, let the chyldren play
They get him not so lightly by my crowne
These sely clerkes rennen vp and downe
With kepe kepe, iossa wartherere
Ga whystle thou, and I sal kepe hym here
But shortly, tyl it was very nyght
They couth not though theydid al her might
Her caple catche, he ran away so faste
Tyl in a dyche they caught hym at the laste
¶ Wery and wete, as beestes in the rayne
Cometh sely John, & w̃ hym cometh Alayn
Alas (quod John) the day that I was borne
Nowe are we dryuen to hethẽ and to skorne
Our corne is stole, men wol vs fooles cal
Bothe the warden, and our felowes al
And namely the myller, waylaway
Thus playneth John, as he gothe by ý way
Towarde the myll, & bayarde in his honde
The myller syttyng by the fyre he fonde
For it was night & ferther might they nought
But for the loue of god they hym besought
Of herbrough and ease, as for her peny
¶ The myller said ayen, if there ben any
Suche as it is, yet shal ye haue your part
My house is strayte, but ye haue lerned art
ye can by argument make a place
A myle brode, of twenty foote of space
Let se nowe yf thys place may suffyse
Or make it rõmer w̃ speche, as is your gyse
Now Symõd (said John) by saint Cutberde
Aye is thou mery, & that is fayre answerde
I haue herd sai, mẽ shuld takẽ of twa thiges
Swylk as he fyndes or swilke as he bringes
But specially I pray the hoste dere
Get vs some meate & drinke, & make vs chere
And we wyl pay trewly at the ful
With empty honde, men may no haukes tul
Lo here our syluer redy for to spende.
The myller to ý towne his doughter sende
For ale and breed, and rosted hem a goos
& bounde her hors he shulde no more go loos
And in his own chambre he made a bedde
With shetes & with chalons fayre yspredde
Not from his owne bedde, ten fote or twelue
Hys doughter had a bedde al by her selue
Right in the same chambre, by and by
It myght be no bette, and the cause why.
Ther was no rowmer herbrowe in ý place
They soupen, & they speken of myrth & solace
And dronken euer stronge ale at beste
Aboute mydnight went they to reste.
¶ Wel hath this myller vernysshed his heed
Ful pale he was for dronken, & nothyng reed
He galpeth, and he speketh through his nose
As he were in the quacke, or in the pose
To bedde he gothe, and with him his wyfe
As any Jay was she lyght and iolyfe
So was her ioly whystel wel ywette
The cradell at the beddes fete was sette
To rocken, and to yeue the chylde to souke
And whan ý dronken was al in the crouke
To bedde went the daughter ryght anon
To bedde gothe Aleyn and eke John
There nas no more, hem neded no dwale
This myller hath so wisely bybbed ale
That as an horse he snorteth in hys slepe
Ne of hys tayle behynde he toke no kepe
His wyfe bare to hym a bordon wel strong
Men might hem here route a forlonge.
The wenche routeth eke par company.
¶ Aleyn the clerke, that herde this melody
He poked on John, & saide slepest thou
Herdest thou euer swylke a sange er nowe
Lo swylke a couplyng is ytwyst hem all
A wylde fyre on her bodyes fal,
Who herde euer swylke a ferly thyng
ye, they shal haue the floure of yuel endyng
Al this lange nyght tydes me no reste
But yet nafore, al shal be for the beste
For Johan (sayd he) as euer mote I thriue,
If that I may, yon wenche wol I swyue
Some esement hath lawe shapen vs
For John there is a lawe that saythe thus
That yf a man in one poynte ben a greued
That in an other he shal be releued

Oure

Our corne is stolne, sothly it is no nay
And we haue had an yuel syt to day
And syn I shal haue none amendement
Agayne my losse I wyl haue myn esement
By goddes sale, it shal none other be.
¶ Thys Johan answerde: Aleyn, auyse the
The myller is a perylous man, he sayde
And yf that he out of his slepe abrayde
He myght don vs bathe a vilonye.
Aleyn answerd: I coũt him not worth a fly
And vp he ryste, and by the wenche he crept.
This wenche lay vpright, and faste slept
Tyl he so nye was, er she myght aspye
That it had ben to late for to crye
And shortly for to sayne, they were at on
Now play Aleyn, for I wol speke of John.
This John lay styl a forlonge way or two
And to hym selfe he maketh routh and wo
Alas (q̃ he) this is a wycked iape
Nowe may I say, I is but an ape
Yet hath my felowe somwhat for his harme
He hath the myllers doughter in hys arme
He auntreth hym, and hath hys nede yspedde
And I lye as a draffe sacke in my bedde
And whan this iape is tolde a nother dey
I shal be holde a daffe, or a cokeney
I wol aryse, and auntre me it by my fay
Unhardy is vnsely, thus men say.
And vp he rose, and softely he wente
Unto the cradel, and in his arme it hent
And bare it softely to his beddes fete
Sone after the wyfe her routyng lete
And gan awake, and went her out to pysse
And came agayn, & gan the cradell mysse
And groped here & there, but she foũde none
Alas (q̃ she) I had almoste mysgone
I had almost gone to the clerkes bedde
Eye benedycite, than had I foule yspedde
And forthe she gothe, tyl she the cradel fonde
She gropeth alway further with her honde
And founde ỳ bedde, & thought nat but good
Bycause that the cradel by it stode
And nyste where she was, for it was derke
But fayre & wel she crepte in by the clerke
And lyeth ful stil, & wold haue caught a slepe
within a while this John the clerke vp lepe
And on this good wyfe he layde ful sore
So mery a fyt had she nought ful yore
And pricked harde & depe, as he were madde
This ioly lyfe haue these two clerkes ladde
Tyl that the thyrde cocke began to syng.
¶ Aleyn ware wery in the dawnyng
For he had swonken al the longe nyght
And sayd, farwel Malyn swete wyght
The day is comen, I may no lenger byde
But euermo, where so I go or ryde
I am thyn owne clerke, so haue I hele.
Nowe dere lemman (q̃ she) go, farwele
But or thou go, one thyng I wol the tell
Whã thou wendest homwarde by the Mell
Ryght at the entre of the dore behynde
Thou shalt a cake of halfe a bushel kynde
That was ymaked of thyn owne mele
Whiche that I helpe my syre to stele
And good lemman god the saue and kepe
And with ỳ worde she gan almoste to wepe.
¶ Aleyn vprist, and thought er it dawe
He wolde go crepen in by his felawe
And founde the cradel with his honde anon
By god thought he, al wronge haue I gon
My heed is totty of my swynke to nyght
That maketh me that I go not aryght
I wot wel that by ỳ cradel I haue mysse go
Here lyeth the Myller and hys wyfe also
And forthe he gothe on twenty dyuel way
Unto the bedde, there as the myller lay
He wende haue cropen by his felowe John
And by the Myller he crepte in anon
And caught hym by the necke, & soft he spake
And sayd: Johan, thou swynesheed awake
For Christes soule, and here a noble game
For by that lorde, that called is saynt Jame
As I haue thrise in this shorte nyght
Swyued the myllers doughter bolt vpright
whyles thou haste, as a cowarde ben agaste.
Ye false harlot (quod the myller) haste
A false traytour, false clerke (quod he)
Thou shalte be deed by goddes dignyte
who durste be so bolde to disparage
My doughter, that is come of suche lynage
And by the throte bolle he caught Alayn
And he him hent dispytously agayne
And on the nose he smote him with his fest
Downe ran the blode streme vpon his brest
And in the flore, wyth mouthe & nose ybroke
They walowen, as dothe pygges in a poke
And vp they gon, and downe ayen anone
Tyl that the myller spurnde on a stone
And downe he fyl backwarde vpon his wyfe
That wyste nothyng of this nyce stryfe
For she was fal a slepe a lytel wyght
with John the clerke, ỳ waked had al nyght
And with the fal, out of her slepe she brayde
Helpe holy crosse of Bromholme she sayde

In ma-

In manus tuas, lorde to the I cal
Awake Symonde, the fende is on me fal
My herte is broken, helpe I am but deed
There lieth one on my wombe & on my heed
Helpe Symkyn, for these false clerkes fyght
This iohn stert vp, as fast as euer he might
And graspeth by the walles to and fro
To fynde a staffe, and she stert vp also
And knewe the estres bet thã dyd this John
And by the wal she founde a staffe anon
And sawe a lytel shemeryng of a light
For at an hole in shone the moone bright
And by that lyght she sawe hem bothe two
But sykerly she nyste who was who
But as she sey a whyte thyng in her eye
And whan she gan this whyte thyng aspye
She wende the clerke had weared a voluper
And w̃ the staffe she drowe alway ner & ner
And wende haue hyt this Aleyn at ful
And smote the myller on the pylled skul
That down he gothe, & cryed, harowe I dye
These clerkes bete hym wel, and let hym lye
And arayeth hem, and toke her horse anon
And eke her meale, and on her way they gon
And at the mylle dore they toke her cake
Of halfe a bushel floure, wel ybake.
Thus is the proude myller wel ybete
And hath ylost the gryndyng of the whete
And payde for the supper euerydele
Of Aleyn and of Johan, that bete hym wele
Hys wyfe is swyued, and his doughter als
Lo suche it is a Myller to be fals
And therfore this prouerbe is ful sothe
Hym dare not wel wene that yuel dothe
A gylour shal hym selfe begyled be
And god that sytte hye in maieste
Saue al this company, great and smale
Thus haue I quyt the myller in his tale.

Here endeth the Reues tale, and here foloweth the Cokes prologue.

THe Coke of London, whyle that the Reue spake
For ioye hym thought he claude hym on the bake
A ha (qꝯ he) for Christes passyon
This myller hath a sharpe conclusyon
Upon his argument of herbygage
Wel sayd Salomon in hys langage
Ne bryng not euery man in to thyn hous
For herbrowyng by nyght is perelous
Wel ought a man auysed for to be
Whom that he brought in to hys priuete
I pray to god so yeue me sorowe and care
If euer sythen I hyght Hodge of ware
Herde I myller bette ysette awerke
He had a iape of malyce in the derke.
But god forbyd that we stynten here
And therfore yf ye vouche safe to here
A tale of me, that am a poore man
I wol you tel as wel as I can
A lytel iape, that fel in our cyte

¶ Our host sayd, syr a graunte it the
Nowe tel on Rodger, loke that it be good
For many a pasty haste thou letten blood
And many a Jacke of Douer hast thou solde
That hath be twyse hotte and twyse colde
Of many a pilgrym hast thou Christes curse
For of thy parsle yet fare they the worse
That they haue eaten wyth thy stobel goos
For in thy shoppe is manye a fiye loos
Nowe tel on gentle Rogere by thy name
But yet I pray the be not wrothe for game
A man may say ful sothe in game and play.

¶ Thou sayst ful sothe (qꝯ Roger) by my fay
But soth play, quade play, as ꝑ fleming saith
And therfore Henry Bayllly by thy fayth
Be thou not wrothe, or we departen here
Though that my tale ben of an hostelere
But natheleſſe, I wol not tellen it yet
But er we parte, ywys thou shalte be quyt
And therwithal he lough and made chere
And sayd his tale, as ye shullen after here.

Here endeth the Cokes prologue, and here foloweth hys tale.

APrentise whilom dwelte in our cyte
And of the crafte of vitaylers was he
Galiard he was, as goldfynch in the shawe
Browne as a bery, a proper shorte felawe
With lockes blake, kempt ful fetously
Daunce he couthe ful wel and iolily
He was called Perkyn Reuelour
He was as ful of loue and paramour
As is the hyue ful of hony swete
Wel was the wenche wyth hym might mete
At euery bridal wolde he syng and hoppe
He loued bette the tauernes than the shoppe
For whan any ridyng was in chepe
Out of the shoppe thider wolde he lepe
Tyl that he had al the syght iseyn
And daunced wel, he wolde not come ageyn
And gather hym a meyny of hys sorte
To hop and syng, and make suche disporte
And there they setten steuyn for to mete
To playen at the dise in suche a strete
For in the cyte nas there no prentise
That fayrer couthe casten a payre of dise
Than Perken couthe, and therto he was fre
Of his dispence, in place of priuyte
That founde his maister wele in his chafare
For oftymes he founde his bore ful bare
For sikerly, a prentise reuelour
That haunteth dise, riotte, or paramour
His maister shal it in hys shoppe abye
Al haue he no parte of the mynstraley
For theefte and riotte, they ben conuertible
Al can he play on gettron or on ribible
Reuel and trouthe, as in lowe degre
They ben ful wrothe al day, as men may se
This ioly prentise, with his mayster abode
Tyl he were nye out of his prentishode
Al were he snybbed bothe early and late
And somtyme ledde with reuel to Newgate
But at the last, his maister him bethought
Upon a day, whan he hys paper sought
Of a prouerbe, that saith this same worde
Welbette is rotten apple out of horde
Than that it rote al the remenaunt
So fareth it by a riottous seruaunt
It is moche lesse harme to let him passe
Than he shende al the seruaũtes in the place
Therfore his maister gaue hym a quitaunce
And badde him go, w̃ sorowe & myschaunce
And thus this ioly prentise had his leue
Nowe lette hym riot al the nyght or leue
And for there is no theefe without a louke
That helpeth hym to waste or to souke
Of that he bribe can, or borowe may
Anon he sent hys bedde and hys array
Unto a compere of hys owne sorte
That loued dice, reuel, and disporte
And had a wyfe, that held for countenaunce
A shoppe, and swyned for her sustenaunce.

¶ Here endeth the Cokes tale, & here foloweth the man of la wes prologue.

OUr hoste saw wel, that the bright sonne
The arke of hys artifyciall daye hath ronne
The fourthe parte, & halfe an hour more
And though he were not depe expert in lore
He wyste it was the eyghtene day
Of Apryl, that is the messanger to May
And sawe wel, that the shadowe of euery tre
Was as in lengthe, the same quantyte
As was the body erecte, that caused it
And therfore by the shadowe he toke his wit
That Phebus, whiche ý shone clere & bright
Degrees was fourty clomben of hyght
And for that daye, as in latitude
It was ten of the clocke, he gan conclude
And sodaynly he plight hys horse aboute.
LOrdynges (q̃ he) I warne you al ý route
The fourthe parte of thys day is gon
Now for the loue of God and of saynt John
Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may (day
Lordinges the tyme wasteth both night and
And stealeth from vs, what priuely slepyng
And what through negligẽce in our wakyng
As doth ý streme, that turneth n euer agayn
Discendynge fro the moũtayne in to ý playn
Wel can Seneke, and many a phylysofre
By waylen tyme, more than golde in cofre
For losse of catel may recouered be
But losse of tyme shendeth vs (q̃ he)
It wol not come ayen withouten drede
No more than wol Walkyns maydenhede
Whan she hath loste it in her wantonnesse
Let vs not mowlen thus in ydelnesse.
Syr man of lawe (q̃ he) so haue I blys
Tel vs a tale anon, as forwarde is
Ye ben submytted, through your fre assent
To stonden in this case at my iugement
Aquyteth you now of your beheste
Than haue ye done your deuer at the leste.
HOste (q̃ he) de pardeux ies assent
To breke forwarde is not myn entent
Byheste is dette, and I wol holde fayne
Al my behest, I can no better sayne
For such law as a mã yeueth an other wight
He shulde hym selue vsen it by ryght
Thus wol our text: But natheles certayne
I can right now no thrifty tale sayne
That Chaucer (though he can but leudly
On metres and in rymyng craftely)
Hath sayd hem, in suche Englysshe as he can
Of olde tyme, as knoweth many a man
And yf he haue not sayd hem leue brother
In one boke, he hath sayd hem in another
For he hath tolde of louers vp and doun
Mo than Ouyde made of mencioun
In his Epystels, that ben ful olde
What shuld I tellẽ hem, sythen they ben told
In youthe he made of syre al a lone
And sythen he hath spoken of euerychone
These noble wyues, and these louers eke
Who so that wol hys large volume seke
Cleped the sayntes lyues of Cupyde
There may he se the large woundes wyde
Of Lucresse, and of Babylon Thisbe
The swerde of Dydo for the false Enee
The tre of Phillis for her Demophoon
The playnte of Deianire, and of Hermyon
Of Ariadna, and of Hysiphilee
The barayne yle stondyng in the see
That dreynte Lyandre for his Hero
The teares of Heleyn, and eke the wo
Of Briseis, and of Laodomia
The crueltie of quene Media
The lytel chyldren hongyng by the hals
For the Jason, that was of loue so fals
Of Hypermistra, Penelope, and Alceste
Your wyfehode he cõmendeth with the beste
But certaynly no worde ne writeth he
Of thylke wycked ensample of Canace
That loued her owne brother synfully
Of suche cursed stories I say fy
Or els of Tyro Appolloneus
Howe that the cursed kyng Antyocus
Byrafte his doughter of her maydenhede
That is so horrible a tale for to rede
Whan he her drewe vpon the pament
And therfore he of ful auisement
Nolde neuer write in uon of hys sermons
Of suche vnkynde abhominations
Ne I ne wol non reherce, yef that I may
But of my tale howe shal I don thys day
Me were lothe be lykened doutles
To Muses, that men clepeth Piryades
Methamorphoseos wotte what I mene
But natheles I reche not a bene
Though I come after hym with Haubake
I speke in prose, and let hym rymes make
And with that worde, he with a sobre chere
Began hys tale, as ye shullen after here.

THere endeth the man of lawes Prologue, and here followeth hys tale.

Hateful harme, condyciõ
of pouert.
With thurst, with colde,
with hũgre so cõfoũded
To asken helpe, the sha-
meth in thyn hert
Jf thou non aske, w̃ nede
thou art so wounded
that very nede vnwrapeth al thy woũdes hid
Maugry thyn heed, thou must for indygence
Or stele, or begge, or borowe thy dispence

Thou blamest Christ, and sayest ful bytterly
He misdeparteth rychesse temporall
Thy neyghbour thou wytest synfully
And sayest, tyou haste to lytel, & he hath all
Parfay, sayst thou, somtyme he reken shall
whan that his tayle shal brenne in glede
For he nought helpeth nedeful in her nede

Herken what is the sentence of the wyse
Better is to dyen, than to haue indygence
Thyne selfe neyghbour wol the dispyse
Jf thou be poore, farwel thy reuerence
Yet of the wyse man take thys sentence
Al the dayes, poore men ben wycke
Beware therfore or thou come to the pricke

Jf thou be poore, thy brother hateth the
And al thy frendes fleeth fro the, alas
O ryche marchauntes ful of wele be ye
O noble prudent folke, as in this caas
Your bagges ben not fylde with ambes aas
But w̃ cyse synke, ẏ renneth for your chaũce
At Christenmasse, mery may ye daunce

Ye seken londes & see for your wynnynges
As wyse folke ye knowen al the state
Of reignes, ye ben fathers of tidynges
And tales, bothe of peace and debate
I was right nowe of tales desolate
Nere that a marchant, gone is many a yere
He taught a tale, whiche ye shullen here.

N Surrey whilõ dwelte a company
Of chapmen rych, and therto sad and
trewe
That wyde were senten her spicery
Clothes of golde, and satten ryche of hewe
Her chafare was so thryfty and so newe
That euery wight hath deyntie to chafare
Wyth hem, and eke to sellen hem her ware

Nowe fel it, that the maisters of that sorte
Han shapen hem, to Rome for to wende
Were it for chapmanhode, or for disporte
Nõ other messangere wold the thyder sende
But comẽ hem selfe to Rome, thys is ẏ ende
And in suche place as thought hẽ auauntage
For her entent, they taken her herbygage

Soiourned hã these marchaũtes in ý town
Certayne tyme, as fel to her pleasaunce
But so bykel, that the excellent renowne
Of the emperours doughter dame Custaũce
Reported was, with euery cyrcumstaunce
Unto these surreyn marchaũtes, in such wise
Fro day to day, as I shal you deuyse

This was the comen voyce of euery man
Our emperour of Rome, god hym se
A doughter hath, ý sythen the worlde began
To rekẽ as wel her goodnesse as her beaute
Nas neuer suche a nother as is she
I pray to god in honour her sustene
And wolde she were of al Europe the quene

In her is hye beautie, without pride
Youthe, without grenhede or folye
To al her werkes vertu is her gyde
Humblesse hath slayne in her al tyrannye
She is a myrrour of al curtesye
Her herte is very chambre of holynesse
Her honde mynistre of fredom and almesse

And al this voyce was soth, as god is trew
But now to our purpose let vs turne agayn
These marchãtes han dõ fret her ships new
And whã they han this blisful mayden seyn
Home to Surrey ben they went ageyn
And done her nedes, as they han done yore
And lyuen in welth, I can say no more.

Now fel it, ý these marchãtes stodẽ in grace
Of hym that was the Soudon of Surrye
For whã ý they came frõ any straunge place
He wolde of hys benygne curtesye
Waken hem good chere, & besyly aspye
Tydynges of sondry realmes for to lere
The wonders that they might seen or here

Amonge other thynges specially
These marchantes haue hym tolde of dame
Custaunce
So gret noblesse, in ernest ceryously
That this Soudõ hath cauzt so great plesãce
To han her fygure in hys remembraunce
And al his luste, and al hys besy cure
was for to loue her, whyle his lyfe may dure

Parauenture in that ylke large boke
Which that cleped is the heuẽ, iwritten was
with sterres, whan that he his byrthe toke
That he for loue shulde han his dethe, alas
For in the sterres, clerer than is the glas
Is written god wot, who so coude it rede
The dethe of euery man withouten drede

In sterres many a wynter there byfore
was written the deth of Hector & of Achilles
Of Pompey and Julius, or they were bore
The stryfe of Thebes, and of Hercules
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The dethe: but that mens wyttes ben so dull
That no wyght can wel rede it at the full

This Soudõ for his priue counsayle sent
And shortly of thys mater for to pace
He hath to hem declared al hys entent
And said hẽ certain, but yf he might haue gra
To haue Custaũce, withyn a lytel space (ce
He nas but deed, and charged hem to hye
To shapen for his lyfe some remedye.

Diuers men, diuersly they sayden
The argument they casten vp and doun
Many a subtell reason forthe they layden
They speken of Magike, and abusyoun
But finally, as in conclusyoun
They can not seen in that non auauntage
Ne in non other way, saue in maryage

Than sawe they therin suche difficulte
By way of reason, to speke al playne
Bycause that there was suche diuersyte
Bitwene her bothe lawes, that they sayne
They trow ý no christen prince wolde fayne
wedden hys chylde vnder our lawes swete
That vs was taught, by Mahounde our pro
phete

And he answerde: rather than I lese
Custaunce, I wol be christen doutels
I mote ben hers, I may non other chese
I pray you holde your argumentes in pees
Saueth my lyfe, and be not recheles
To getten her, that hath my lyfe in cure
For in thys wo, I may not long endure

what nedeth greater delatatyon
I say, by treatie and ambassadrye
And by the popes meditation
And al the chirche, and al the cheualry
That in distruction of Maumetry
And in encrease of Christes lawe dere
They ben accorded, as ye shal here.

Howe

Howe that the Soudon and his baronage
And al hys lieges, shulde ichristned be
And he shal han Custaunce in mariage
And certayne golde, I not what quantite
And her to fynde sufficient surete
The same accord was sworne on eyther syde
Now fayre Custaūce, almyghty god ỳ gyde

Nowe woldē som men waiten, as I gesse
That I shulde tellen al the purueyaunce
That the Emperour of hys noblesse
Hath shapen for hys daughter dame Custāce
Wel may men knowē, that so gret ordynāce
May no man tellen in a lytell clause
As was arayde for so hyghe a cause

Bishoppes ben shapē with her for to wēde
Lordes and ladies, and knightes of renown
And other folke ynowe, this is the ende
And notifyed is throughout the town
That euery wight, with great deuotioun
Shulde pray Christ, that he this mariage
Receyue in gree, and spede this voyage

The day is come of her departyng
I say the woful day natural is come
That there may be no lengre tarieng
But forwarde they hem dresse al and some
Custaunce, that with sorowe is al ouercome
Ful pale arist, and dressheth her to wende
For wel she sey, there is non other ende

Alas, what wondre is it though she wept
That shal be sent to a straunge nation
Fro frendes, that so tenderly her kept
And to be bounden vnder subiectyon
Of one, she knoweth not his condityon
Husbondes ben al good and han ben yore
That knowen wyues, I dare say no more

Father (she said) thy wretched child custāce
Thy yonge daughter, fostred vp so softe
And ye my mother, my soueraigne pleasance
Ouer al thyng (out take Christ on lofte)
Custaunce your child her cōmaundeth ofte
Unto your grace: for I shal to Surrye
Ne shal I nener more se you with eye

Alas, vnto the Barbary nation
I must anon, sithen it is your wyl
But Christ that starke for our redemption
So yeue me grace, his hestes to fulfyl
I wretched womā no force though I spyll
Women are borne to thraldom and penaūce
And to ben vnder mannes gouernaunce

I trow at Troy, whā Thurus brake ỳ wal
Of Ilyon, ne whan brente was Thebes cite
Ne Rome for the harme of Hanybal
That Romayns hath iuēqueshed tymes thre
Nas herde, suche tendre weppyng for pyte
As was in the chambre for her departyng
But forth she mote, wheder she wepe or syng

O fyrst mouyng cruel firmament
Wyth thy diurnal swegh, that croudest aye
And hurtleste al fro Est to Occident
That naturally wolde holde another way
Thy croudyng set the heuen in suche array
At the begynnyng of this feirs voyage
That cruel Mars hath slayne this maryage

O infortunate assendent tortuous
Of whiche the lorde is helpelesse fal, alas
Out of hys angle, into his derkest house
O Mars, O occiser, as in thys caas
O feble Mone, vnhappy ben thy paas
Thou knittest ỳ there thou nart notreceyued
Ther thou were wel, fro thēce art ỳ wayued

Imprudent emperour of Rome, alas
Was there no philosofer in thy towne
Is no tyme bette than other in suche cas
Of voiage, is there none electiowne
Namely to folke of hye conditioun
Nat whan a rote is of a brythe iknowe
Alas we ben to leude, or to slowe

To ship is brought this woful faire mayd
Solempnely, with euery cyrcumstaunce
Nowe Jesu Christ be with you al (she sayd)
Ther nys no more, but fare wel fair Custāce
She payneth her to make good countenaūce
And forthe I let her sayle in this manere
And tourne I wol agayne to my matere.

¶ Explicit prima pars:
et sequitur pars
secunda.

The mother of the Soudon, wel of vices
Aspyed hathe her sonnes playne entent
Howe he wol lete hys olde sacrifyces
And right anon, she for her counsayle sent
And they ben comen, to know what she ment
And whan assembled was thys folke in fere
She sette her down, & sayd, as ye shal here.

Lordes (quod she) ye knowen euerichone
Howe that my sonne is in poynt to lete
The holy lawes of our Alkaron
Yeuen by goddes messangere Machomete
But one auowe to grete God I hete
The lyke shal rather out of my body stert
Or Machomettes lawe go out of my hert

What shulde vs tyden of thys newe lawe
But thraldome to our bodies and penaunce
And afterwarde in hel to ben drawe
For we reneyed Mahounde our creaunce
But lordes, wol ye make assuraunce
As I shal say, assentyng to my lore
And I shal make vs sake for euermore

They sworen, and assenten euery man
To lyue with her and dye, and by her stonde
And eueriche in the best wise that he can
To strengthen her, shal his frendes fonde
And she hath this emprise take in honde
Whiche ye shal here, that I shal deuise
And to hem al she spake in thys wyse.

we shul vs fyrst fayne, christendom to take
Colde water shal not greue vs but a lyte
And I shal suche a reuel and a feest make
That as I trowe, I shal the Soudon quyte
For tho his wife be christenedneuer so white
She shal haue nede to washe away the rede
Though she a fonte ful of water ẃ her lede

O Soudonnesse, rote of iniquite
Virago, thou Symyram the secounde
O serpent vnder kemenynete
Ilyke to the serpent depe in hell ybounde
O fayned woman, al that may counfounde
Vertu and innocence, throug thy malyce
Is bredde in the, a nest of euery vyce.

O Sathan enuyous, syn thylke day
That thou were chased from our herytage
wel knewest thou to women the olde way
Thou madest Eue to bryng vs in seruage
Thou wolte fordone this christen maryage
Thyne instrument, so welaway the whyle
Makest thou of womẽ, whã thou wolt begile

This Soudonesse, whõ I blame & wery
Let priuely her counsayle gon her way
what shulde I in this tale lenger taryen
She rydeth to the Soudon on a day
And sayd hym, that she wolde renye her lay
And christendom of prestes hondes fonge
Repentyng her, she hethen was so longe

Besechyng hym, to done her that honour
That she might haue ẏ Christẽ folke to feste
To plesen hem, I wol don my labour
The Soudõ saythe, I wol don at your heste
And knelyng, thanketh her of that requeste
So glad he was, he nyst not what to say
She kist her sonne, & home she goth her way

Aryued ben these christen folke to londe
In Surre, with a great Solempne route
And hastely this Soudon sent his sonde
Fyrst to his mother, & al the reygne aboute
And sayd, hys wyfe was comen out of doute
And praydẽ hem for to ryden ayenst ẏ quene
The honoure of hys reygne for to sustene

Great was the prese, & ryche was the raye
Of Surreyens, and Romayns ymette yfere
The mother of the Soudon, ryche and gay
Receyueth her with al glad chere
As any mother myght her doughter dere
Unto the next cyte there besyde
A softe paas solempnely they ryde

Nought trowe I, the triumphe of Julyus
Of whiche that Lucan maketh suche a bost
was royaller, and more curious
Than was thassemblyng of this blisful host
But this Scorpyon, this wycked gost
The sodonnesse, for al her flatteryng
Cast vnder al thys, ful mortally to styng

The Soudon cometh himselfe sone after
So ryally, that wonder is to tel (this
He welcometh her wyth moche ioye & blys
And thus in myrthe & ioye I let hem dwel
The fruyte of euery tale is for to tel

When tyme come, mē thought it for the best
That reuel stynte, and men gone to rest

The tyme come, this olde Soudōnesse
Ordened hath ý feest, of whych I tolde
And to the feest, christen folke hem dresse
In general, both yonge and olde
There may men feest and ryalte beholde
And deyntes mo then I can deuyse
But al to dere they boughten it or they ryse

O Soudon, wo ý euer thou art successour
To worldly blisse, springed with bytternesse
The ende of ioye, of our worldly laboure
Wo occupyeth the ende of our gladnesse
Herken thys counsayle, for thy sekernesse
Upon thy glad day haue thou in mynde
The vnware wo or harm, ý cometh behynde

For shortly for to tellen at a worde
The Soudon, and the christen euerychone
Ben al to hewe, and stycked at the borde
But it were onely dame Custaunce alone
Thys olde Soudonnesse, curled crone
Hath wyth her fredes done thys cursed dede
For she her selfe wolde al the countre lede

Ne there was surreyn none ý was cōuerted
That of the coūsayle of the Soudon wot
That he nas al to hewe, er he asterted
And Custaūce han they taken anone fotehot
And in a shyppe al sterneleſſe (god wot)
They han her set, & bydden her lerne to sayle
Out of Surrey ayenwarde to Italy

A certayne tresour, that she thyder ladde
And soth to sayne, bytayle great plente
They han her yeuen, & clothes eke she had
And forth she sayled in the salte se
O my custaunce ful of benignite
O Emperours yonge doughter dere
He that is lorde of fortune, be thy stere

She blesseth her, and w̄ ful pytous voyce
Unto the crosse of Christ, tho sayd she
O clere, o welful aulter, holy croice
Reed of the lambes blode, ful of pyte
That washe ý worlde fro ý olde iniquite
Me fro the fende, and fro hys clawe kepe
That daye that I shal drenchen in the depe.

Victorious tree, protection of trewe
That onely worthy were for to bere
The kynge of heuē, with hys woūdes newe
The whyte lambe, that hurt was w̄ a spere
Flemere of fendes, out of hym and here
On whych thy lymmes, faythfully extenden
Me kepe, & yeue me myght my lyfe to amēde

Yeares and dayes fleteth thys creature
Thyrghout ý see of Grece, vnto the strayte
Of Marocke, as it was her auenture
O, many a sory mele may she bayte
After her death ful ofte may she wayte
Or that the wylde waues wolde her dryue
Unto the place there she shulde aryue.

Men mightē aske, why she was not slayne
Eke at the feest, who myght her body saue
I answere to that demaunde agayne
Who saued Daniel in that horrible caue
Ther euery wyght, were he master er knaue
Was wyth the lyon frette or he asterte
No wyght but god, that he bare in his herte

God lyst to shewe his wonderful myracle
In her, for she shuld sene his mighty werkes
Christ that is to euery harme tryacle
By certayne meanes often, as knowē clerkes
Doth thinge for certayne ende, ý ful derke is
To mans wytte, that for our ignorauncе
Ne can not knowe hys prudent purueyaūce

Now syth ý she was not at ý feest yslawe
Who kepeth her fro the drenchyng in the see
Who kept Jonas in the fyshes mawe
Tyl he was spouted out at Neniue
Wel may mē knowe, it was no wight but he
That kept ý people Ebrake from drenchyng
Wyth drye fete, through the see passyng

Who hath the foure spirites of ý tempeste
That power had, both to anoye lande & see
Both north and south, & also west and este
Anoyeth nether see, ne lande, ne tre
Sothly the cōmaunder therof was he
That fro ý tempest aye thys woman kepte
As wel when she woke as when she slepte

Wher might this womā mete & drynke haue
Thre yere & more, how lasteth her vitayle
Who fedde the Egipcyan Marye in the caue
Or in deserte (none but Christ sans fayle)
Fyue thousand folk it was as gret maruaile

With loues kyue and kyllhes two to kede
God sent his foyson at her great nede.

She driueth forthe in to our Occian
Throughout the wylde see, tyl at the laste
Under an holde, that nempne I ne can
Fer in Northumberlōde, the waue her caste
And in the sande her shyppe stycked so faste
That thence nolde it not of al a tyde
The wyl of Christ was ý she shuld ther byde

The constable of the castel downe is fare
To seen this wrecke, & al the shyp he sought
And fonde this wery woman ful of care
He founde also the tresoure that she brought
In her langage, mercy she besought
The lyfe out of her body for to twyn
Her to delyuer of wo that she was in

A maner latyn corrupte was her speche
But algates therby was she vnderstonde
The constable, whā hym lyst no lenger seche
Thys wofull woman brought he to londe
She kneleth downe, & thāketh goddes sonde
But what she was, she wolde no man sey
For foule ne fayre, though she shulde dey

She sayd she was so mased in the see
That she forgate her mynde, by her trouthe
The constable of her hath so great pyte
And eke his wyfe, that they wepen for routh
She was so dyligent withouten slouthe
To serue and plese euerych in that place
That al her louen, that loken in her face

The cōstable, & dame Hermegilde his wyfe
Were paynems, and that cōtre euery where
But Hermegylde loued her ryght as her lyfe
And Custaunce hath so long sojourned there
In orisons, with many a bytter tere
Tyl Jesu hath conuerted through his grace
Dame Hermegylde, cōstablesse of that place.

In al that londe durst no christen route
Al christen folke ben fledde from that coūtre
Through paynems, that conquered al about
The plages of the North, by londe and see
To wales fledde the christianyte
Of olde Bretons, dwellyng in that Ile
There was her refuge, for the meane whyle

But yet nas ther neuer christē bretō so exiled
That there nas some in her priuete
Honoured Christe, & heathen folke begyled
And nye the castel suche there dwellen thre
That one of hym was blynde, & might not se
But it were with thylke eyen of his mynde
With whiche men seen, after they ben blynde

Bright was the sonne, as in somers day
For whiche the constable, and his wyfe also
And Custaunce, han taken the ryght way
Towarde the see, a furlong waye or two
To playen, and to romen to and fro
And in her walke, thre blynde men they met
Croked and olde, with eyen faste yshette

In ý name of Christ, cryed this blind bretō
Dame hermegylde, yeue me syght agayne
This lady ware a frayde of the soun
Leste that her husbonde, shortly for to sayne
wold her for Jesus Christes lore haue slayne
Til Custāce made her bolde, & bad her werch
The wyl of Christ, as doughter of his cherch

The cōstable wore abashed of that syght
And sayd: what amounteth al thys fare
Custance answerde: syr it is Christes might
That helpeth folke out of the fendes snare
And so ferforth she gan our lawe declare
That she the constable, er that it was eue
Cōuerted hath, & on Christ made hym bileue

This cōstable wasnothing lord of this place
Of which I speke, ther he Custaunce fonde
But kept it strongly, many a wynter space
Under Alla, kyng of Northumberlonde
That was ful wyse, & worthy of hys honde
Agayne the Scottes, as men may wel here
But tourne I wol agayne to my matere.

Sathan, that euer vs wayteth to begyle
Sawe of Custaunce al her perfectioun
And cast anon how he might quyte her wyle
And made a yong knight, ý dwelt in the toun
Loue her so hotte, of foule affectioun
That verily, hym thought ý he shulde spyll
But he of her ones might haue his wyll

He woeth her, but it aueyled nought
She wolde do no synne by no wey
And for dispyte, he compassed in his thought
To maken her on shamfull dethe to dey
He wayteth whan the constable is awey

And pri-

And priuely on a nyght he crepte
In to Hermegildes chambre whyle she slept

Wery forwaked in her orisons
Slepeth Custaunce and Hermegylde also
This knight, through Sathans tēptacions
Al softely is to the bedde ygo
And cut the throte of Hermegylde a two
And layde ý blody knyfe by dame Custaūce
And went his waye, ther god yeue him myschaunce.
Sone after cometh ý cōstable home agayne
And eke Alla, that kynge was of that lande
And sawe hys wyfe dyspytously yslayne
For whych he wepte and wronge his hande
And in the bedde the blody knyfe he fonde
By dame Custāce, alas what myght she say-
For very wo, her wytte was al away

To kynge Alla was tolde al this myschaūce
And eke the tyme, & where, & in what wyse
That in a shyppe was foūden this Custaūce
As here before ye han herde me deuyse
The kynges herte, for pyte gan aryse
when he sawe so benygne a creature
Fal in dysease and in mysaduenture

For as ý lābe towarde hys death is brought
So stante this innocent before the kyng
This fals knight, ý hath this treso wrought
Bereth her on hād, ý she hath don this thing
But natheleſſe there was great mornyng
Amonge the people, & sayd they can not gesse
That she had done so great a wyckednesse

For they han sene her euer so vertuouse
And louyng Hermegylde, right as her lyfe
Of this bare witnesse euerych in that house
Saue he that Hermegyld slow w̄ hys knyfe
This gētle kyng hath caught a great motyfe
Of this wytnes, & thought he wold enquere
Deper in thys case, the trouth to lere

Alas Custaunce, thou hast no champion
Ne fyght canst thou not, so welaway
But he that starft for our redempcion
And bonde Sathan, & yet lyth there he laye
So be thy stronge champion thys daye
For but yf Christ on the myracle kyth
Without gylt thou shalt be slayne aswyth

She set her doune on knees, & thus she sayde
Immortal god, that sauedest Susanne
Fro false blame, and thou mercyful mayde
Marye I meane, doughter to saynt Anne
Byforne whose chylde angels synge Osanne
Yf I be gyltlesse of thys felonye
My socoure be, or els shal I dye

Haue ye not sene somtyme a pale face
(Amonge a prees) of hym that hath ben lad
Toward his deth, wher as him get no grace
And such a colour in his face hath had
That mē might know his face ý was bystad
Amonges al the faces in that route
So standeth Custaunce, & loketh her aboute

O quenes, lyuynge in prosperite
Duchesses, and ye ladyes euerychone
Haue some routh on her aduersite
An emperours doughter stante alone
She hath no wyst, to whō to make hermone
O bloode royal, that stondeth in this drede
Farre ben thy frendes at thy great nede

Thys Alla kyng, hath such compassioun
As gentle herte is ful of pyte
That from hys eyen ran the water doun
Nowe hastely do fette a boke (quod he)
And yf thys knyght wol swere, how that she
Thys woman slowe, yet wol we vs auyse
whom that we wol shal ben our iustyse

A breton boke, wrytten wyth Euangeles
was fette, and theron he swore anone
She gylty was, and in the meane whyles
An hande hym smote on the necke bone
That downe he fyl atones, as a stone
And both hys eyen brast out of hys face
In syght of euery body in that place

A voyce was herde, in generall audience
That sayd: Thou hast dysclandred gyltles
The doughter of holy chyrch, in hye presence
Thus hast thou done, & yet I holde my pees
Of this maruayle, agast was al the prees
As dysmayde folke, they stoden euerychone
For drede of wreche, saue Custaunce alone

Great was ý drede, & eke the repentaūce
Of hem that hadden wrought suspection
Upon thys sely innocent Custaunce
And for thys myracle, in conclusion
And by Custaunces mediation

The kynge, and many another in that place
Conuerted was, thanked by goddes grace

This false knight was slayn for his vntroth
By iudgement of Alla hastely
And yet Custaūce, had of his death gret roth
And after this, Jesus of hys mercy
Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
Thys holy mayde, that is so bryght & shene
And thus hath christ made Custaūce a quene

But who was woful, yf I shulde not lye
Of thys weddyng, but Donogelde & no mo
The kynges mother, full of tyranny
Her thought her cursed hert brast a two
She wolde not her sonne had do so
Her thought a despyte, that he shulde take
So straunge a creature vnto hys make

We lyst not of the chaffe ne of the stree
Make so longe a tale, as of the corne
what shulde I tel of the royalte
Of ỳ mariage, or whych course goth beforne
who bloweth in a trompe or in an horne
The frute of euery tale is for to saye
They eaten and drynken, daunce and playe

They gon to bedde, as it was skyl & ryght
For though ỳ wyues ben ful holy thynges
They must take in pacience anyght
Such maner necessaries, as ben plealynges
To folke that han wedded hem with rynges
And lay a lytel her holynesse asyde
As for the tyme, it may none other betyde

On her he gatte a man chylde anone
And to a bylhoppe, and to hys constable eke
He toke hys wyke to kepe, when he is gone
To Scotlandwarde, hys fo men for to seke
Now fayre Custāce, ỳ is so humble & meke
So longe is gone wyth chylde tyl that styl
She halte her chābre. abyding Christes wyl

The tyme is come, a man chylde she bare
Mauricius at fontstone they hym calle
This constable doth forth come a messanger
And wrote to hys kynge, ỳ cleped was Alle
Howe that thys blyssful tydynge is byfal
And other tydynges nedeful for to say
He taketh the letter, & forth he goth his way

Thys messanger to done hys auauntage
Unto the kynges mother rydeth swythe
And saluetb her ful fayre in hys langage
Madame (quod he) ye maye be glad & blythe
And thanketh god an hūdred thousand sythe
My lady quene hath chylde, wythoutē doute
To ioye and blysse of all thys reygne aboute

Lo here the letters sealed of thys thynge
That I mote beare, in al the hast I may
yf ye wol ought vnto your sonne the kynge
I am your seruaunt both nyght and day
Donegylde answerde, as at thys tyme nay
But here I wol al nyght thou take thy reste
To morowe wol I say the what my leste

This messāger drōke sadly both ale & wyne
And stolen were hys letters priuely
Out of hys bore, whyle he slepte as a swyne
And counterfeted was ful subtelly
Another letter, wrought ful synfully
Unto the kynge directe of thys matere
Fro hys constable, as ye shal after here

The letter spake, the quene delyuered was
Of so horrible a fendlyche creature
That in the castel none so hardy was
That any whyle durst therin endure
The mother was an elfe by auenture
Icome, by charmes or by sorcery
And euery wyght hateth her company

wo was this kyng, whē he ỳ letter had seyn
But to no wyght he tolde hys sorowes sore
But wyth hys owne honde he wrote ageyn
welcome the sonde of Christ for euermore
To me, that am newe lerned in hys lore
Lorde, welcome be thy lust & thy pleasaunce
My lust I put al in thyne ordynaunce

Kepeth this childe, al be it foule or fayre
And eke my wyke, vnto myne home cōmyng
Christ when him lyst, may sende me an heyre
More agreable then thys, to my lykynge
Thys letter he sealeth, priuely wepynge
whych to the messangere was taken sone
And forth he goth, ther nys no more to done

O messanger, fulfylled of dronkennesse
Strōge is thy breth, thy lymmes faltrē aye
And thou bewrayest al secretnesse
Thy mynde is lorne, thou ianglyst as a iaye
Thy face is turned in a newe araye

There

There dronkennesse reyneth in any route
There nys no coũsayle hyd wythoutẽ doute

O Donegild, I ne haue no englysh digne
Unto thy malyce, and thy tyrannye
And therfore to the fende I the resygne
Let hym endyte of thy traytrye
Fye mannyshe fye: O nay by god I lye
Fye fendyshe spirite, for I dare wel tel
Though thou here walke, thy spirit is in hel

This messãger cometh fro ꝑ kynge agayne
And at the kynges mothers house he lyght
And she was of thys messanger ful fayne
And pleased hym in al that euer she myght
He dronke, and wel hys gyrdel vnder pyght
He slepeth, and he snorteth in hys gyse
Al nyght, tyl the sonne gan aryse

Ofte were hys letters stolen euerychon
And connterfeted letters in thys wyse:
The kynge cõmaundeth hys constable anon
Up payne of hongyng on an hye iewyse
That he ne shulde suffren in no wyse
Custaunce, wythin hys realme for to abyde
Thre dayes, and a quarter of a tyde

But in the same shyppe, as he her fonde
Her and her yonge sonne, and al her gere
He shulde croude, and put fro the londe
And charge her, that she neuer eft come there
O Custaunce, wel may thy goste haue fere
And slepynge in thy dreame, ben in penaũce
when Donegylde, cast al thys ordynaunce

This messãger on ꝑ morow when he woke
Unto the castel halte the nexte way
And to the Constable he the letter toke
And when that he thys pytous letter sey
Ful ofte he sayd (alas) and welaway
Lord Christ (ꝙ he) how may this world en-
So ful of synne is many a creature (dure

O myghty god, yf that it be thy wyl
Syn thou art ryghtful iuge, how may it be-
That thou wylt suffer innocence to spyl-
And wycked folke to raygne in prosperite
O, good custaunce (alas) so wo is me
That I mote be thy tourmẽtour, or els dey
On shames death, ther nys none other wey

Wepen both yonge & olde in that place
when that the kynge thys cursed letter sent
And Custaunce wyth a deadly pale face
The fourth day, towarde her shyp she went
But natheleſſe, she taketh in good entent
The wyl of Christ, & knelyng in the stronde
She sayd Lorde, aye welcome be thy sonde

He that me kepte fro that false blame
whyles I was on the lande amonge you
He can me kepe fro harme, & eke fro shame
In the salte see, al though I se not howe
As stronge as euer he was, he is nowe
In hym truste I, and in hys mother dere
That is to me, my sayle and eke my stere

Her lytel chylde lay weppynge in her arme
And knelynge pytously, to hym she sayde
Peace lytel sonne, I wol do the none harme
wyth that her kercher of her heed she brayde
And ouer hys lytel eyen she it layde
And in her arme, she lulleth it ful faste
And into heuen her eyen vp she caste

Mother (quod she) & mayde bright Mary
Soth is, that through womans eggement
Mankinde was lorne, & dampned aye to dye
For whych thy chylde was on crosse yrent
Thy blysful eyen sawe al hys turment
Then is there no comparison bytwene
Thy wo, and any wo that man may sustene

Thou se thy chylde yslayne byfore thyn eyen
And yet now lyueth my lytel chylde parfaye
Nowe lady bryght, to whom al woful cryen
Thou glory of womanheed, thou fayre may
Thou hauen of refute, bryght sterre of day
Rewe on my chylde, of thy gentylnesse
That rewest on euery ruful in dystresse

O lytel chelde (alas) what is thy gylte-
That neuer wroughtest synne, as yet parde
why wol thyne hard father haue the spylte-
O mercy: dere constable (quod she)
As let me lytel chylde dwel here wyth the
And yf thou darst not sauen hym fro blame
So kysse hym ones in hys fathers name

Therwyth she loketh backward to ꝑ lõde
And sayd: farewel husbande routhlesse
And vp she rylt & walked downe the stronde
Toward the shyp, her foloweth al the prees
& euer she prayeth her child to holdẽ his pees

And

And taketh her leue, and with an holy entent
She blesseth her, and into ý shyppe she went

Vitayled was the shippe, it is no drede
Habundantly, for her full long space
And other necessaries that shulde nede
She had inowe, heried be goddes grace
For wynde & weder, almighty god purchace
And bringe her home, I can no better say
But in the see, she drueth forthe her way

Alla the kyng cometh home sone after this
Vnto hys castel, of whyche I tolde
And asketh where his wyfe & hys chylde is
The constable gan aboute hys herte to colde
And playnly al the maner hym tolde
As ye han herde, I can tel it no better
And sheweth the king his seale and his letter

And sayd: lorde as ye commaunded me
Up payne of dethe, so haue I done certayne
This messanger turmented was, tyl he
Must beknowen, and tel plat and playne
Fro night to night, in what place he had lain
And thus by wytte and subtel enqueryng
ymagened was, by whō this harm gā spring

The honde was knowē, ý the letter wrote
And al the venym of this cursed dede
But in what wyse, certaynly I note
The effecte is this, that Alla out of drede
His mother slow, that may men playnly rede
For that she traytoure was to her alegaunce
Thus endeth old Donegild with mischaūce

The sorowe that this Alla nyght & day
Maketh for hys childe, and for hys wyfe also
There is no tonge that it tel may
But nowe wol I to Custaunce go
That fleteth in the see, in payne and wo
Fyue yere and more, as lyked Christes sonde
Or that her shyppe aproched vnto londe

Under an hethen castel, at the laste
Of whiche the name in my text I not fynde
Custaunce and eke her chylde the see vp caste
Almighty god, that saueth al mankynde
Haue on Custāce, & on her chyld some mynde
That fallen is in hethen honde efte sone
In poynte to spyl, as I shal tel you sone

Downe fro the castel cometh ther many a (wight
To gauren on this shyppe, & on Custaunce
But shortly fro the castel on a nyght
The lordes stewarde, god yeue him mischaū (ce
A thefe, that had renyed our creaunce
Came into the shyp alone, and sayd he sholde
Her lemman be, whether she woide or nolde

Wo was the wretched woman tho bygō
Her chylde cryed, and she cryed pitously
But blyssful Marye holpe her anon
For with her stroglyng, wel and mightyly
The thefe fel ouer the borde, al sodaynly
And in the see he drenched for vengaunce
And thus hath christ vnwēmed kept Custāce

O foule luste of luxure, lo thyn ende
Nat onely that thou fayntest mans mynde
But verily, thou wolt his body shende
The ende of thy werke, or of thy lustes blynd
Is cōplayning: how many one may mē fynd
That not for werke somtyme, but for thētent
To don this synne, ben eyther slayne or shent

How may this weke womā haue ý strēgth
Her to defende agaynst this renegate?
O Golyas, vnmesurable of length
Howe might Dauid make the so mate?
So yonge, and of armure so desolate
Howe durst he lokc on thy dredful face?
wel may men sene, it is but goddes grace.

Who yaue Judith courage or hardynesse
To sleen hym Holofernes in hys tente
And to delyuer out of wretchydnesse
The people of God? I say, for this entent
That ryght as God, spyrite and bygore sente
To hem, and saued hem out of mischaunce
So sent he might and bigore to Custaunce

Forth goth her ship thorow ý narow mouth
Of Subalter and septe, fletyng aye
Somtyme weste, & somtyme northe & south
And somtyme este, kul many a wery daye
Tyl Christes mother, yblessed be she aye
Hath shapen, through her endlesse goodnesse
To make an ende of al her heuynesse.

¶ Explicit secunda pars:
et sequitur pars
tertia.
(.·.)

Nowe

NOw let vs stynte of Custance but a throwe
And speke we of the Romayne Emperoure
That out of Surrey hath by letters knowe
The slaughter of christen folke, & dishonour
Done to hys doughter, by a false traytour
I meane the cursed wycked Soudonnesse
That at the feest, let sleen bothe more & lesse

For whiche this Emperour hath sent anon
Hys senatour, with royal ordinaunce
And other lordes, god wote many one
On Surreyns to done hye vengeaunce
They brennē, sleen, & bringē hem to mischāce
Ful many a day: but shortly this is the ende
Homward to Rome, they shapē hem to wēde

This senatour repayreth with victorye
To Rome warde, saylyng ful royally
And met the shyp dryuyng, as sayth the story
In whiche Custaunce, sate ful pitously
Nothyng knewe he what she was, ne why
She was in suche array, ne she nolde sey
Of her estate, thoug she shulde dey

He bryngeth her to Rome, and to his wyfe
He yaue her, and her yonge sonne also
And with the senatour she ladde her lyfe
Thus can our lady bryng out of wo
Woful Custaunce, and many another mo
And longe tyme dwelled she in that place
In holy werkes euer, as was her grace.

The senatours wyfe her aunte was
But for al that, she knewe her neuer the more
I wol no lenger tarye in thys caas
But to kyng Alla, ý whiche I spake of yore
That for hys wyfe wepeth, and syketh sore
I wol retourne, and let I wyl Custaunce
Under the senatours gouernaunce.

Kyng Alla, which ý had his mother slayne
Upon a day fel in suche repentaunce
That yf I shortly tellen al shal, & playne
To Rome he cometh, to receyue hys penaūce
And putten him in the churches ordinaunce
In hye & in lowe, and Jesu Christ besought
Forgeue hys wycked werkes, ý he wrought (born

The fame anon through Rome town is
Howe Alla kyng, shal come on pilgrymage
By herbegers that wenten hym byforne
For whiche the senatour, as was vsage
Rode hym agayne, and many of hys lynage
As wel to shewen hys hye magnifycence
As to done any kyng reuerence.

Great chere dothe thys noble senatour
To kyng Alla, and he to hym also
Euerych of hem dothe other great honour
And so bykel, that on a day or two
This senatour is to kyng Alla go
To feest, and shortly yf I shal not lye
Custaunces sonne went in hys companye (stance

Som mē wold sayne, at ý request of Cus-
This senatour had ladde thys childe to feest
I may not tellen euery circumstaunce
Be as be may, there was he at leste
But sothe it is, right at hys mothers heste
Byforn Alla, duryng the meate space
The chylde stode, lokyng in the kynges face (wonder

This Alla kyng, hath of thys chyld great
And to the senatour he sayd anon
whose is ý fayre chyld, that stondeth yonder:
I not (quod he) by god and by saynt John
A mother he hath, but father hath he non
That I of wote, but shortly in a stounde
He tolde Alla, howe the childe was founde

But God wote (quod this senatour also)
So vertuous a lyuer in my lyfe
Ne sawe I neuer, as she, ne herde of mo
Of wordly woman, mayden, ne of wyfe
I dare wel say, she had leuer a knyfe
Through her brest, than ben a womā wycke
There is no mā couthe bryng her to ý pricke

Nowe was the chylde as lyke Custaunce
As possyble is, a creature for to be
This Alla hath the face in remembraunce
Of Dame Custaunce, and theron mused he
Yeue that the childes mother were aught she
That is his wyfe, and priuely he syght
And spedde hym fro the table, that he myght

Parfay he thought, ý fantome is in myn
I ought deme of skyfiul iugement (heed
That in the salte see my wyfe is deed
And afterwarde he made hys argument
What wot I, yf Christ hath hyther sent
My wyfe by see, as wel as he her sente
To my countrey, fro thens ý she was wente

And after anone, home wyth the senatour
Goeth Alla, for to se thys wonder chaunce
Thys senatour doth Alla great honour
And hastely he sente after Custaunce
But trusteth wel, her lust not to daunce
when she wyst wherfore was that sonde
Unneth vpon her fete myght she stonde.

Whē Alla saw his wife, fayre he her gret
And wept, that it was rough for to se
For at the fyrst loke he on her set
He knewe wel verely that it was she
And for sorowe, as dombe stante as a tre
So was her herte shet in dystresse
when she remembreth hys vnkyndnesse

Twyse she sowned in her owne syght
He wepeth and hym excuseth pytously
Nowe god (q̃ he) and hys hallowes bryght
So wylly on my soule haue mercy
That of your harme, as gyltlesse am I
As is Maurice my sonne, so lyke your face
Els the fende me fetch out of thys place.

Longe was ẏ sobbyng, & the bytter payne
Or that her woful herte myght cese
Great was the pyte to here hem complayne
Thrugh which plaintes gan her wo encrese
I pray you al my laboure to relese
I may not tel her wo, tyl to morowe
I am so wery to speake of her sorowe

But fynally, when that ẏ soth is wyste
That Alla gyltlesse was of her wo
I trowe an hundred tymes ben they kyste
And such a blysse is there bytwyxt hem two
That saue the ioye, that lasteth euermo
There is no lyke, that any creature
Hath seyen or shal, whyle ẏ world may dure

Tho prayed she her husbande mekely
In relesynge of her pytous payne
That he wolde praye her father specially
That of hys maiesty he wolde enclyne
To vouchsafe somdaye wyth hym to dyne
She prayed hym eke, he shulde by no waye
Unto her father no worde of her to saye

Some mē wold say, ẏ the chyld Maurice
Doth thys message vntyl thys Emperour
But as I gesse, Alla was not so nyse
To hym that was of so soueraygne honour
As he that is of christen folke the flour
Sent any chylde, but it is bette to deme
He went hym selfe, and so it may wel seme

Thys Emperour graunted gentelly
To come to dyner, as he hym bysought
That al was redy he loked besely
Upon this chyld, & an his doughter thought
Alla goeth to hys ynne, and as hym ought
Arrayde for thys feest in euery wyse
As farforth as hys connynge may suffyce

The morow came, & Alla gan hym dresse
And eke his wyfe, the Emperour for to mete
And forth they ryde in ioye and in gladnesse
And when she sawe her father in the strete
She lyght a downe and falleth hym to fete
Father (q̃ she) your yonge chylde Custaunce
Is nowe ful clene out of your remembraūce

I am your doughter Custaunce (q̃ she)
That whylom ye han sent into Surrye
It am I father, that in the salte see
was put alone, and dampned for to dye
Nowe good father, I you mercy crye
Sende me no more into hethennesse
But thanken my lorde here of hys kyndnesse

who can the pytous ioye tellen al
Bytwyxt hem thre syn they bē thus ymette
But of my tale make an ende I shal
The day goth fast, I wol no lenger lette
Thys glad folke to dyner ben sette
In ioye and blysse, at meate I let hem dwell
A thousande folde welmore then I can tel

This chyld Mauris was sythin emperour
Made by the pope, and lyued christenly
To Christes churche he dyd great honour
But I let al thys story passen by
Of Custaunce is my tale specially
In olde Romayne iestes men may fynde
Maurys lyfe, I beare it not in mynde

This kynge Alla, when he hys tyme sey
wyth thys Custaūce, his holy wyfe so swete
To Englande ben they come the ryght wey
where as they lyue in ioye and in quyete
But lytel whyle it lasteth I you hete
Joye of this worlde, for tyme wol not abyde
Fro daye to nyght, it chaungeth as the tyde

Who

Who lyued euer in such delyte a daye
That he ne meued eyther in conscience
Or yre, or tallent of some kyn affraye
Enuye or pryde, or passion, or offence.
I ne saye, but for thys ende, & thys sentence
That lytel whyle in ioye or in pleasaunce
Lasteth the blysse of Alla wyth Custaunce

For deth, ý taketh of hye & lowe his rente
when passed was a yere, euen as I gesse
Out of thys worlde kynge Alla he hente
For whom Custaũce hath ful gret heuynesse
Nowe let vs prayen god hys soule blesse
And dame Custaunce, kynally to say
Towarde ý towne of Rome goeth her way

To Rome is come thys holy creature
And kyndeth her father hole and sounde
Nowe is she skaped al her auenture
And when that she her father hath ýfounde
Downe on her knees goeth she to grounde
weepynge for tenderness in herte blythe
She heryeth god, an hũdred thousand sythe

In vertue and holy almesdede
They lyuen al, and neuer a sonder wende
Tyl death departen hem, thys lyke they lede
And fareth nowe wel, my tale is at an ende
Now Jesu christ, ý of his myght may sende
Joye after wo, gouerne vs in hys grace
And kepe vs al, that ben in thys place

¶ Thus endeth the man of lawes tale, and here foloweth the Squyers prologue.

Our hoost on hys stryoppes stode anone
And sayd: good men herkeneth euerychone
Thys was a thrykty tale for the nones
Syr parysh preest (q he) for goddes bones
Tel vs a tale, as was thy forwarde yore
I se wel that ye lerned men in lore
Can moche good, by goddes dignite
The parson hym answerde, benedicite
what eyleth the man, so synfully to swere.
¶ Our host answerd, O Jenkyn be ye there
Now good mẽ (q our host) herkeneth to me
I smel a loller in the wynde (q he)
Abydeth for goddes dygne passion
For we shall haue a predication
Thys loller here, wol prechen vs somwhat.
¶ Nay by my fathers soule, that shal he nat
Sayd the Squyer, here shal he not preche
Here shal he no gospel glose ne teche
we leueth al in the great god (quod he)
He wolde sowen some dyffyculte
Or sprynge cockel in our clene corne
And therfore hoost, I warne the byforne
My iolly body, shal a tale tel
And I shal ryngen you so mery a bel
That I shal waken al thys companye
But it shal not ben of philosofye
Ne phisyke, ne termes queynte of lawe
There is but lytel laten in my mawe

¶ Here endeth the Squyers prologue, and hereafter foloweth hys tale.

AT Sarra, in the lãde
of Tartary
There dwelt a kynge
that warred Surry
Thrughwhich ther di
ed many a douzty mã
Thys noble kynge
was called Cambuscã
Whych in hys tyme
was of so great renoun
That there nas no where, in no regioun
So excellent a lorde in al thynge
Hym lacked naught that longed to a kynge
As of the secte, of whych he was borne
He kept hys laye, to whych he was sworne
And therto he was hardy, wyse, and ryche
And pytous and iuste alwaye ylyche
Trewe of his worde, benygne & honorable
Of hys corage, as any centre stable
Yonge, fresche, & stronge, in armes desyrous
As any bacheler of al hys hous
A fayre person he was, and fortunate
And kept alwaye so royal astate
That there nas no where such another man
This noble kyng, this tartre, this Cãbuscã
Had two sonnes by Eltheta hys wyfe
Of whych the eldest hyght Algarsyfe
That other was cleped Camballo.
A doughter had thys worthy kynge also
That yongest was, and hyght Canace
But for to tel you al her beaute
It lyeth not in my tonge, ne in my connynge
I dare not vndertake so hye a thynge
Myne Englyshe eke is vnsufficient
It muste be a rethor excellent
That couth his colours, longyng for ÿ arte
Yf he shulde dyscryue here euery parte
I am none such I muste speake as I can
And so byfel, that thys Cambuscan
Hath twenty wynter borne hys dyademe
As he was wonte, fro yere to yere I deme
He let the feest of hys natiuite
Done cryen throughout Sarra hys cyte
The laste ydus of Marche, after the yere
Phebus the sonne, full ioly was and clere
For he was nye hys exaltation
In Martes face, and in hys mantion
In Aries, the collorike, the hote syngne
Ful lusty was the wether and benygne
For whych the foules, agaynst ÿ sonne shene
wha

what for the season, and the yonge grene
Ful loude songe her affections
Hem semed han getten hem protections
Ayen the swerde of wynter kene and colde.
¶ Thys Cābuscā, of which I haue you tolde
In royal vestementes, syt on hys deys
wyth dyademe, ful hye in hys paleys
And helde hys feest so royal and so ryche
That in thys worlde nas there none it lyche
Of whych, yf I shall tel of al the array
Then wolde it occupye a sommers day
And eke it nedeth not to deuyse
At euery course, the ordre of her seruyce
I wol not tel of her straunge sewes
Ne of her swannes, ne of her heronsewes
Eke in that lande, as tellen knyghtes olde
Ther is some meate, that is ful dainty holde
That in thys lande men retche of it but smal
There is no man that maye reporten all.
I wyl not taryе you, for it is pryme
And for it is no frute, but losse of tyme
Unto my fyrst purpose I wol haue recourse
¶ And so byfel that after the thyrde course
whyle that thys kyng syt thus in his noblay
Herkenyng his minstralles her thinges play
Before hym at hys borde delicyously
In at the halle dore al sodeynly
There come a knyght on a stede of brasse
And in hys honde abrode myrrour of glasse
Upon hys thombe he had of golde a ryngе
And by hys syde a naked swerde hongynge
And vp he rydeth to the hye borde
In al the hall ne was there spoke a worde
For maruayle of ý knyght, hym to beholde
Ful besely they wayten yonge and olde
¶ This straūge knyght ý come thus sodenly
Al armed saue hys heed, ful royally
Salued kynge and quene, and lordes al
By ordre, as they sytten in the hall
wyth so hye reuerence and obeysaunce
As wel in speche as in countenaunce
That Gawyn wyth hys olde curtesye
Thoughe he come ayen out of fayre
Ne coude him not amende of no worde
And after this, before the hye borde
He with a manly voyce sayd his message
After the forme vsed in his langage
without vyce of syllable or of letter
And for his tale shulde seme the better
Accordant to his wordes was his chere
As teacheth arte of speche hem that it lere
Al be that I can not sowne his style
Ne I ne can not clymben so hye a style
Yet saye I thus, as to my comen entente
Thus much amoūteth al that euer he mente
yf it so be, that I haue it in my mynde
¶ He sayd: The kynge of Araby and of Ynde
Wy liege lorde, on thys solempne day
Salueth you, as he best can and may
And sendeth you, in honoure of your feest
By me that am redy at your heest
Thys stede of brasse, that easely and wel
Can in the space of a daye naturel
This is to say, in foure & twenty houres
where so ye lyst, in drought or in shoures
Beren your body into euery place
Into whych your herte wylleth to pace
without weme of you, through foule or faire
Or yf ye lyst to fleen in the eyre
As doth an Egle, when hym lyst to sore
This same stede shal beare you euermore
withouten harme, tyl ye ben there you leste
Though that ye slepen on his backe and rest
And turne agayn with ý writhyng of a pyn
He that it wrought coude ful many a gyn
He wayted ful many a constellation
Or he had done this operatyon
And knew ful many a seale & many a bonde.
This myrrour eke ý I haue in myne honde
Hath such a myght, that men may in it se
when there shal fallen any aduersite
Unto your reygne, or to your selfe also
And openly se, who is your frende and foe
And ouer al thys, yf any lady bryght
Hath set her herte on any myner wyght
yf he be false, she shal the treason se
Hys newe loue, and al hys subtylte
So openly, that there shal nothynge hyde
Wherfore agayne this lusty sommer tyde
Thys myrrour & thys ryngе, that ye maye se
He hath sente to my lady Canace
Your excellent doughter that is here
¶ The vertue of thys ryngе, yf ye woll here
Is thys, that yf she lyst it for to were
Upon her thombe, or in her purse it bere
There is no foule, that fleeth vnder heuen
That she ne shal vnderstande hys steuen
And knowe hys meanynge openly & playne
And answere hym in hys langage agayne
And euery grasse that groweth vpon rote
She shal wel know, & whom it wol do bote
Al be hys woūdes neuer so depe and wyde
¶ This naked swerde, ý hangeth by my syde
Such vertue hath, ý what man so ye smyte

Throughout his armure it wol karue & byte
were it as thycke as a braunched oke
And what mã that is woũded wyth ý stroke
Shal neuer be hole, tyl that you lyst of grace
To stroken him with ý platte in thylke place
There he is hurte, thys is as moche to sayne
Ye mote wyth the platte swerde agayne
Stroken hym in the wounde, & it wol close
Thys is very soth wythouten glose
It fayleth not, whyles it is in your holde.
And whẽ this knizt hath thus his tale tolde
He rydeth out of the halle, & downe he lyght
Hys stede, whych that shone as sonne bryght
Stante in the courte styl as any stone
The knyght is into chambre ladde anone
He is vnarmed, and to the meate ysette
And al that harneys bykorne hym fette
This is to sayne, the swerd & eke ý myrrour
All borne was into the hye tour
wyth certayne offycers ordeyned therfore
And to Canace the rynge is bore
Solemnely, there she sat at the table
But sekerly wythout any fable
The horse of brasse, ý may not be remeued
It stante, as it were to the grounde yglewed
There maye no man out of the place it drye
For none engyne, or wyndlas, or polye
And cause why, for they can not the crafte
And therfore in the place they han it lafte
Tyl ý the knizt hath taught hem ý manere
To voyden hym, as ye shal after here.
¶ Great was ý prees, that swarmed to & fro
To gauren on the horse, that standeth so
For it so hye was, & so brode and longe
So wel proporcioned for to ben stronge
Ryght as it were a stede of Lumbardye
Therwyth so horsly, and so quycke of eye
As it a gentle courser of Poyle were
For certes, fro hys tayle to hys ere
Nature ne arte coude hym not amende
In no degre, as al the people wende
But euermore her moste wonder was
Howe that it couth gon, and was of bras
It was of fayrie, as the people semed
Dyuers folke dyuersly they demed
As many heedes, as many wyttes there ben
They murmure, as doth a swarme been
And made of skylles after her fantesyes
Reherynge of the olde poetryes
And sayden it was ylyke the Pegase
The horse that had wynges for to flee
Or els it was the Grekes horse Synon
That brought Troye to dystruccion
As men in thys olde bokes rede.
Myne herte (q̃ one) is euermore in drede
I trowe some men of armes ben therin
That shapen hem thys cytie for to wyn
It were right good, ý such thynges were
In other rowned to his felow low (know
And sayd he lyed, for it is rather ylyke
An apparence made by some magyke
As iogglours playen at these feastes grete
Of sondry thoughtes, thus they iãgle & trete
As leude people demeth comenly
Of thynges that ben made more subtelly
Then they can in her leudnesse comprehende
They demen gladly to the badder ende.
And some of them wondren on ý myrrour
That borne was vp to the mayster toure
Howe men myght in it such thynges se.
And other answerd, certes it myght wel be
Naturally by composicyons
Of angels and of sye reflections
And sayden in Rome was suche on
They speken of Alocen and Vitilion
And Aristote, that wryteth in her lyues
Of queynte myrrours, and of prospectiues
As knowen they that han her bokes herde.
And other folke han wõdred on ý swerde
That wolde perce through euery thynge
And fel in speche of Telophus the kynge
And of Achylles for hys queynte spere
For he couth wyth it heale and dere
Right in such wyse as mẽ may ẃ the swerde
Of which right now ye haue your seluẽ herd
They speken of sondry hardyng of metal
And speken of medycyns eke wythal
And how, and when it shulde hardened be
whych is vnknowe algate to me.
¶ Tho speake they of Canaces rynge
And sayden al, that suche a wonder thynge
Of crafte of rynges herde they neuer non
Saue that Moses, and kynge Salomon
Had a name of connynge of such arte
Thus sayen the people, & drawẽ hem aparte
But natheleſſe, some sayden that it was
wonder to maken of ferne ashen, glas
And yet is glas not lyke ashen of ferne
But so they han knowen it so ferne
Therfore they sesen her iãglyng & her wõder
As sore wondren some on cause of thõder
On ebbe & fludde, on gossomer, and on myste
And on al thynge, tyl the cause is wyste.
Thus ianglen they, and demẽ and deuyse

Tyl

Tyl that the kyng gan fro hys borde arise.
¶Phebus hath lefte the angle merydional
And yet ascendyng was the beest royal
The gentle Lyon with his Aldrian
Whan that this tartre Kyng Cambuscan
Rose from his borde, there as he sate ful hye
Byforne hym gothe the loude mynstralcye
Tyl he came to hys chambre of paramentes
There as they sownen dyuers instrumētes
That is lyke an heuen for to here
Nowe dauncen lusty Venus chyldrē dere
For in the kyche her lady sate ful hye
And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.
¶This noble kyng is sette vpon hys trone
This straunge knyght is fet to hym ful sone
And in the daunce he gothe with Canace
Here is the reuel and the iolyte
That is not able a dul man to deuyse
He must han knowe loue and her seruyse
And ben a feestlyche man, as fresshe as May
That shulde you deuyse suche araye.
¶Who coulde you tellen the forme of daūces
So vncouth and so fresh countenaunces
Suche subtyll lokynges and dissimulinges
For drede of ialouse mens apperceyuynges
No man but Lancelot, and he is deed
Therfore I passe ouer al this lusty heed
I say no more, but in this iolynesse
I lete hem, tyl men to supper dresse.
¶The steward byddeth spyces for to hye
And eke the wyne, in al this melodye
The vshers and the squyers ben ygone
The spyces and the wyne is comen anone
They eten & dronkē, & whā this had an ende
Into the temple, as reason was, they wende
The seruyce is done, they soupen al by day
What nedeth it to reherseu her array?
Eche man wot wel, that at a kynges feest
Is plenty, to the moste and to the leest
And deyntes mo, than ben in my knowynge.
And after supper gothe this noble kynge
To seen this horse of brasse, with al his route
Of lordes and of ladyes hym aboute
Such wōdrig ther was on his hors of bras
That sythen the great siege of Troye was
There as men wondred on an horse also
Ne was there such a wondring, as was tho
But fynally, the kyng asketh the knyght
The vertue of thys horse and the myght
And prayde him to tellen of his gouernaūce.
The horse anon gan to tryppe and daunce
whā ý this knightlayde honde on hys rayne
And sayd, syr there is no more to sayne
But whan you lyste to ryden any where
Ye mote tryll a pyn, stante in hys ere
whiche I shal tel you bytwene vs two
Ye mote nempne hym to what place also
Or to what countre you lyst to ryde
And whan ye come there you lyste abyde
Bydde hym discende, and trylle a nother pyn
For therin lyeth the effecte of al the gyn
And he wol downe discende, & don your wyl
And in that place he wol abyde styl
Though al ý world had the cōtrary sworne
He shal not thens be ythrowe ne yborne
Or yf you lyst bydde hym thens gon
Tryl thys pyn, and he wol vanyche anon
Out of the syght of euery maner wyght
And come ayen, be it day or nyght
whan that you lyst to clepen hem agayne
In suche a gyse, as I shal to you sayne
Bytwyxt you and me, and that ful sone
Ryde whā you lyst, ther nis no more to done.
¶Enfourmed whā ý kyng was of ý knyght
And hath conceyued in hys wytte aright
The maner and the forme of al thys thyng
Ful glad and ful blythe, the noble kyng
Repayreth to hys reuel, as byforne
The brydel is in to the toure yborne
And kept amonge his iewels lefe and dere
The horse vanyshed, I not in what manere
Out of her syght, ye get no more of me
But thus I lete in luste and iolyte
This Cambyscan, hys lordes festyng
Tyl wel nye the day began to spryng.

¶Explicit prima pars: et sequitur pars secunda.

The norice of digestyon, the slepe
Gan on hem wynke, & bad hem take kepe
That myrth, drinke, & labour wol haue reste
And with a galping mouthe hem al he keste
And sayd, it was tyme to lye adoun
For blode was in hys domynacyoun
Cherysseth blode, natures frende (q̃ he)
They thankē him galpyng, by two by thre
And euery wight gan drawē him to his reste
As slepe hem bade, they toke it for the beste.
Her dremes shul not now ben itolde for me
Ful were her heedes of fumosyte
That causeth dremes, of whyche ther is no
They slepen, tyl it was pryme large (charge

The moste parte, but it were Canace
She was ful mesurable, as women be
For of her father had she take her leue
To gon to rest, sone after it was eue
Her lyst not appalled for to be
Nor on the morowe, vnrestlyche for to se
And slept her fyrst slepe, and awoke
For suche a ioy she in her herte toke
Both of her queynt Rynge, & of her myrrour
That twenty tymes she chaunged her colour
And in her slepe, ryght for impressyon
Of her myrrour, she had a visyon
Wherfore, or the sonne vp gan glyde
She cleped her maistresses her besyde
And sayd, her luste for to aryse.
¶ These olde women, that ben gladly wyse
As is her maystresse, answerde her anon
And sayd: madame, whither wol ye gon
Thus erly for folke ben al in reste.
¶ I wol (quod she aryse) for me leste
No lenger for to slepe, but walken aboute.
Her maystresse cleped womē a great route
And vp they ryse, wel ten or twelue
Up ryseth fresshe Canace her selue
As ioly and bright, as the yonge sonne
That in the Ram is four degrees vp ronne
No hygher was he, whan she redy was
And forthe she walketh an easye paas
Arrayed after the lusty season sote
Lightly for to playen, & to walken on fote
Nought but fyue or sixe of her meyne
And in a trenche, fer in the parke gothe she.
¶ The vapour, whiche ẏ fro the erth glode
Maketh the sonne to seme ruddy and brode
But natheleſſe, it was so fayre a syght
That it made al her hertes for to lyght
what for the season, and for the morownyng
And for the foules that she herde synge
For right anon, she wyste what they ment
Right by her songe, and knewe al her entent
¶ The knotte why, that euery tale is tolde
If it be taryed tyl luste be colde
Of hem that han it herkened after yore
The sauour passeth, euer lenger the more
For fulsomnesse of prolixite
And by the same reason thynketh me
I shulde vnto the same knot condiscende
And make of her walkyng sone an ende.
¶ Amydde a tre, for drye as whyt as chalke
As Canace was playeng in her walke
There sate a faucon ouer her heed ful hye
That with a pytous voyce gan to crye
That al the wodde resowned of her cry
And beaten had her selfe so pytously
With bothe her wynges, tyl the reed blode
Ran endelonge the tre, there as she stode
And euer in one, she cryed and shright
And with her becke, her seluen so she pyght
That there nas Tygre, ne cruel beste
That dwelleth in wodde, eyther in foreste
That nolde hā wept, yf that they wepe coude
For sorowe of her, she shright alway so loude
For there nas neuer yet man on lyue
If that he couthe a faucon wel discryue
That herde of suche another of fayrenesse
As wel of plumage, as of gentylnesse
Of shappe, of al that might irekened be
A faucon peregryn than semed she
Of ferude londe, & euermore as she stoode
She swouned now & now, for lacke of blood
Tyl welny is she fal fro the tree.
¶ This fayre kynges doughter, this Canace
That on her fynger bare the queynte rynge
Thrugh which she vnderstod wel euery thig
That any foule may in hys leden sayne
And coude answere hym in his leden agayne
Hath vnderstande, what this faucon seyde
And welny for routhe almost she deyde
And to the tre she gothe ful hastely
And on this faucon loketh ful pytously
And helde her lappe abrod, for wel she wyste
The faucon muste fallen from the twyste
Whā ẏ she swouned next, for lacke of bloode
A longe whyle to wayten there she stoode
Tyl at the laste she spake in this manere
Unto the hauke, as ye shalen after here.
¶ What is the cause, yf it be for to tell
That ye ben in this furyal payne of hell
Quod Canace, vnto this hauke aboue
Is thys for sorowe of dethe, or losse of loue?
For as I trowe, these ben causes two
That causen most a gentyll hert wo
Of other harme it nedeth not to speke
For ye vpon your selfe you wreke
Whiche proueth wel, that eyther ire or drede
Mote ben encheson of your cruell dede
Syn that I se none other wyght you chace
For the loue of god, so doth your selfe grace
Or what may be your helpe, for west or est
Ne sawe I neuer er now, no bryde ne beest
That farde with hym selue so pytously
Ye slee me with your sorowe verily
I haue of you so great compassioun
For goddes loue come fro the tre adowne

And

And as I am a kynges doughter trewe
If that I verly the causes knewe
Of your disease, yf it lay in my myght
I wolde amende it, certes or it be nyght
As wysely helpe me great god of kynde
And herbes shal I right ynowe fynde
To hele with your hurtes hastely
Tho shright this faucon yet more spitously
Than euer she dyd, & fell to grounde anone
And lyeth a swoune deed as is a stone
Tyl Canace hath in her lappe itake
Unto the tyme she gan of swonne awake
And after that she of swoune gan abreyde
Right in her haukes leden thus she sayde
That pite renneth soone in gentyl herte
(felyng his semilitude in paynes smerte)
Is proued al day, as men may se
As wel by werke as by authorite
For gentle hert kepeth gentilnesse
I se wel, that ye haue of my distresse
Campassyon, my fayre Canace
Of very womanly benignyte
That nature in your principles hath sette
But for none hope for to fare the bette
But for to obey vnto your hert free
And for to make other beware by me
As by the whelpe, chastised is the Lyon
Right for that cause, and for that conclusyon
Whyle that I haue a leyser and a space
Myne harm I wol confessen or I pace
And euer while that one her sorowe tolde
That other wepte, as she to water wolde
Tyl that the Faucon badde her to be styl
And with a sike, thus she sayd her tyl.
¶ There I was bredde, alas that ilke day
And fostred in a roche of marble gray
So tenderly, that nothyng eyleth me
I ne wist not what was aduersyte
Tyl I coude flye, ful hye vnder the skye
There dwelte a Terselet me fast by
That semed wel of al gentylnesse
Al were he ful of trayson and of falsnesse
It was so wrapped vnder humble chere
And vnder hewe of trouth, & in suche manere
Under pleasaunce, and vnder busy payne
That no wight coud haue wēde he coud fain
So depe in greyne he dyed his colours
Right as a serpent hideth him vnder flours
Tyl he may se hys tyme for to byte
Right so, this God of loues ipocrite
Dothe so hys serymones and obeysaunce
With his dissimulynge, & fayre assemblaunce
That sowneth vnto gentilnesse of loue
As in a tombe is al the fayre aboue
And vnder the cors, suche as ye wote
Suche was this ipocrite colde and hote
And in this wyse he serued his entent
That saue the fende, non wist what he ment
Tyl he so long had weped and complayned
And many a yere hys seruyce to me yfayned
Tyl that myn hert, to pitous and to nyce
Al innocent of hys cruel malyce
For ferde of hys dethe, as thought me
Upon hys othes and hys suretee
Graunted hym loue, vpon this condition
That euermore myn honour and my renoun
were saued, bothe preuy and apert
This is to say, that after hys desert
I yaue hym al myn hert and all my thought
God wote, and in other wyse nought
And toke his hert in chaunge of myn for aye
But sothe is sayd, gone sythen many a day
A trewe wight and a thefe thynketh not one
And whan he sawe the thyng so fer ygone
That I graunted hym fully my loue
In suche a gyse, as I haue sayd aboue
And yeuen hym my trewe hert as fre
As he swore he yake his hert to me
Anon this Tygre, ful of doublenesse
Fyll on hys knees with so deuout humblesse
With hye reuerence, and eke by his chere
So lyke a gentyl louer, as of manere
So rauysched, as it semed for ioye
That neuer Troylus, ne Paris of Troy
Jason certes, ne non other man
Syn Lamet was, that alder first began
To louen two, as writen folke before
Ne neuer sythen Adam was borne
Ne couthe man by twenty thousande parte
Counterfete the sophymes of hys arte
Ne were worthy to vnbocle hys galoche
Ther doublenesse or fayny ng shulde aproche
Ne so couth thanke a wight, as he dyd me
His maner was an heuen for to se
Tyl any woman, were she neuer so wyse
So paynteth he hys chere poynt deuyse
As wel hys wordes, as hys countenaunce
And I so loued hym for hys obeysaunce
And for the trouthe that I demed in his hert
That yf so were, that any thyng hym smert
Al were it neuer so lyte, and I it wyst
Me thought I fetel dethe at my herte twyst
And shortly, so ferforth this thyng went
That my wyl was his wylles instrument

That

That is to say, my wil obeyed his wyl
In al thyng, as ferre as reason fyl
Kepyng the boundes of my worthyp euer
Ne neuer had I thyng so lefe ne so leuer
As hym god wote, ne neuer shal no mo
This last lenger than a yere or two
That I supposed of hym nothyng but good.
But fynally, thus at the last it stode
That fortune wolde that he most twyn
Out of that place, whiche that I was in
where me was wo, it is no questyon
I can not make of it discriptyon
For o thyng dare I tel boldely
I knowe what the payne of dethe is therby
Suche harm I felte, that he ne might beleue
So on a day of me he toke hys leue
So sorowfully eke, that I wende verely
That he had felte as moche harm as I
whā that I herde him speke, & saw his hewe
But natheles, I thought he was so trewe
And eke that he repaire shulde agayne
withyn a lytel whyle sothe to sayne
And reason wolde eke, that he must go
For hys honour, as ofte happeth so
That I made vertue of necessite
And toke it wel, sythe it must nedes be
As I best might, I hidde fro hym my sorow
And toke nim by ý hond, seit John to borow
And sayd thus: lo I am yours al
Beth suche as I haue ben to you and shal
what he answerde, it nedeth not reherce
who can sayn bet than he, who can do wers:
whan he had al wel ysaid, than hath he done
Therfore behoueth hym a longe spone
That shal eten with a fende, thus herd I say
So at the last he mote forth hys way
And forthe he fleeth til he come there him lest
whan it come hym to purpose for to rest
I trowe he had thylke text in mynde
That al thyng repayring to hys kynde
Gladeth him selue, thus sayn men as I gesse
Men louen of kynde newfangleneſſe
As briddes don, that men in cages fede
For though ÿ nyght & day take of hem hede
And strawe her cage fayre and softe as sylke
And gyue hem sugre, hony, breed and mylke
Yet right anon as hys dore is vppe
He with his fete wold sporne adown his cup
And to the wood he wolde, and wormes eate
So newfangled ben they of her meate
And louen nouelries of proper kynde
No gentylneſſe of blode may hem bynde
So ferde thys Tercelet, alas the day
Tho he were gentel borne, fresche and gayt
And goodly for to se, and humble and free
He sawe vpon a tyme a kyte flee
And sodaynly he loued this kyte so
That al hys loue is clene fro me goo
And hath hys trouthe falsed in this wyse
Thus hathe the kyte my loue in her seruyce
And I am lorne without remedy.
And with ý worde this faucon gan to crye
And swouned ofte in Canaces barme
Great was ý sorowe for that haukes harme
That Canace, and all her women made
They nyst how they might her faucon glade
But Canace home bereth here in her lappe
And softely in playsters gan her wrappe
There as she w̄ her becke had hurt her selue
Nowe can not Canace but herbes delue
Out of the grounde and make salues newe
Of herbes precious and fyne of hewe
To helen with the hauke fro day to nyght
She dothe her besynesse, and all her might
And by her beddes heed she made a mewe
And couered it with veluettes blewe
In sygne of trouthe, that is in women sene
And al withouten ý Mewe is peynted grene
In which were peynted al these false foules
As ben these tydefes, tercelettes, and owles
Ryght for dispyte were peynted hem besyde
Pyes on hem for to crye and chyde
Thys leue I Canace her hauke kepynge
I wol nomore as nowe speke of her rynge
Tyl it come efte to purpos for to sayn
How that this faucon gate her loue agayn
Repentant, as the story telleth vs
By mediatyon of Camballus
The kynges sonne, of whiche I of tolde
But henforthe I wol my proces holde
To speken of auentures, and of batayls
That yet was neuer herd of so gret marueils
Fyrst wol I tel you of Cambuscan
That in hys tyme many a cyte wan
Howe that he wan Theodora to hys wyfe
And after wol I speke of Algarsyfe
For whom ful ofte in great peryl he was
Ne had he ben holpen by the horse of bras
And after wol I speke of Camballo
That fought in listes with the brethern two
For Canace, er that he myght her wyn
And there I left, I wol agayn begyn.

Explicit secunda pars.

Apollo whirleth vp his chare so hye
Tyl that the god Mercurius house he slye.

¶ There can be founde no more of this foresayd tale, whiche hath beu sought in dyuers places

¶ Here foloweth the wordes of the Marchaunt to the Squyer, and the wordes of the Host to the Marchaunt.

N fayth Squyer, thou hast the wel iquyt
And gentelly, I prayse wel thy wyt
Quod the Marchaunt, considyryng thyne youth
So kelyngly thou spekest I the alouth
As to my dome, there is non that is here
Of eloquence, that shalbe thy pere
Yf that thou lyue, God gyue the ryght good chaunce
And in vertue sende the perseueraunce
For of thy spekyng I haue great deynte
I haue a sonne, and by the Trinite
I had leuer thã twenty poũdes worth londe
(Though it nowe were fallen in my honde)
He were a man of suche discressyon
As that ye ben: kye on possessyon
But yf a man be vertuous with all
I haue my sonne shybbed, and yet shal
For he to vertue lysteth nat to entende
But for to play at dyse, and to spende
And lese al that he hath, is his vsage
And he had leuer talke with a page
Than to cõmen with any gentyl wight
where he myght lerne gentelnesse aryght
Strawe for your gentylnesse (q̃ our host)
what marchaunt, pardy wel thou wost
That eche of you mote tellen at the lest
A tale or two, or breken your behest
That know I wel (q̃ the marchãt) certain
I pray you haue me nat in disdayn
Though I to thys mã speke a worde or two
¶ Tel on thy tale withouten wordes mo
Gladly syr host (q̃ he) I wol obey
Unto your wyl, nowe herkeneth what I say
I wol you nat contray in no wyse
As farre as my wittes may suffyse
I pray to god that it may plesen you
Than wotte I wel, it is good ynow.

¶ Thus ende the wordes of the host and the marchant, and here foloweth the Marchauntes prologue.

Epyng and waylyng, care and other sorowe
I haue ynowe, both euyn and eke a morowe
Quod the Marchaunt, and so haue other mo
That wedded be, I trowe that it be so
For wel I wote it fareth so by me
I haue a wyfe, the worst that may be
For though the fende coupled to her were
She wold him ouermatch I dare wel swere
What shulde I reherce in special
Her hygh malyce - she is a shrewe at all
There is a longe and a large difference
Betwyxt Grisyldes great pacience
And of my wyfe the passyng cruelte
Were I vnbounde, also mote I the
I wolde neuer efte come in the snare
We wedded men lyue in sorowe and care
Assay who so wol, and he shal fynde
That I say sothe, by saynt Thomas of Inde
As for the more parte, I say nat al
God shelde that it shulde so befal
Ah good syr host, I haue wedded be
These monethes two, and more nat parde
And yet I trowe he that all hys lyfe
Hath wedded be, thoug men hym ryfe
In to the hert, ne couthe in no manere
Tel so moche sorowe, as I nowe here
Coude tell, of my wyues cursednesse
Now q̃ our host marchant, so god ỳ blesse
Syn ye be so moche knowe of that arte
Ful hertely I pray you tell vs parte
Gladly quod he but of myn owne sore
For sory hert I tel may no more.

¶ Here endeth the Marchauntes prologue, and here foloweth hys tale.

WHylō there was dwellyng in Lombardy
A worthy knyght, that borne was at Pauy
In whiche he lyued in great prosperyte
And sixty yeare a wyfeles man was he
And folowed aye hys bodely delyte
On women, there as was his appetyte
As don these foles that ben seculeres
And whan that he was past sixty yeres
Were it for holynesse or dotage
I can not sayn, but suche a great corage
Had this knyght to ben a wedded man
That day and nyght he dothe al that he can
To espy, where that he wedded myght be
Prayeng oure lorde to graunten hym that he
Myghten ones knowen of that blysful lyfe
That is bitwixt an husbande and hys wyfe
And for to lyuen vnder that holy bonde
With which god fyrst man and womā bonde
Non other lyfe (sayd he) is worthe a bean
For wedlocke is so easy and so clean
That in this worlde it is a paradise
Thus saith this olde knyght that is so wyse.
And certaynly, as sothe as god is kyng
To take a wyfe, it is a glorious thyng
And namely whan a man is olde and hore
Than is a wyfe the frute of hys tresore
Than shulde he take a yonge wyfe & a faire
On which he might engendren him an heire
And lede his lyfe in ioye and in solace
Where as these bachelers syngen alas
Whan that they fynden any aduersyte
In loue, whiche nys but chyldes banyte
And trewly it sytte wel to be so
That bachelers han ofte payne and wo
On brotel grounde they bylden brotelnesse
They finde freelte, whā they wenē secrenesse
They lyue but as bryddes or beestes
In lyberte, and vnder nyce arestes
There as a wedded man in hys estate
Lyueth a lyfe blissfully and ordinate
Vnder the yoke of mariage ybounde
Wel may his hert in ioye and blisse habounde
For who can be so buxome as a wyfe
Who is so trewe and eke so tentife
To kepe hym sicke and hole as is hys make
For wel ne wo she nyl hym nat forsake
She nys nat wery hym to loue and serue
Though that he lye bedreed tyl he sterue
And yet some clerkes sayn, that it is nat so
Of whiche Theophrast is one of tho
What force though Theophrast lyst to lye
Ne take no wyfe (q̃ he) for hysbondrye
As for to spare in houshold thy dispence
A trewe seruaunt doth more dilygence
Thy good to kepe, than thyn owne wyfe
For she wol clayme halfe parte al her lyfe

And

And yf that thou be sycke, so god me saue
Thy very frendes or a trewe knaue
wol kepe the better, thē she that wayteth aye
After thy good, and hath done many a daye
And yf thou take a wyke, to the vntrewe
Ful ofte tyme it shal the sore rewe
Thys sentence, and an hundred sithes worse
wryteth thys mā there, god hys bones curse
But take no kepe of suche vanyte
Defyeth Theophrast, and herkeneth me.
¶ A wyke is goddes yefte verely
Al other maner yeftes hardely
As landes, rentes, pasture, or cōmune
Or mouables, al ben yeftes of fortune
That passen, as a shadowe on a wal
But drede not, yf playnly speake I shal
A wyke wol last and in thyne house endure
wel lenger then the lyst parauenture
Mariage is a ful great sacrament
He whych hath no wyke I holde hym shent
He lyueth helples, and al desolate
I speake of folke in secular estate.
And herkneth why, I say not this for nought
A woman is for mannes helpe ywrought
The hye god, wen he had Adam maked
And sawe hym alone belly naked
God of hys great goodnesse sayd than
Let vs make an helpe to thys man
Lyke to hymselfe, and then he made Eue
Here may ye se, and hereby may ye preue
That a wyke is mannes helpe and comforte
Hys paradyse terrestre and hys dysporte
So buxome and so vertuous is she
They must nedes lyue in vnyte
One flesche they ben, & two soules as I gesse
Not but one herte in wele and in dystresse
A wyke, ah saynt Mary, benedicite
Howe myght a man haue any aduersite
That hath a wyke certes I can not sey
The blysse that is betwyxte hem twey
There may no tonge tellen or hert thynke
yf he be poore, she helpeth hym to swynke
She kepeth hys good, & wasteth neuer a del
Al that her husbande lust, her lyketh wel
She sayeth not ones naye, when he sayth ye
Do thys (sayeth he) al redy syr (sayth she)
¶ O blysful order of wedlocke precious
Thou arte so mery, and eke so vertuous
And so cōmended, and so approued eke
That euery mā, that halte hym worth a leke
Upon hys bare knees ought all hys lyfe
Thanken god, that hym hath sent a wyke
Or praye to god hym for to sende
A wyke, to last vnto hys lyues ende
For then hys lyfe is sette in sekernesse
He may not be dysceyued, as I gesse
So that he werche after hys wyues rede
Then may he boldely bearen vp hys hede
They ben so trewe and also wyse
For whych, yf thou wolt werchen as ÿ wyse
Do alway so, as women wol the rede
Lo how that Jacob, as these clerkes rede
By good counsayle of hys mother Rebecke
Bounde the kydde skynne about hys necke
For whych hys fathers benison he wan
Lo Judyth, as the story tel can
By wyse counsayle goddes people kept
And slewe hym Holofernes whyle he slept
Lo Abigail by counsayle, howe she
Saued her husbande Nabal, when that he
Shulde haue be slayne. And loke Hester also
By good counsayle delyuered out of wo
The people of God, & made hym Mardochee
Of Assuere enhaunsed for to be.
¶ There nys nothynge in gree superlatyfe
(As sayeth Senec) aboue an humble wyke
Suffre thy wyues tonge, as Caton byt
She shal cōmaūde, and thou shalt suffre it
And yet she wol obey of curtesye
A wyke is keper of thyne husbondrye
wel may the sycke man wayle and wepe
There as there nys no wyke ÿ house to kepe
I warne the, yf wysely thou wylt werche
loue wel thy wife, as christ loueth his cherch
yf thou loue thy selfe, thou louest thy wyke
No man hateth hys flesche: but in hys lyke
He fostreth it, and therfore byd I the
Cherysche thy wyke, or thou shalt neuer ithe
Husbande & wyke, what so men iape or playe
Of worldly folke holde the seker waye
They be so knit, ther may none harme betide
And namely vpon the wyues syde
For which this January, of which I tolde
Consydred hath in hys dayes olde
The lusty lyfe, the vertuous quiete
That is in mariage hony swete
And for hys frendes on a daye he sent
To tellen hem theffecte of hys entent.
¶ Wyth face sadde, his tale hath he hem tolde
He sayd frendes, I am hoore and olde
And almost (god wot) on the pyttes brynke
Upon my soule somwhat must I thynke
I haue my body folyshly dyspended
Blessed be god, it shal ben amended

For I wol ben certayne a wedded man
And that anone in al the hast I can
Unto some mayde, fayre and tender of age
I pray you shapeth for my mariage
All sodeynly, for I wol not abyde
And I wol fonden to espye on my syde
To whom I may be wedded hastely
But for as moche as ye ben more then I
Ye shullen rather suche a thynge espyen
Then I, and there me luste best to alyen
But one thing warne I you my frēdes dere
I wol none olde wyfe haue in no manere
She shal not passe fyftene yere certayne
Olde fyshe & yonge flesche wol I haue fayne
Better is (q̃ he) a pyke then a pykerel
And better then olde befe is the tender veel
I wol no woman of thyrty wynter age
It nys but beanstrawe and great forage
And eke these olde wedowes (god it wote)
They connen so moche crafte in wades bote
So moche broken harme when hem lyst
That wyth hem shulde I neuer lyue in rest
For sondrye scholes maketh subtel clerkes
A woman of many scholes halfe a clerke is
But certaynly a yonge thynge may men gye
Ryght as mē may warme wax wō hādes ply
wherfore I saye you plainly in a clause
I nyl none olde wyfe haue for thys cause
For yf so were that I had myschaunce
And in her couth haue no pleasaunce
Then shulde I lede my lyfe in auoutry
And so streyght to the deuel when I dye
Ne chyldren shulde I none vpon her geten
Yet had I leuer houndes had me eten
Then that myne heritage shulde fal
In straunge handes: and thus I tel you al
I dote not, I wote the cause why
Men shulde wedden: & forthermore wot I
There speaketh many a man of mariage
That wot nomore of this thē doth my page
For whych cause men shulde take a wyfe
Yf he may not lyuen chast hys lyfe
Take hym a wyfe wyth great deuotion
Bycause of leful procreation
Of chyldren, to the honoure of god aboue
And not only for paramour or for loue
And for they shulden lechery eschewe
And yelde her dettes when that it is dewe
Or for that eche man shulde helpen other
In myschefe, as a suster shulde the brother
And lyue in chastite ful heuenly
But sys (by your leaue) that am not I
For god be thanked, I dare make auaunt
I fele my lymmes hole and sufficiaunt
To done al that a man belongeth to
I wote my selfe best what I may do
Though I be hore, I fare as doth a tre
That blossometh er that frute ywore be
The blossomed tre is neyther drye ne deed
I fele no where hore but on my heed
Myne herte and my lymmes bene as grene
As laurel is through the yere to sene
And sythen that ye haue herd al myn entent
I pray you to my wyll ye wol assent
Dyuers men dyuersly hym tolde
Of mariage many ensamples olde
Some blameth it, some prayseth it certayne
But at the last, shortly for to ta sayn
(As al daye falleth altercacion
Betwyxt frendes in dysputation)
There fel a stryfe betwyxt hys brethren two
Of whych that one was cleped Placebo
Justynus sothly called was that other
Placebo sayd: O January brother
Ful lytel nede han ye my lorde so dere
Counsayle to axe of any that is here
But that ye ben so ful of sapience
That you ne lyketh for your hye prudence
To vayne fro the worde of Salomon
Thys worde sayth he vnto euerychone
worke al thynge by counsayle, thus sayd he
And then shalt thou not repent the
But tho that Salomon speake such a worde
Myne owne dere brother and my lorde
So wysely god my soule bryng to ease & rest
I holde your owne counsayle for the best.
For brother myne, take of me thys motyfe
I haue ben now a court man al my lyfe
And god wote, though I now vnworthy be
I haue standen in ful great degre
Aboven lordes in ful great estate
Yet had I neuer wyth none of hem debate
I neuer hem contrarved truely
I wote wel that my lorde can more then I
That he sayeth, I holde it ferme and stable
I say the same, or els thynge semblable
A ful great foole is any counsaylour
That serueth any lorde of hye honour
That dare presume, or ones thynke it
That his cōsaile shuld passe his lordes wyt
Nay, lordes be no fooles be my fay
Ye haue your selfe spoken here to day
So hye sentence, so holy & so wel
That I consent, and conferme euery del

Your

Your wordes al, and your opinyon
By god there nys no man in al thys town
Ne in Italye, coude bette haue sayd
Christ holdeth hym of thys ful wel a payde
And trewly it is an hye corage
Of any man that is stopen in age
To taken a yong wyke, by my father kyn
Your hert hongeth on a ioly pyn
Doth now in this matere right as you lest
For finally I holde it for the best.
Justynus that aye satte and herde
Right in thys wyse to Placebo he answerde
Nowe brother myne be pacyēt I you pray
Sith ye haue said, now herkeneth what I say
Senec among other wordes wyse
Saith, that a man ought hym wel auyse
To whom he yeueth hys londe or his catel
And sythens I ought auyse me right wel
To whom I gyue my good away fro me
Wel moche more I ought auysed be
To whom I gyue my body: for alway
I warne you wel it is no childes play
To take a wyke wichout auysement
Men must enquere (this is myne assent)
Whether she be sobre, wise, or dronkelwe
Or proude, or other wayes a shrewe
A chider, or a waster of thy good
Other riche or poore, or els a man is wood
All be it so, that no man kynde shal
Non in this worlde, that trotteth hole in all
Ne man, ne beest, suche as men can deuyse
But natheles, it ought ynough suffyse
With any wyke, yf so were that she had
Mo good thewes, than her vices badde
And al thys asketh layser to enquere
For god wotte I haue wept many a tere
Ful preuely, sythe I had a wyke
Praise who so wol a wedded mannes lyke
Certeyn I fynde in it but cost and care
And obseruaunces of all blysses bare
And yet god wote, my neyghbours about
And namely of women many a rout
Sayn that I haue the most stedfast wyke
And eke the mekest one that beareth lyke
But I wot best, where wryngeth me my sho
Ye may for me, right as you lyst do
Auyse you, ye ben a man of age
Howe that ye entren into mariage
And namely with a yonge wife and a fayre
By him that made water, erthe, and ayre
The yongest man that is in al this rout
Is besy ynowe to bringe it about
To haue his wyke alone, trusteth me,
Ye shal nat pleasen her yeres thre
This is to sayn, to don her plesaunce
A wyke asketh ful moche obseruaunce
I praye you that ye be nat yuel apayde
wel (q̃ this January) & hast thou al sayd
Strawe for thy Senec, & for thy prouerbes
I count it nat worth a pannyer ful of herbes
Of schole termes, wiser men than thou
As thou hast herde, assenteth it right nowe
To my purpose Placebo, what say ye
I say it is a cursed man (q̃ he)
That letteth matrymony sekerly
And with that worde they risen sodaynly
And ben assented fully, that he shulde
Be wedded whan him list, & where he wolde
Hyghe fantasy and curiousnesse
Fro day to day, gan in the soule empresse
Of January, about hys mariage
Many fayre shappe, and many fayre visage
There passeth throug his hert night by night
As who so toke a myrrour polysshed bright
And sette it in a comen market place
Than shulde he se many a figure pace
By his myrrour, and in the same wyse
Gan January within his thought deuyse
Of maydens, whiche that dwellen besyde
He wyst nat where he myght abyde
For yf that one had beautie in her face
Another stont so in the peoples grace
For her sadnesse and her benignyte
That of the people grettest voyce had she
And some were riche, and had badde name
But natheles, bitwixt ernest and game
He at last apoynted hym on one
And lete al other from his hert gone
And chese her of his awne authorite
For loue is blynde al day, and may nat se
And whan ý he was in his bedde ybrought
He purtreyde in hys hert and in hys thought
Her fresche beaute, and her age tender
Her middle smal, her armes long and slender
Her wise gouernaunce, and her gentylnesse
Her womanly bearyng, and her sadnesse
And whā that he was on her condiscended
Him thoght his choise myght nat bē amended
For whan that he him selfe concluded had
Him thought eche other mannes wyt so bad
That impossyble it were to reply
Ayenst his choice, this was hys fantasy
His frendes sent he to, at his instaunce
And prayeth hem to don hym that plesaunce

That hastely they wolde to hym come
He wolde abrydgen her labour al and some
Nedeth nomore for hym to go ne ryde
He was appoynted there he wolde abyde
¶ Placebo came, and eke hys frendes sone
And alder fyrst he bad hem al a bone
That none of hem none argumentes make
Ayenst hys purpose that he hath ytake
which purpose was pleasaũt to god (said he)
And very grounde of hys prosperite.
He said there was a mayden in the towne
whych of beauty hath great renowne
Al were it so, she were of smal degre
Suffyseth hym her youth and her beaute
whych mayde he said, he wold haue to wyfe
To leden in ease and in holynesse hys lyfe
And thanked god, ẏ he myght hauen her al
That no wyght hys blysse parten shal
And prayeth hem to labour in thys nede
And shapeth that he fayle not to spede
For then he sayd, hys spirite was at ease
Then is (q̃ he) nothynge maye me dysplease
Saue o thynge prycketh in my conscience
The whych I wol reherce in your presence.
¶ I haue (q̃ he) herde sayd ful yore ago
There may no mã haue parfyte blysses two
Thys is to say, in earth and eke in heuen
For though he kept him fro the synnes seuen
And eke from euery braunche of thylke tre
Yet is there so parfyte prosperite
And so great ease and lust in mariage
That euer I am agast nowe in myne age
That I shal lede nowe so mery a lyfe
So delycate wythout wo or stryfe
That I shal haue myne heuen in earth here
For sythen very heuen is bought so dere
wyth tribulation and great penaunce
How shulde I then lyuyng in such pleasaũce
As al wedded men done wyth her wyues
Come to ẏ blisse, ther christ eterne on lyue is
Thys is my drede, and ye my brethren twey
Assoyleth me thys question I you prey.
¶ Justinus, whych that hated hys foly
Answered anon ryght in hys iapery
And for he wolde hys longe tale abrege
He wolde none authorite allege
But sayd: syr, so there be none obstacle
Other then thys, god of hys hye miracle
And of hys mercy may for you so wyrche
That er ye han your ryghtes of holy chyrche
Ye may repent of wedded mannes lyfe
In whych ye sayen is neyther wo ne stryfe
And els god forbede, but yf he sent
A wedded man grace hym to repent
wel ofter, rather then a syngle man
And therfore syr, the best rede that I can
Dyspayreth you not, but haue in memory
Parauenture she may be your purgatory
She may by goddes meane & goddes whip
Then shal your soule vp to heuen skip
Swyfter thẽ doth an arowe out of a bowe
I hope to god here after ye shal knowe
That ther nys none so great felicite
In mariage, ne neuer none shal be
That you shal let of your saluation
So that ye vse it as skyl is and reason
The lustes of your wyfe attemperatly
And that ye please her not to amorously
And that ye kepe you eke fro other syn
My tale is done, for my wytte is thyn
Beth not agast herof my dere brother
But let vs wade fro thys matter to another
The wyfe of Bath, yf ye vnderstande
Of mariage, whych ye haue in hande
Declareth ful wel in a lytel space
Fareth now wel, god haue you in hys grace
And w̃ this worde, Justyne & his brother
Han take her leaue, and eche of hem of other
For when they sawe it must nedes be
They wrought so by wyse and slye treate
That she thys mayde whych May hyght
As hastely as euer that she myght
Shal wedded be to thys January
I trowe it were to longe to you to tary
Yf I you tolde of euery escrite and bonde
By whych she was fefted in hys londe
Or for to herken of her ryche arraye
But fynally ycomen is the daye
That to chyrch both ben they went
For to receyue the holy sacrament
Forth cometh ẏ prest, w̃ stole about his neck
And badde her be lyke Sara and Rebecke
In wysedome and trouth of mariage
And sayd hys orisons, as is the vsage
And crouched hem, & bad godshuld hem bless
And made al seker ynowe wyth holynesse
Thus ben they wedded wyth solempnite
And at feest sytteth he and she
wyth other worthy folke vpon the deys
Al ful of ioye and blysse is the paleyes
And ful of instrumentes and of vytayle
The moost deyntes of al Italie
Before him stode instrumẽtes of such sown
That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion

Ne

Ne made neuer such a melody.
At euery cours came loude mynstralcy
That neuer Joab tromped for to here
Neyther Theodomas yet halfe so clere
At Thebes, when the cytie was in doute
Bacchus the wyne hem skynketh al aboute
And Venus laugheth on euery wyght
For January was become her knyght
And wolde both assayen hys corage
In lybertie, and eke in mariage
And wyth her fyre bronde in her hōde about
Dauncetb before the bryde and al the rout
And certaynly, I dare wel sayen tyght this
Emenius that god of weddynge is
Saw neuer in his life, so mery a wedded mā
Holde thou thy peace thou poet Marcian
That wrytest vs that ylke weddynge mery
Of her philology and hym Mercury
And of the songes that the Muses songe
To smal is both thy penne & eke thy tonge
For to dyscriuen of thys mariage
whē tēder youth hath iwedded stouping age
There is such myrth, ẏ̄ it may not be written
Assayeth your selfe, then may ye wytten
Yf that I lacke or none in thys matere
May that sytte, wyth so benigne a chere
Her to beholde, it semed fayrey
Quene Hester loked neuer wyth such an eye
On Assuere, so meke a loke hath she
I may you not deuyse al her beaute
But thus moche of her beaute tel I may
That she was like ẏ̄ bryght morow of May
Fulfylde of al beaute, and of pleasaunce
This January is rauysched in a traunce
And at euery tyme he loked in her face
But in hys herte, he gan her to manace
That he ẏ̄ night, ī his armes wold her strein
Harder, then euer Parys dyd Heleyn
But natheles, yet had he great pyte
That ylke nyght offende her muste he
And thought, alas, O tender creature
Now wolde god ye myght wel endure
Al my corage, it is so sharpe and kene
I am agast ye shal it not sustene
But god forbede, that I dyd al my myght
Now wolde god that it were wane nyght
And that the nyght wolde last euer mo
I wolde that al these people were ago
And fynally he doth all hys labour
As he best myght, sauynge hys honour
To hast hem fro the meat in subtel wyse
The tyme came, that reason was to ryse
And after that men dauncen, & drynke fast
And spices all about the house they cast
And ful of ioye and blysse is euery man
Al but a squyer, that hyght Damian
whych carke before the knyght many a day
He was so rauysched on hys lady May
That for very payne he was ny wode
Almost he swelte, and sowned there he stode
So sore hath Venus hurt hym w̄ her brand
So freshe she was, and therto so lycande
And to hys bedde he went hym hastely
No more of hym at thys tyme speke I
But there I let hym wepe ynowe & playne
Tyl ẏ̄ freshe May wol rewen on hys payne.
O perilous fyre, ẏ̄ in the bedstraw bredeth
O fauyler foe, that hys seruyce bedeth
O seruaunt traytour, false homely hewe
Lyke to the adder slye in bosome vntrewe
O January dronken in plesaunce
God shylde vs al from your iniquitaunce
Of mariage, se howe thys Damian
Thyne owne squyer and thy borne man
Entendeth to done the villany
God graunt the thyne homely foe to espye
For in thys worlde nys wers pestilence
Then homely foe, al daye in thy presence
Parfourmed hath the son his arke dyurne
No lenger may the body of hym soiourne
On orisont, as in that latitude
Nyght w̄ hys mantel, that is darke & rude
Gan for to sprede, the hemyspery about
For whych departed is the lusty rout
Fro January, wyth thanke on euery syde
Home to her houses lustely they ryde
There as they done her thynges, as am lest
And when they sawe her tyme to go to rest
Sone after thys lusty January
wol go to bedde, he wolde no lenger tary
He drynketh ypocras, clarrey, and vernage
Of spyces hote, to encrease hys corage
And many a lectuary had he full fyne
Such as the cursed monke dan Cōstantyne
Hath wrytten in hys boke of Coitu
To eaten hem al he nolde nothyng eschewe
And thus to hys preuy frendes sayd he
For goddes loue, as sone as it may be
Let voyde al this house in curteys wise sone
Then drinkē, and the trauers drewe anone
So hasted January, it must be done
The bryd was brought to bed as styl as ston
And whē the bed was with ẏ̄ preest yblessed
Out of ẏ̄ chābre hath euery wight hē dressed

And January hath fast in armes take
Hys fresche May, hys paradyse, hys make
He lulleth her, he kysseth her ful ofte
wyth thycke brystels of hys berde vnsofte
Ilyke ȳ skyn of Houdysh, as sharp as brere
For he was shaue al newe in hys manere
He rubbeth her vpon her tendre face
And sayd thus: Alas, I mote trespace
To you my spouse, and you greatly offende
Or tyme come, that I wol downe dyscende
But natheles, consydreth thys (q̃ he)
There nys no workman, what so euer he be
That may both wyrche wel and hastely
Thys wol be done at leyser parfytly
It is no force howe longe that we play
In trewe wedlocke coupled be we tway
And blessed be the yoke that we bene in
For in our actes we mowe do no syn
A man may do no synne wyth hys wyfe
Ne hurte hym selfe wyth hys owne knyfe
For we haue leaue to play vs by the lawe
Thus laboureth he, tyl the day gan dawe
And then he taketh a soppe in fyne clarre
And vprygh in hys bedde then sytteth he
And after that he syngeth full loude & clere
And kyst hys wyfe, and maketh wantõ chere
He was al coltysche, and ful of ragery
And ful of gergon, as is a flecked pye
The slacke skynne aboute hys necke shaketh
whyle that he songe, so chaũteth he & craketh
But god wot what May thought i her herte
when she hym sawe, vpsyttyng in hys sherte
In hys nyght cappe, with hys necke lene
Shye prayseth not his playeng worth a bene
Then sayd he thus: my rest wol I take
Now daye is come, I may no lenger wake
And downe he layd his heed, & slept til prime
And afterward, when that he saw hys tyme
Up ryseth January, but the fresche May
Holdeth her chambre to the fourth day
As vsage is of wyues for the best
For euery labour somtyme mote haue rest
Or els longe may he not endure
Thys is to say, no lyues creature
Be it fysche or beest, bryddc or man
Now wol I speake of woful Damian
That langureth for loue, as ye shal here
Therfore I speke to hym in thys manere.
¶ I say, O sely Damian, alas
Answere to thys demaunde, as in thys caas
Howe that thou to thy lady fresche May
Tel thy wo: she wol alwaye saye nay
Eke yf thou speke, she wol thy wo bewray
God be thyn helpe, I can no better say
Thys sycke Damian in Venus fyre
So brenneth, that he dyeth for desyre
For whych he put hys lyfe in auenture
No lenger myght he in thys wyse endure
But priuely a penner gan he borowe
And in a lettre wrote he al hys sorowe
In maner of a complaynt or a lay
Unto thys fayre and fresche lady May
And in a purse of sylke, hõgyng on hys sherte
He hath it put, and layde it at hys hert
¶ The mone at noone tyde that ylke day
(That January hath ywedded fresche May)
Out of Taure was in the Cancre gleden
So longe hath May in her chambre bydden
As custome is, vnto these nobles al
A bryde shal not eaten in the hal
Tyl dayes foure, or thre at the leest
I passed bene, then let her gon to feest
¶ The fourth day cõplete fro noon to noone
when that the hye masse was ydone
In hal sat thys January and May
As fresche as is thys bryght somers day
And so befyl, how that thys good man
Remembreth hym vpon thys Damian
And sayd: saynt Mary how may thys be
That Damian entendeth not to me:
Is he aye sycke: or how may thys betyde:
Hys squyers which that stodẽ hym besyde
Excused hym, bycause of hys sycknesse
whych letted hym to done hys besynesse
None other cause myght make hym tary
That me forthynketh (q̃ this January)
He is a gentle squyer be my trouthe
If that he dyed, it were harme and routhe
He is as wyse, dyscrete, and secre
As any man that I wote of hys degre
And therto manly and seruysable
And for to be a thryfty man tyght able
But after meate, as sone as euer I may
I wol my selfe bysete hym, and eke May
To done hym al the comforte that I can
And for that worde, hym blessed euery man
That of hys bounte and of hys gentylnesse
He wolde so comforten in hys dystresse
Hys squyer, for it was a gentle dede
Dame (q̃ thys January) take good hede
That after meate, ye and your wemen al
(when ye haue ben in chãbre out of this hal)
That al ye gone to se thys Damian
Doth hym dysporte, he is a gentyl man

And

And telleth hym that I wol hym visite
Haue I nothyng but rested me a lyte
And spede you fast, for I wol abyde
Tyl that ye slepe fast by my syde
And with that worde he gan to hym cal
A squyer, that was Marshal of hys hal
And tolde him certayn thynge that he wolde
This fresh May hath streight her way ihold
With al her women, vnto this Damyan
Downe by hys beddes syde sat she then
Confortyng hym as goodly as she may
This Damyan, whã that he his tyme say
In secrete wyse, hys purse and eke hys byl
(In whiche he had written al hys wyl)
Hath put in to her honde withouten more
Saue that he syghed wonders depe and sore
And sothly, to her ryght thus sayd he
Mercy, and that ye discouer nat me
For I am deed, yf that this thyng be kydde
This purse hath she in her bosome hydde
And went her way, ye gete no more of me
But vnto January icome is she
And on hys beddes syde she sytte ful softe
He taketh her, and kysseth her ful ofte
And layde hym downe to slepe, & that anon
She fayned her, as that she must gon
There as ye wote, ý euery wight hath nede
And whan she of this byl hath taken hede
She rent it al to cloutes, and at last
In to the preuy, sothly she it cast.
who studieth nowe but faire fresshe May
And adown by January she lay
That slepte, tyl the cough hath hym awaked
Anon he prayde her to stripe her al naked
He wolde of her (he said) haue some pleasaũce
He said her clothes dyd hym encombraunce
And she obeyeth be she leke or lothe
But lest that precious folke be ẃ me wrothe
Howe that he wrought, I dare nat to you tel
Or whether she thought it paradise or hel
But I lette hem worche in her wyse
Tyl euynsong ryng, that they must aryse
Were it by desteny or by auenture
were it by influence, or by nature
Or constellation that in suche estate
The heuen stode, that tyme fortunate
(Was for to put a byl of Venus warkes)
For al thyng hath tyme, as sayn clerkes
To any woman for to gete her loue
I can nat say, but the great god aboue
That knoweth, that non acte is causeles
He demeth al, for I wol holde my pees.

But sothe is this, howe ý this freshe May
Hath take suche impressyon that day
Of pyte, on thys sicke Damyan
That fro her hert she dryue ne can
The remembraunce for to downe hym ease
Certayn (thought she) whom thys thyng dis-
I recke not, for this I hym assure (please
I loue hym best of any creature
Though he no more had than hys shert.
Lo pyte renneth soone in gentyl hert
Here may ye se, howe excelent franchise
In women is, whan they hem narow auyse
Some tyrant is, as there ben many one
That hath an hert as harde as any stone
Which wolde haue lete him sterue in ý place
Wel rather thã haue graunted hym her grace
And her reioysed in her cruel pride
And nat haue retched to been an homycide.
Thys gentyl may, fulfylled of al pyte
Right so of her honde a lettre made she
In whiche she graunteth him her very grace
There lacketh nought, but only tyme & place
where that she might to hys lust suffyse
For it shal be, right as he wol deuyse
And whan she sawe her tyme vpon a day
To visite this Damyã goth thys faire May
And subtelly this lettre down she thryst
Under hys pyllowe, rede it yf hym lyst
She taketh him by ý hond, & herd him twist
So secretely, that no wight of it wyst
And badde hym ben al hole, & forth she went
To January, whan that he for her sent.
Up ryseth Damyan the nexst morowe
Al passed was hys sickenesse and hys sorowe
He kembeth hym and proyneth hym & piketh
And dothe all that hys lady lust and lyketh
And eke to January he gothe as lowe
As euer dyd a dogge for the bowe
He is so plesaunt to euery man
For crafte is al, who that it can
That euery wight is fayn to spekẽ him gode
And fully in hys ladyes grace he stode
Thus lette I Damyan about his nede
And in my tale, forthe I wol procede.
¶ Some clerkes holden that felycite
Stont in delyte, and therfore certayn he
Thys noble January with al hys might
In honest wyse, as longeth to a knyght
Shope hym to lyue ful delyciously
Hys housyng, hys array, as honestly
To hys degre, was made as a kynges
Among other of hys honest thynges

He had a garden walled al with stone
So faire a garden was there neuer none
For out of dout, I verily suppose
That he that wrote the Romant of the Rose
Ne couth of it the beaute wel deuyse
Ne Priapus, ne myght nat suffyse
Though he be god of gardens, for to tell
The beaute of the garden, and of the wel
That stont vnder a laurer alway grene
Ful ofte tyme kyng Pluto and hys quene
Proserpina, and al her fayrie
Disporten hem, and maken melodye
About that wel, and daunced as men tolde
This noble knight, this January the olde
Suche deynte hath, in it to walke and play
That he wol suffre no wight to bere the kay
Saue he hym selfe, for the smal wicket
He bare alway of syluer a clycket
With which, whan that hym lyst vnshet
And whan that he wolde pay hys wyfe her
In somer season, thider wolde he go (det
And May his wife, & no wight but they two
And thinges whiche ý were nat don a bedde
He in the garden parfourmed hem & spredde
And in thys wyse, many a mery day
Lyued this January and thys fresche May
But worldly ioye may nat alway endure
To January, ne to no lyueng creature.
¶ O sodayne hap, O thou fortune vnstable
Lyke to the Scorpion disceyuable
That flatrest w̃ thy heed whã ý wolt stynge
Thy tayle is deth, thrugh thyn enuenomyng
O brotel ioye, O swete poyson queynt
O monster, that so sodaynly canst peynt
Thy gyftes, vnder the hewe of stedfastnesse
That thou disceyuest bothe more and lesse
Why hast thou January thus desceyued?
And haddest hym for thy frende receyued
And now thou hast beraft hym both his eyen
For sorowe of whiche desyreth he to dyen
Alas, this noble January that is so fre
Amydde his lust and his prosperite
Is woxen blynde, and al sodaynly
His dethe therfore desyreth he vtterly
And therwithal, the fyre of ielousy
(Lest that his wyfe shulde fal in some foly)
So brent hys hert, that he wolde fayne
That some man, bothe hym & her had slayne
For neuer after hys dethe, ne in hys lyfe
Ne wolde he that she were loue ne wyfe
But euer lyue a wedowe in clothes blake
Sole, as the turtle doth ý hath lost her make
But at the last, after a mouth or tway
His sorowe gan to swage, sothe to say
For whan he wyst it might non other be
He paciently toke hys aduersyte
Saue out of dout may he nat for gone
That he nas ielous euer more in one
Whiche ielousy, it was so outragious
That neyther in hal ne in non other hous
Ne in non other place neuer mo
He nolde suffre her, neyther ryde ne go
But if that he had honde on her alway
For whiche ful often wepeth fresche May
That loueth Damyan so benignely
That she mote eyther dye sodaynly
Or els she mote haue hym at her lest
She wayteth whan her hert shulde to brest
Upon that other syde Damyan
Become is, the sorowfullest man
That euer was, for neyther night ne day
Ne myght he speke a worde to fresche May
As to his purpose of no suche matere
But yf that January must it here
That had an honde vpon her euer mo
But natheles, by writyng to and fro
And preuy sygnes, wist he what she ment
And she knewe al the sygnes of hys entent.
¶ O January, what myght the it auayle?
Tho thou mightest se, as ker as shippes sayle
For as good is a blynde man disceyued be
As to be disceyued, whan that a man may se.
Lo Argus, which had an hundred eyen
For all that euer he couthe pore and prien
Yet was he blent, and god wotte so ben mo
That wenen wisely that it is nat so
Passe ouer is an ease, I say no more
This fresch May, of which I spake of yore
In warme ware hath printed this clycket
That January bare of that small wicket
By whiche vnto hys garden ofte he went
And Damyan that knewe her entent
The clycket counterfayted priuely
There nys no more to say, but hastely
Some wonder by this clycket shal betyde
Whiche ye shul heren, yf ye wol abyde.
¶ O noble Ouide, soth sayest thou god wote
What sleight is it, though it be long and hote
That he nyl fynde it out in some manere
By Pyramus and Thisbe, maye men lere
Though they were kept ful lõg streyt ouer al
They ben accorded, rownyng through a wal
Ther nis no wight couth fynde such a sleight
But nowe to purpose, er ý dayes eyght

were

Were passed, er the moneth of Jule befyll
That January hath caught so great a wyl
Through egging of his wife, him for to play
In his garden, & no wight but they tway
That in a morowe, vnto this May sayd he
Ryse vp my wife, my loue, my lady free
The turtel voyce is herde my lady swete
The wynter is gon, with al his raynes wete
Come forth now with thyn eyen columbyne
Nowe fayrer ben thy brestes than is wyne
The garden is enclosed al about
Come forth my white spouse out of dout
Thou hast me wounded in my hert, o, wyfe
No spotte in the nas in al thy lyfe
Come forth and lette vs taken our disport
I chese the for my wyfe and my confort
Suche olde leude wordes vsed he
On Damyan a sygne made she
That he shulde go before with hys clicket
This Damyan hath opened this wicket
And in he stert, and that in suche manere
That no wight might it se ne here
And styl he sate vnder a bushe anon.
This January, as blynde as is a ston
With May in hys honde, and no wight mo
In to hys freshe garden is he go
And clapte to the wicket sodainly.
Nowe wyfe (q. he) here nys but thou & I
That arte the creature that I best loue
For by that lorde that sytte vs al aboue
I had leuer dyen on a knyfe
Than the offende, dere trewe wyfe
For goddes sake thynke howe I the chees
Nat for couetise, ne other good doutlees
But onely for the loue I had to the
And though that I be olde and may nat se
Be to me trewe, and I woll tel you why
Certes, thre thynges shal ye wyn therby
First loue of Christ, & to your selfe honour
And al myn heritage, town and toure
I gyue it you, maketh charters as ye lyst
Thys shal be don to morowe er sonne rysst
So wisely god my soule bring to blysse
I pray you on couenaunt that ye me kysse
And though ý I be ielous wite me nought
Ye ben so depe enprented in my thought
That whan I consyder your beaute
And therwithal, the vnlikly elde of me
I may nat certes, though I shulde dye
Forbere, to ben out of your company
For very loue, this is withouten dout
Now kysse me wife, and lette vs rome about
This fresh May, whã she these wordes herd
Benygnely to January answerde
But fyrst and forwarde she began to wepe
I haue (q. she) a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye, and also myn honour
And of wyfehode thilke tender flour
Whiche that I haue ensured in your honde
Whan that the preest to you my body bonde
Wherfore I wol answere in this manere
By the leaue of you my lorde so dere
I pray god that neuer dawe that day
That I ne sterue, as foule as woman may
Yf euer I do to my kynne that shame
Or els that I empayre so my name
That I be false, and yf I do that lacke
Do stripe me, and putte me in a sacke
And in the next ryuer do me drenche
I am a gentyl woman, and no wenche
Why speke ye thus, but men ben euer vntrew
And women haue reprofe of you, aye newe
Ye can non other cõmunyng, I leue
But speke to vs of vntrust and repreue
And with ý word she sawe where Damiã
Sate in the bushe, and knele he began
And with her fynger sygnes made she
That Damyan shulde clymbe vp on a tre
That charged was with frute, & vp he went
For verily he knewe al her entent
And euery sygne that she couth make
Welbet than January her owne make
For in a letter she had tolde him al
Of this mater, howe that he worch shal
And thus I lete hym sytte in the pery
And January and May romyng ful mery.
Bright was the day, & blewe ý fyrmament
Phebus of golde doun hath his stremes sent
To gladen euery flour with hys warmnesse
He was that tyme in Geminy, as I gesse
But lytel fro hys declynation
The causer of Jouis exaltation
And so bykel that bright morowe tyde
That in the garden, on the farther syde
Pluto, that is the kyng of Fayrye
And many a lady in hys company
Folowyng his wyfe, the quene Proserpyne
Eche after other ryght as a lyne
Whiles she gadred floures in a mede
In Claudian ye may the story rede
Howe in his grisely carte he her fette
This kyng of Fayry doun hym sette
Upon a benche of turues freshe and grene
And right anon thus sayd he to hys quene

My wyke (q he) that may nat say nay
The experience so proueth it euery day
The treason, which that women doth to mã
Tenne hundred thousande tel I can
Notable, of your untrouth and brotelnesse
O Salomon, richest of al richesse
Fulfylde of sapience, and of worldly glory
Ful worthy ben thy wordes in memory
To euery wight, that witte and reason can
Thus prayseth he the bounte of man
Among a thousande men yet fonde I one
But of al women fonde I neuer none
Thus saith ỳ kyng, ỳ knoweth your wicked-
And Jesus filius Sirach, as I gesse (nesse
Ne speketh of you but selde reuerence
A wylde fyre, a corrupte pestilence
So fal vpon your bodies yet to nyght
Ne se ye nat thys honorable knyght-
Bicause (alas) that he is blynde and olde
Hys owne man shal maken him cokolde
Lo where he sytte, the lechour in the tre
Nowe wol I graunt of my maieste
Unto this olde blynde worthy knyght
That he shal haue agayn hys eye syght
whan that hys wyke wolde don him villany
Than shal he knowe al her harlotry
Bothe in repreke of her and other mo.
Yea shal (q Proserpyne) and wol ye so-
Nowe be my mothers soule syr I swere
That I shal yeuen her sufficient answere
And al women after her sake
That though they ben in any gylte itake
with face bolde, they shullen hem selue excuse
And bere hym doun, that wolde hem accuse
For lacke of answere, non of hem shul dyen
Al had he sey a thyng with bothe hys eyen
Yet shulde we women so visage it hardely
And wepe and swere, and chide subtelly
That ye shal ben as leude as gees
What recketh me of your auctoritees-
I wotte wel this iewe, this Salomon
Founde of vs women foles many one
But though he ne fonde no good woman
Yet there hath ifonde many an other man
women ful trewe, ful good, & ful vertuous
witnesse of hem that dwel in Christes hous
with martyrdom, they preued her constaunce
The Romain iestes eke make remembraũce
Of many a very trewe wyke also
But syr, be nat wrothe that it be so
Though that he said he fond no good womã
I pray you take the sentence of the man
He ment thus, that in souerayn bounte
Nys non but god, that sytteth in trynyte.
Eye, for very god that nys but one
what make ye so moche of Salomon-
what though he made a temple goddes hous
what though he were riche and glorious-
So made he a temple of false goddis
How might he don a thing ỳ more forbode is
Parde as faire as ye hys name enplaster
He was a lechour, and an idolaster
And in his elde, very god forsoke
And yẽ that god nadde (as saith the boke)
yspared hym for hys fathers sake, he shulde
Haue lost his reygne soner than he wolde
I seke nat of al the villany
That ye of women write, a butterflye
I am a woman, nedes mote I speke
Or els swel, tyll myn hert breke
For sythen he sayd, that we ben iangleresses
As euer mote I hole broke my tresses
I shal nat spare for no curtesy
To speke hem harme, that wold vs villany
Dame (q this Pluto) be no lenger wroth
I gyue it vp: but sythe I swore myn othe
That I wolde graunt hym hys syght ayen
My worde shal stande, ỳ warn I you certeyn
I am a kyng, it sytte me nat to lye.
And I (q she) a quene of Fayrie
Her answere she shal haue I vndertake
Lette vs no mo wordes herof make
Forsoth I wol no lenger you contrary.
Nowe lette vs turne agayn to January
That in the garden with this faire May
Syngeth merier than the popyngay
You loue I best, and shal, and other non
So long about the aleyes is he gon
Tyl he was comen ayenst thylke pery
where as this Damyan sytteth ful mery
On hye, among these freshe leues grene.
This freshe May, that is so bright & shene
Gan for to sike, and sayd: alas my syde
Nowe syr (q she) for ought that may be tyde
I must haue of these peeres that I here se
Or I mote dye, so sore longeth me
To eten of the final peeres grene
Helpe for her loue that is heuyn quene
I tel you wel a woman in my plyte
May haue to frute so great an appetyte
That she may dyen, but she it haue
Alas (q he) that I ne had here a knaue
That couth clymbe, alas, alas (q he)
For I am blynde, ye syr no force (q she)

But

But wolde ye vouchsafe for goddes sake
The pery in your armes for to take
For wel I wotte that ye my strust me
Than shulde I clymbe wel ynough (q̃ she)
So I my fote myght sette vpon your backe
Forsoth sayd he, in me shal be no lacke
Myght I you helpe with myne hert blode
He stoupeth doun, & on hys backe she stode
And caught her by a twist, and vp she goth
Ladyes I praye you be nat wroth
I can nat glose, I am a rude man
And sodaynly anon this Damyan
Gan pullen vp the smocke, and in he thronge
A great tent, a thrifty and a longe
She sayd it was the meryest fytte
That euer in her lyfe she was at yet
My lordes tent serueth me nothyng thus
It foldeth twifolde by swete Jesus
He may nat swyue worth a leke
And yet he is ful gentyl and ful meke
This is leuer to me than an euynsong
And whan that Pluto sawe thys wronge
To January he gaue agayn his syght
And made hym se aswel as euer he myght
And whan he had caught his syght agayn
Ne was there neuer man of thyng so fayn
But on his wyfe his thought was euer mo
Up to the tree he cast his eyen two
And saw how Damian his wife had dressed
In suche manere, it may nat be expressed
But yf I wolde speke vncurtesly
And vp he yaf a roryng and a crye
As dothe the mother whan the child shal dye
Out helpe, alas (harowe) he gan to crye
For sorowe almost he gan to dye
That his wife was swyued in the pery
O stronge lady hore what dost thou
And she answered: syr what ayleth you
Haue pacience and reason in your mynde
I haue you holpen of both your eyen blynde
Up peryl of my soule, I shal nat lyen
As me was taught to helpe with your eyen
Was nothyng bette for to make you se
Than strogle with a man vpon a tree
God wote I dyd it in ful good entent
Strogle (q̃ he) yea algate in it went
Styffe and rounde as any bel
It is no wonder though thy bely swel
The smocke on hys brest lay so theche
And euer me though he poynted on ẏ breche
God gyue you bothe on shames deth to dyen
He swyued the, I sawe it with myne eyen
And els I be honged by the halse
Than is (q̃ she) my medicyn false
For certayn, yf that ye myght se
Ye wolde nat say theke wordes to me
Ye haue some glymsyng, and no parfite sight
I se (q̃ he) as wel as euer I might
Thanked be god, with bothe myne eyen two
And by my trouth me thought he dyd so
Ye mase ye mase, good syr (q̃ she)
This thanke haue I for that I made you se
Alas (q̃ she) that euer I was so kynde
Now dame (q̃ he) let al passe out of minde
Come down my lefe, and if I haue missayde
God helpe me so, as I am yuel apayde
But by my fathers soule, I wende haue seyn
Howe that this Damyan had by the leyn
And that thy smocke had lyen vpon his brest
Ye syr (q̃ she) ye may wene as ye lest
But syr, a man that waketh out of hys slepe
He may nat sodaynly wel taken kepe
Upon a thyng, ne se it parfitely
Tyl that he be adawed verily
Right so a man that longe hath blynde be
Ne may nat sodaynly so wel yse
First whan the sight is newe comen a gayn
As he that hath a daye or two ysayn
Tyl that your sight istabled be a while
There may ful many a sight you begyle
Beware I pray you, for by heuen kyng
Ful many a man weneth to se a thyng
And it is al another than it semeth
He that mysconceyueth ofte mysdemeth
And with that worde she lepe doun fro ẏ tre
This January, who is gladde but he
He kysseth her, he clyppeth her ful ofte
And on her wombe he stroketh her ful softe
And to hys paleys home he hath her ladde
Nowe good men I pray you, beth ye al glad
Thus endeth here my tale of January
God blesse vs al, and hys mother Mary.

¶ Thus endeth the Marchauntes tale, and here foloweth the Wife of Bathes prologue.

Experience

The wyfe of Bathes prologue.

EXperience, though none authorite
Were in this worlde, is ryght ynowe for me
To speake of wo that is in mariage
For lordinges, sith I twelue yere was of age
Thonked be god, that is eterne on lyue
Husbondes at chirche dore haue I had fyue
If I so ofte myght haue wedded be
And al were worthy men in her degre.
But me was tolde not longe ago iwys
That sythen Christ went neuer but onys
To weddyng, in the cane of Galilee
That by thylke ensample taught he me
That I ne shulde wedded be, but ones.
Lo here, which a sharpe word for ý nones
Besyde a wel, Jesu god and man
Spake in repreue of the Samaritan
Thou hast had fyue husbandes (q he)
And that ilke man that now hath the
Is not thyne husbonde: thus sayd he certayn
What he ment therby I can not sayn
But that I aske, why the fyfte man
was nat husbonde to the Samaritan
Howe many myght she haue in mariage?
Yet herde I neuer tellen in myne age
Upon this nombre trewe diffynition
Men may deuyne, and glosen vp and doun
But wel I wotte expresse without lye
God badde vs for to wexe and multiply
That gentyl text can I wel vnderstonde
Eke wel I wotte (he said) myne husbonde
Shuld leaue father & mother, and take to me
But of nombre no mention made he
Of bigamye or of octogamye
Why shul men speke of it villany?
Lo he the wyse kyng Salomon
I trowe had wyues mo than one
As wolde god it leful were to me
To be refreshed halfe so ofte as he
which a gifte of god had he, for al hys wyues
No man hath such, ý in this worlde a lyue is
God wotte this noble kynge, as to my wytte
The fyrst nyght had many a mery fytte
with eche of hem, so wel was hym a lyue
Blessed be god, I haue had fyue
welcome the syxte whan euer he shal
For sothe I wol not kepe me chaste in al
whan myne husbonde is fro the world ygon
Some crysten man shal wedde me anon
For than the apostel saythe, that I am fre
To wedde a goddeshalfe, where it lyketh me
He saythe, that to be wedded is no synne
Better is to be wedded then to brynne
What recketh me though folke say villany
Of shrewde Lameth, and of hys bigamy
I wotte wel Abraham was an holy man
And Jacob eke, as fer as euer I here can
And eche of hem had wyues mo than two
And many another holy man also
Where can ye say in any maner age

That

That euer god defended mariage
By expresse wordes: I pray you tel me
Or where cõmaunded he virginyte:
I wotte as wel as ye, it is no drede
The Apostel, whan he spake of maydenhede
He sayd, therof precept had he none
Men may counsayle a woman to be one
But counsaylyng is no cõmaundement
He put it in our owne iugement
For had god cõmaunded maydenhede
Thã had he dampned weddyng out of drede
And certes, yf there were no sede ysowe
Virginite than wherof shulde it growe:
Poule durst not comaunde at the leste
A thing, of which his maister yafe none heste
The darte is set vp for virgynite
Catche who so may, who renneth beste let se.
But thys worde is not take of euery wight
But there as god lyst yeue it of his might
I wotte wel that the apostel was a mayde
But natheleſſe, though that he wrote & sayde
He wolde that euery wight were suche as he
Al nys but counsayle to virginite
And for to ben a wyfe he yaue me leue
Of indulgence, so it be not to repreue
To wedde me, yf that my make dye
Without exception of bygamye
Al were it good no woman for to touche
He ment as in hys bedde or in hys couche
For peryl is, bothe fyre and towe to assemble
Ye knowe what this ensample may resemble
This is al and some, he helde virginite
More parfyte than weddyng in freelte.
¶ Freelte clepe I, but yf that he and she
Wolde lede her lyfe al in chastyte
I graunt it wel, I haue none enuye
Though maydenhede preferre bygamye
It lyketh hem to be clene in body and goste
Of myne estate I wol make no boste
For wel ye know, a lorde in his houſholde
Hath nat euery vessel al of golde
Some ben of tree, and don her lorde seruyce
God clepeth folke to hym in sondry wyse
And euerichе hath of god a proper gifte
Some this, some that, as hym lyketh shifte
Virginyte is great perfection
And contynence eke with deuocion
But Christ, that of perfection is wel
Badde nat euery wight he shulde go sel
Al that he had, and gyue it to the poore
And in suche wise folowe hym and his lore
He spake to hem, that wolde lyue parfitly
And lordinges (by your leaue) that am nat I
I wol bestowe the floure of al myne age
In the actes and frute of mariage
Tel me also, to what conclusyon
Were membres made of generation:
And of so parfite wise a wight iwrought
Trusteth wel, they were nat made for nought
Glose who so wol, and saye vp and doun
That they were made for purgatioun
Of vryne, and other thynges smale
And eke to knowe a female from a male
And for non other cause, what say ye no:
The experience wotte wele it is nat so
So that the clerkes be nat with me wroth
I saye that they were maked for bothe
This is to sayn, for office and for ease
Of engendrure, there we nat god displease
Why shulde men els in her bokes sette
That man shulde yelde to hys wyfe her dette
Now wherwith shuld he pay his paymẽt:
If he ne vsed his sely instrument
Than were they made vpon a creature
To purge vryn, and eke for engendrure
But I say nat, that euery wight is holde
That hath suche harnesse, as I to you tolde
To gon and vsen hem in engendrure
Than shulde men take of chastite no cure
Christ was a mayde, and shapen as a man
And many a saynt, sythen the worlde began
Yet lyued they euer in parfyte chastite
I nyl enuy no virginyte
Lette hẽ with bredde of pure whete be fedde
And lette vs wyues eate barly bredde
And yet with barly bred, Marke tel can
Our lorde Jesu refreshed many a man
In suche a state as god hath cleped vs
I wol perseuer, I nam nat precious
In wifehode wol I vse myn instrument
As frely as my maker hath it sent
If I be daungerous, god gyue me sorowe
My husbõd shal it haue both euyn & morowe
Whan that him lyst come forth & pay his det
An husbande wol I haue I wol nat let
Which shal be bothe my dettour & my thral
And haue his tribulation with al
Vpon his flesche, while that I am hys wyfe
I haue the power duryng al my lyfe
Vpon his proper body, and nat he
Right thus the apostle tolde to me
And badde our husbondes for to loue vs wel
Al this sentence me lyketh euery del.
¶ Vp stert the Pardoner, and that anon

Nowe dame q he, by god & by saynt John
Ye ben a noble prechour in thys caas
I was about to wedde a wyfe, alas
what, shulde I bye it on my flesche so dere
Yet had I leuer wedde no wyfe to yere
Abyde q she, my tale is not begon
Nay, thou shalt drynke of another ton
Er that I go, shal sauer worse then ale
And when that I haue tolde forth my tale
Of tribulation that is in mariage
Of whych I am expert in al myne age
Thys is to say, my selfe haue ben the whyp
Then mayst thou chese whyther ỳ wylt syp
Of thylke tonne, that I shal set abroche
Beware of it, er thou to nere aproche
For I shal tel ensamples mo then ten
who so wol not beware by other men
By hym shal other men corrected be
These same wordes wryteth Ptholome
Rede in hys almagest, and take it there.
Dame I wol pray you, yf your wyll were
Sayd thys pardoner, as ye began
Tel forth your tale, spareth for no man
And teache vs yonge men of your practycke
Gladly (q she) yf it may you lyke
But that I praye to al thys company
yf that I speake after my fantasy
As taketh not agrefe of that I say
For myne entent is not but to play
Now sys, then shal I tel forth my tale
As euer mote I drynke wyne or ale
I shal say soth, tho husbondes that I had
Thre of hem were good, and two were bad
The thre good men were ryche and olde
Unnethes myght they the statute holde
In whych they were bounden vnto me
Ye wote wel what I meane of thys parde
As god me helpe, I laugh when I thynke
How pitously a night I made hem to swinke
But by my faye, I tolde of it no store
They had me yeue her londe and her tresore
Ye neded no lenger to do diligence
To wynne her loue, and hem reuerence
They loued me so wel by god aboue
That I ne tolde no deynte of her loue
A wyse woman wol besy her euer in one
To gete her loue, ther as she hath none
But sythen I had hem holly in my honde
And that they had gyue me al her londe
what, shulde I take kepe hem for to please
But yf it were for my profyte and myn ease
I sette hem so a worke by my faye
That many a nyght they songen wel away
The bacon was not fet for hem I trowe
That some men haue in Essex at Dõmowe
I gouerned hem so wel after my lawe
That eche of hem ful blysful was & fawe
To brynge me gaye thynges fro the fayre
They were ful fayne whẽ I spake hem fayre
For god it wote, I chydde hem spytously
Nowe herkeneth howe I bere me properly.
Ye wyse wyues that can vnderstande
Thus shul ye speake, and bere hem on hande
For halfe so boldly there can no man
Swere and lye, as a woman can
I saye not thys by wyues that ben wyse
But yf it be, when they hem mysse auyse
A wyse wyfe shal, yf that she can her gode
Bere hem in honde the cowe is wode
And take wytnesse of her owne mayde
Of her assent: but herkeneth howe I sayde.
¶ Syr olde steynarde, is thys thyn array
why is my neyghbours wyfe so gay
She is honoured ouer al where she goth
I sytte at home, and haue no thryfty cloth
what dost thou at my neyghbours hous
Is she so fayre art thou so amorous
what rownest thou w̃ our mayd benedicite
Syr olde lechour, let thy iapes be
And yf I haue a gossyp or a frende
(wythout gylt) thou chydest as a fende
yf that I walke or play vnto hys house
Thou comest home as dronkẽ as a mouse
And prechest on thy benche wyth euel preke
Thou sayest to me, it is a great myschefe
To wedde a poore woman for costage
And yf that she be rych of hygh parage
Then sayst thou, it is a very tourmentry
To suffre her pryde and her melancoly
And yf that she be fayre, thou very knaue
Thou sayest that euery holour wol her haue
She may no whyle in chastite abyde
That is assayled on euery syde
Thou sayst some folke desyrẽ vs for rychesse
Some for our shape, & some for our fairnesse
And some, for she can eyther synge or daunce
And some for gentylnesse or for daliaunce
Some for her handes and her armes smale
Thus goeth al to the deuel by thy tale
Thou sayst mẽ may not kepe a castel wall
It may so longe assayled be ouer all
And yf that she be foule, thou sayest that she
Coueteth euery man that she may se
For as a spaneyl, she wol on hem lepe

Tyl

Tyll ý the hyude some man ý wold her chepe
Ne none so gray gese goth there in the lake
(As sayst thou) wol ben wythout her make
And sayst, it is a harde thynge for to welde
A wyght, that no man wol his thanke helde
Thus sayst thou lorel, when ý gost to bed
That no wyseman nedeth for to wedde
Ne no man that entendeth vnto heuen
wyth wylde thunder dent and fyre leuen
Wote thy wycked necke be to broke.
Thou sayst, droppyng houses, & eke smoke
And chydyng wyues, maken men to flee
Out of her owne house, ah, benedicite
what ayleth such an olde man for to chyde:
Thou sayst, we wyues wol our vyces hyde
Tyl we be fast, and then we wol hem shewe
wel may thys be a prouerbe of a shrewe.
Thou sayst, ý oxen, horse, asses, & houndes
They ben assayde at dyuers stoundes
Basyns, lauers, er that men hem bye
Spones, stoles, and al suche husbondrye
And so be pottes, clothes, and arrayes
But folke of wyues maken none assayes
Tyl they ben wedded, olde dottarde shrewe
And sayst, how we wol thē our vyces shewe
Thou sayest also, that it dysplease th me
But yf that thou wylt prayse my beaute
And but thou pore alwaye on my face
And clepe me fayre dame in euery place
And but thou make a feest on that ylke day
That I was borne, & make me freshe & gay
And but thou doue to my norice honour
And to my chamberer wythin my bour
And to my fathers folke, and hys alyes
Thus sayest thou olde barel ful of lyes
And yet of our prentyse Jenkyn
For hys cryspe heer, shynyng as golde fyne
And for he squyreth me both vp and down
Hast thou caught a false suspectioun
I wol hym not, tho ý were deed to morowe.
But tel me this, why hidest thou w̄ sorowe
The keyes of thy chest away fro me:
It is my good as wel as thyne parde
what, wenest ý make an ydiot of our dame
Nowe by ý lorde, ý called is saynt Jame
Thou shalt not both though ý were wode
Be mayster of my body and of my good
That one ý shalt forgon maugre thyne eyen
what helpeth it of me to enquere and spyen:
I trowe thou woldest locke me in thy chyst:
Thou shuldest saye: wyfe, go where you lyst
Take your dysporte, I wol leue no tales
I knowe you for a trewe wyfe dame Ales
we loue no man, that taketh kepe or charge
where that we go, we wol be at our large
¶ Of al men yblessed mote he be
The wyse astrologien dan Ptholome
That sayth thys prouerbe in his almagest
Of al men hys wysedome is the best
That recketh not who hath ý world in hāde
By thys prouerbe thou shalt vnderstande
Haue thou ynowe, what dare ý recke or care
Howe merely that other folke fare
For certes, olde dottarde by your leue
ye shal haue queynte ynowe at eue
He is to great a nygarde that wol werne
A man, to lyght a candel at hys lanterne
He shal haue neuer the lasse lyght parde
Haue thou ynowe, thou darst not playne the
Thou sayst also, that yf we make vs gaye
wyth clothes, or wyth precious arraye
That it is peryl of our chastite
And yet with sorow, thou must enforsen the
And saye these wordes in the apostels name
In habyte made with chastite & shame
ye women shulde appareyle you (q̄ he)
And not in tressed heer, and gaye perre
As perle, ne wyth golde, ne clothes ryche
After the texte, ne after thy rubryche
I nyl not worche as moche as a gnatte.
¶ Thou sayest also, I was lyke a catte
But who so wolde senge the cattes skynne
Then wolde the catte dwellen in hys ynne
And yf the cattes skyn be slicke and gaye
She nyl not dwel in house halfe a daye
But forth she wol or any daye be dawed
To shewe her skyn, and gon a catrewawed.
¶ Thus thou sayest, yf I be gay syr shrewe
I wol ren out, my borel for to shewe
Syr olde foole, what helpeth the to spyen
For though thou play Argus w̄ hys. C. eyen
To be my wardcors, as he can best
In fayth he shal not kepe me but me lest
Yet couth I make hys berde, so mote I the
¶ Thou sayest eke, ý there ben thynges thre
The whych troublen al thys erth
And that no wyght may endure the ferth
O, lefe syr shrewe, Jesu shorte thy lyfe
Yet prechest thou, & sayest: an hateful wyfe
I rekened is, for one of these myschaunces
Ben there none other resemblaunces:
That ye maye lyken your parable to
But yf a sely wyfe be one of tho.
Thou lykenest eke, womens loue to hell

To barayn londe, there water may nat dwel
Thou lykenest it also to wylde fyre
The more it brenneth, the more it hathdesyre
To consume any thyng that brent wolde be.
Thou saiest, right as wormes shendē a tre
Right so a wyfe distroyeth her husbonde
This knowen they that ben to wyues bonde
Lordiges, right thus as ye haue vnderstōd
Bare I stiffely myn olde husbande on honde
That thus they sayden in her dronknesse
And al was false, but as I toke witnesse
Of Jenkyn, and of my nece also
O lorde the payne I dyd hem, and the wo
Ful gyltles by goddes swete pyne
For as an horse, I couth both byte & whyne
I couth playn, though I were in the gylte
Or els often tyme I had ben spylte
who so first to myl cometh, first grynt
I playned first, and so was our warre istynt
They were ful glad to excusen hem blyue
Of thyng, that they a gylt neuer in her lyue
Of wenches wol I bere hem on honde
whan ỳ for sicke, vnnethes might they stond
Yet tickled I his hert, for that he
Wende I had of him so great cheerte
I swore, that al my walkyng out by nyght
Was for to espy wenches, that he dight
Under that colour had I moche myrthe
For al suche witte, is gyuen vs in oure birthe
Disceite, weepyng, spynnyng, god hath gyue
To women, kyndly while that they lyue
And thus of o thyng I may auaunt me
At thende I had the best in eche degre
By sleyght or force, or by some maner thyng
As by contynual murmure or grutchyng
Namely a bedde had they mischaunce
There wolde I chide, & don hē no plesaunce
I wolde no lenger in the bedde abyde
(yf I felte hys arme ouer my syde)
Tyl he had made his raunsom vnto me
Than wolde I suffre hym do hys nycete
And therfore, euery man thys tale I tel
wyue who so may, al ben for to sel
with empty hondes men may no haukes lure
For wynnyng wolde I al his lust endure
And make me than a fayned appetite.
And yet in bacon had I neuer delyte
That maked me euer ỳ I wolde hem chide
For though the pope had sytten hem besyde
I wolde nat spare hem at her own borde
For be my trouth I quit hem word for word
As helpe me very god omnypotent
Tho I right nowe shulde make my testamēt
I ne owe hem a worde, but it is quytte
I brought it so about by my wytte
That they must gyue it vp, as for the best
Or els had we neuer ben in rest
For though he loked as wode as a lyon
Yet shulde he fayle of hys conclusyon.
Than wolde I say, good lefe take kepe
Howe mekely loketh wylken shepe
Come nere my spouse, & let me kysse your
Ye shulde be al pacient and meke (chyche
And haue a swete spiced conscience
Sithe ye so preche of Jobs pacyence
Suffreth alway, syth ye so wel can preche
And but yf you do, we shal you teche
That it is fayre to haue a wyfe in pees
One of vs two mote obeyen doutles
And sithe a man is more resonable
Than a woman is, ye must ben sufferable
what ayleth you to grutche thus and grone?
Is it for ye wolde haue my queynt alone?
why take it al, lo, haue it euery del
Peter I shrewe you, but ye loue it wel.
For if I wolde sel my belechose
I couth walke as fresche as any rose
But I wol kepe it for your owne toth
Ye be to blame by god, I say you soth
Suche maner wordes had we on honde
Now wol I speke of my fourth husbonde.
My fourth husbonde was a reuelour
This is to say, he had a paramour
And I was yong and ful of ragery
Stubburne and stronge, and ioly as a pye
wel coude I daunce to an harpe smale
And syng ywis, as a nyghtingale
Whā I had dronkē a draught of swete wine
Metellus, the foule churle the swyne
That with a staffe byraft hys wyfe her lyfe
For the dróke wine: though I had be his wife
Ne shulde he nat haue daunted me fro drinke
And after wyne of Venus must I thynke
For also seker, as colde engendreth hayle
A lycorus mouth must haue a lecherous taile
In women vynolent is no defence
This knowe lechours by experience.
But lorde Christ, whan it remembreth me
Upon my youth, and my iolyte
It tickleth me about myne hert rote
Unto this day it dothe myne hert bote
That I haue had my worlde, as in my tyme
But age alas, that al wol enuenyme
Hath me biraft my beaute, and my pith

Let go farewel, the deuel go therwyth
The floure is gone, there nys no more tel
The bran (as I best can) nowe mote I sel
But yet to be ryght mery wol I fonde
Now forth to tel of my fourth husbonde.
¶ I saye I had in hert great dyspyte
That he of any other had delyte
But he was quyte, by god and by saynt Joce
I made hym of the same wode a troce
Not of my body in no foule manere
But certaynly, I made folke such chere
That in hys owne grece I made hym fry
For anger, and for very ielousy
By god, in erth I was hys purgatory
For whych I hope hys soule be in glory
For god it wote, he satte ful ofte and songe
when that hys shoe ful bytterly him wronge
There was none, saue god and he, that wyst
In many wyse, howe sore that I him twyst
He dyed when I came fro Hierusalem
And lyeth in graue vnder the Rode beem
Al nys hys tombe so curious
As was the sepulture of hym Darius
whych that Appelles wrought so subtelly
It is but wast to bury hym preciously
Let him farwel, god giue his soule good rest
He is nowe in hys graue and in hys chest.
¶ Nowe of my fyfth husbande wol I tel
God let neuer hys soule come in hel
And yet was he to me the most shrewe
That fele I on my rybbes al by rewe
And euer shal, vnto myne endynge day
But in our bedde he was so freshe and gay
And therwythal, he couth so wel me glose
when that he wolde haue my bele chose
That though he had me bete on euery bone
He couth wynne ayen my loue anone
I trowe I loued hym the better, for that he
was of hys loue so daungerous to me
we women haue, yf that I shal not lye
In thys matere, a queynt fantasy
wayte what thyng we may not lightly haue
Therafter wol we alday crye and craue
Forbyd vs thynge, and that desyren we
Prese on fast, and then wol we flee
wyth daunger vttren we al our chaffare
Great prees at market maketh dere ware
And to great chepe is holde at to lytel pryce
Thys knoweth euery woman that is wyse.
¶ My fyfth husbande, god hys soule blesse
whych I toke for loue and no rychesse
He somtyme was a clerke of Oxenforde
And had lefte schole, & wēt at home to borde
wyth my gossyp, dwellynge in our town
God haue her soule, her name was Alysoun
She knewe my hert, and eke my priuety
Better then our parysche preest so mote I the
To her bewrayed I my counsayle al
For had my husbande pyst agaynst the wal
Or done a thynge, ȳ shulde haue cost his lyfe
To her, and another worthy wyfe
And to my nece, whych that I loued wel
I wolde haue tolde hys counsayle euery dell
And so I dyd ful often god it wote
That made hys face ful ofte reed and hote
For very shame, and blamed hym ofte, for he
Had tolde to me so great a preuyte.
¶ And so befyl, that ones in a lent
So ofte tyme I to my gossyp went
For euer yet I loued to go gaye
And for to walke in March, Apryll, & Maye
Fro house to house, to herken sondry tales
That Jenkē clerke, & my gossep dame Ales
And I my selfe, into the feldes went
My husbonde was at london al that lent
I had the better layser for to pleye
And for to se, and eke for to be sey
Of lusty folke, what wyst I where my grace
was shapen for to ben, or in what place:
Therfore made I my visytations
To vigilles, and to processions
To preachyng eke, and to pilgrymages
To playes of myracles, and to mariages
And weared on my gay skarlet gytes
The wormes, these moghtes, ne these mites
Vpon my parel frette hem neuer a del
And wost thou why: for they were vsed wel
Nowe wol I tel forth what happed me
I saye, that in the feldes walked we
Tyl truely we had suche daliaunce
Thys clerke and I, that of my purueyaunce
I speake to hym, and sayd how that he
yf I were wedowe, shulde wedde me
For certaynly, I say for no bobaunce
Yet was I neuer wythout purueyaunce
Of mariage, ne of other thynges eke
I holde a mousses wytte not worth a leke
That hath but one hole to sterten to
And yf that fayle, then is al ydo.
I bare hym on hāde he had enchaūted me
My dame taught me forsoth that subtylte
And eke I sayd, I mette of hym al nyght
He wolde a slayne me, as I laye vpryght
And al my bedde was ful of very blood

But yet I hope truely he shulde do me good
For blode betokeneth gold, as I was taught
& al was fals, I demed of him right nauzt
But as I folowed aye my dames lore
As wel of that, as of other thynges more.
But now syr let me se, what shal I sayne
A ha, by god I haue my tale agayne
when ý my fourth husbande was on bere
I wept algate, and made sorz chere
As wymes moten, for it is vsage
And wyth my kerchefe couered my visage
But for that I was purueyed of a make
I wept but smal, and that I vndertake
To church was my husbãd borne on morow
wyth neyghbours, that for hym made sorow
And Janken our clerke was one of tho
As helpe me god, when that I sawe him go
After the bere, me thought he had a payre
Of legges and of fete, so clene and so fayre
That al my herte I yaue vnto hys holde
He was I trowe, twenty wynter olde
And I was fourty, yf that I shal saye sothe
But yet I had alway a coltes tothe
Gaptothed I was, & that bycame me wele
I had the printe of dame Venus seele
As helpe me god, I was a lusty one
And fayre, ryche, & yonge, and wel bygone
And truely, as myn husbande tolde me
I had the best queynte that myght be
For certes I am al fully Venerian
In felynge, and my herte is Marcian
Venus me yaue my lust & my lycorousnesse
And Mars yaue me my sturdy hardynesse
Myn ascendent was Taure, & Mars therin
Alas alas, that euer loue was syn
I folowed aye myne inclination
By vertue of my constellation
That made me I couth not wythdrawe
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe
Yet haue I Martes marke vpon my face
And also in another preuy place
For god so wysly be my saluation
I loued neuer by no dyscretion
But euer folowed myne appetyte
Al were he shorte, longe, blacke, or whyte
I toke no kepe, so that he lyked me
Howe poore he was, ne eke of what degre.
what shuld I say: but at ý monethes ende
Thys ioly clerke Janken, that was so hende
Hath wedded me wyth great solempnite
And to hym yake I al the lande and fee
That euer was yeuen me here byfore
But afterwarde repented me ful sore
He nolde suffre nothynge of my lyste
By god he smote me ones wyth hys fyst
For that I rente out of hys boke a lefe
That of that stroke, my eres wext defe
Stubborne I was, as is a lyonesse
And of my tonge a very iangleresse
And walke I wolde, as I had done byforne
Fro house tohouse, although he had it sworn
For which ful oft tyme wolde he preche
And me of olde Romayne iestes teche
How he Sulpicius Gallus left hys wyfe
And her forsoke terme of hys lyfe
Not but for open heed he her sey
Lokynge out at hys dore on a dey
An other Romayne tolde he me by name
That for hys wyfe was at a sommer game
wythout hys wetynge, he forsoke her eke
And then wolde he vpon hys Byble seke
That ylke prouerbe of Ecclesiaste
where he cũmaundeth, and forbyddeth fast
A mã shal not suffre his wife go royle about
Thẽ wolde he say ryght thus out of doute
Who so buyldeth hys house al of salowes
And pricketh his blynd horse ouer ý falowes
And suffreth his wyfe for to seche hallowes
He is worthy to be hanged on the gallowes
But al for nought, I set not an hawe
Of hys prouerbes, ne of hys olde sawe
Ne I wolde not of hym corrected be
I hate hym that my vyces telleth me
And so do mo (god wotte) then I
Thys made hym wood wyth me al vtterly
I nolde nat forbere him in no caas
Now wol I say you soth by saint Thomas
why that I rent out of hys boke a lefe
For wyych he smote me that I was defe
He had a boke, that gladly nyght and daye
For hys dysporte, he wolde rede alway
He cleped it Valery, and Theophrast
At wyych boke he lough alway ful fast
And eke ther was a clerke somtime at Rome
A cardinal, that hyght saynt Jerome
That made a boke ayenst Jouinian
In wyych boke there was eke Tertulian
Crisyppus, Trotula, and Helowys
That was abbesse not farre fro Parys
And eke the parables of Salomon
Ouydes arte, and bokes many one
And al these were bounden in one volume
And euery nyght and day was hys custome
(when he had leyser and vacatioun

From

From other worldly occupatioun)
To reden in this boke of wycked wyues
He knewe of hem mo legendes and lyues
Than ben of good women in the Byble
For trusteth wel, it is an impossyble
That any clerke wolde speke good of wyues
But yf it ben of holy sayntes lyues
Ne of non other woman neuer the mo
Who peynted the lyon, tel me who?
By god, yf women had writen stories
As clerkes han, within her oratories (nesse
They wold haue writtē of men more wicked
Than al the marke of Adam may redresse
The chyldren of Mercury and Venus
Ben in her workyng ful contrarious
Mercury loueth wysedom and science
And Venus loueth riot and dispence
And for her dyuers disposition
Eche falleth in others exaltation
And thus god wotte, Mercury is desolate
In Pisces, where Venus is exaltate
And Venus falleth wher Mercury is reysed
Therfore no woman of no clerke is preysed
The clerke whan he is old, & may nought do
Of Venus werkes, nat worth his olde shoe
Than sytte he doun, and write in his dotage
That women can nat kepe her mariage
But nowe to purpose, why I tolde the
That I was beten for a boke parde
Upon a nyght I enken, that was our syre
Redde vpon his boke, as he sate by the fyre
Of Eue fyrst, that for her wickednesse
was al mankynde brought to wretchednesse
For which ý Jesu christ hym selfe was slayn
That bought vs with his hert blode agayn
Lo here expresse of women may ye fynde
That woman was the losse of al mankynde
Tho rad he me how sāpson lost his heeres
Slepyng, his lemā cut hem with her sheres
Thorowe which treson lost he both his eyen
Tho rad he me, yf that I shal nat lyen
Of Hercules, and of his Deianyre
That caused him to sette him selfe a fyre
Nothyng forgate he the care and the wo
That Socrates had with his wyues two
Howe that Xantippe cast pysse on his heed
This sely man satte styl, as he were deed
He wyped his heed, no more durst he sayn
But er the thonder stynt there cometh rayn
Of Pasiphae, that was quene of Crete
For shrendnesse him thought that tale swete
Fye, speke no more, it is a grisely thynge
Of her horrible lust and her lykyng
Of Clytemnestra for her lechery
That falsely made her husbande for to dye
He rad it with wel good deuotion
He tolde me eke, for what occasyon
Amphiaraus at Thebes lost his lyfe
My husbonde had a legende of hys lyfe
Eriphilem that for an ouche of golde
Hath preuely vnto the grekes tolde
where that her husbonde hyd him in a place
For which he had at Thebes sory grace
Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucy
They both made her husbondes for to dye
That one for loue, that other was for hate
Lyma her husbonde on an euyn late
Enpoysoned had, for that she was his foe
Lucia lykerous loued her husbonde so
That for he shulde alway vpon her thynke
She gaue hym suche a loue maner drynke
That he was deed, er it were morowe
And thus algates husbondes han sorowe
Than tolde he me, howe one Latumeus
Complayned to his felowe Arius
That in his garden growed suche a tree
On whych (he sayd) that hys wyues thre
Honged hem selfe for hertes dispitous
O lefe brother (q̃ this Arius)
Yeue me a plant of thys blyssful tree
And in my garden planted shal it be.
Of later date of wyues hath he redde
That some han slayn her husbondes in bedde
And let her lechour dight hem al the nyght
whiles that the cors lay in flore vpright
And some had dryue nayles in her brayne
whiles they slepe, & thus they haue hē slayn
Some haue yeue hem poyson in her drynke
He spake more harme than hert may thynke
And therwithal he knewe mo prouerbes
Than in this world there groweth grasse or herbes
Bette is (q̃ he) thyne habitation
Be with a lyon, or a foule dragon
Than with a woman vsyng for to chyde
Bette is (q̃ he) hygh in the rofe to abyde
Than with an angry wife down in an hous
They ben so wicked and so contrarious
They haten, that her husbondes louen aye
He said, a woman cast her shame away
whan she cast of her smocke: and farther mo
A fayre woman, but she be chast also
Is lyke a golde ryng on a sowes nose
who coude wene, or who coude suppose
The wo, that in myne hert was and pyne

And whan I sawe he wolde neuer fyne
To reden on this cursed boke al nyght
Al sodayniy thre leues haue I plyght
Out of hys boke, right as he radde, and eke
I with my fyst so toke hym on the cheke
That in the fyre he fell backwarde a doun
And vp he stert, as dothe a wode lyoun
And with his fyst he smote me on myne heed
That in the flore I laye as I were deed
And whan he sey howe styl that I lay
He was a gast, and wold haue fledde awaye
Tyl at the last out of my swoun I brayde
Oh, hast thou slayn me false thefe I sayde
For my londe thus hast thou murdred me
Er I be deed, yet wol I ones kysse the
And nere he cam, and kneled faire a doun
And said: dere suster, swete Alysoun
As helpe me god I shal the neuer smyte
That I haue don, it is thy selfe to wyte
Forgeue it me, and that I the beseke
And yet efte sones I hytte hym on the cheke
And sayd: thefe, thus moche am I be wreke
Nowe wol I dye, I may no lenger speke.
But at the last, with mokel care and wo
We fel accorded within our seluen two
He yaf me al the brydel in myne honde
To haue the gouernaunce of house & londe
And of hys tonge, and of hys honde also
And made hym bren his boke anon tho
And whan I had goten vnto me
By maistry, al the soueraynte
Than he sayd: myne own trewe wyfe
Dothe as thou lyste, the terme of al thy lyfe
Kepe thyne honour, and eke myne estate
After that day we had neuer debate
God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde
As any wyfe fro Denmarke vnto Inde
And also trewe, and so was he to me
I praye to god, that syttc in maieste
So blysse hys soule, for his mercy dere
Nowe wol I say my tale yf ye wol here.
¶ The frere lough whan he had herd al this
Nowe dame (q̃ he) so haue I ioye or blysse
This is a long preamble of a tale
And whan the Sompner herd ỳ frere gale
Lo (q̃ this sompner) by goddes armes two
A frere wol entermete hym euermo
Lo good men, a fye and eke a frere
wol fal in euery dishe and eke matere
what spekest thou of preambulation?
what amble or trot, eyther peace or syt a doū
Thou lettest our disporte in this matere.
Cyea wolt thou so syr Sōpner (q̃ ỳ frere)
Nowe by my faye I shal, er that I go
Tel of a Sompner, suche a tale or two
That al the folke shul laugh in this place.
Nowe els frere I beshrewe thy face
(Quod this sompner) and I beshrewe me
But yf I tel tales two or thre
Of freres, er I come to Sittyngburne
That shal make thyne hert for to murne
For wel I wotte thy pacience is goon.
¶ Our Hoost cried peace, and that anoon
And sayd: Lette the woman tel her tale
Ye faren as folke, that dronken ben of ale
Do dame, tel forthe your tale, & that is beste
Al redy syr (q̃ she) ryght as you leste
If I haue lycence of thys worthy frere
Yes dame, tel forthe your tale, I wol it here.

Here endeth the wyfe of Bathes prologue, and here begynneth her tale.

In the olde dayes of kynge Artoure
(Of which the Bretons speken great honour)
Al was thys londe fulfylled of fairy
The Elfe quene, with her ioly company
Daunsed ful ofte in many a grene mede
This was the olde opinyon as I rede
I speke of many an hundred yere a go
But nowe can no man se none elfes mo
For nowe the great charyte and prayers
Of lymytours and other holy freres
That serchen euery lande and euery streme
As thicke as motes in the sonne beme
Blissyng halles, chambres, kichens, & boures
Cyties borowes, castelles, and hye toures
Thropes, bernes, shepens, and deyries
This maketh, that there ben no fayries
For there as wonte to walke was an elfe
There walketh now the lymitour hym selfe
In vndermeles, and in mornynges
And saythe hys matyns, & hys holy thynges
As he gothe in hys lymitacioun
women may go safely vp and doun
In euery bushe, and vnder euery tre
There nys none other incubus but he
And he ne wyl done hem no dishonour

And

¶And so fel it, that this kyng Artour
Had in his house a lusty bacheler
That on a day come rydyng fro the ryuer
And happed, that alone as he was borne
He sawe a mayde walkyng hym byforne
Of whiche mayde anon, maugre her hede
(By very force) he berafte her maydenhede
For whiche oppression was suche clamour
And suche pursute vnto kyng Artour
That dampned was this knyght to be deed
By course of lawe, & shuld haue lost his heed
Peraduenture suche was the statute tho
But that the quene, and other ladyes mo
So longe prayden the kyng of grace
Tyl he his lyfe graunted in that place
And yaue hym to the quene, al at her wyl
To chese where ý she wolde hym saue or spil
The quene thãketh ý king w̃ al her might
And after this, thus spake she to the knyght
whan she sey her tyme on a day
¶Thou standest yet (q̃ she) in suche aray
That of thy lyfe yet haste thou no suerte
I graunte ý thy lyfe, if that thou canst tel me
what thyng is it, that women moste desyren
Beware, and kepe thy necke bone from yren
And yf thou canste not tel it me anon
Yet wol I yeue the leue for to gon
A twelue moneth and a day, to seke and lere
An answere suffycient in this matere
And suertie wol I haue, er that thou passe
Thy body for to yelde in this place.
¶Wo was the knight, & sorowfully he syketh
But what he may not done al as him lyketh
And at laste he chese hym for to wende
And come ayen, ryght at the yeres ende
with such answer, as god wold hym purueay
And taketh his leue, & wedeth forth his way
He seketh euery house and euery place
where as he hopeth for to fynde grace
To lerne, what thyng women louen moost
But he ne couthe aryuen in no coost
where as he myght fynde in this matere
Two creatures accordyng yfere
Some sayd, women loued best rychesse
Some sayd honour, some sayd iolynesse
Some sayd riche aray, some said lust a bedde
And ofte tyme to ben wydowe and wedde.
Some sayd, that our herte is moste yfesed
whan that we ben flatered and yplesed
He gothe ful nye the sothe, I wol not lye
A man shal wynne vs beste with flaterye
And with attendaunce, and with busynesse
Ben we ilymed bothe more and lesse.
And some men sayn, how ý we louen beste
For to ben fre, and do right as vs leste
And that no man repreue vs of our vyce
But say that we be wyse, & nothyng nyce
For trewly there nys none of vs al
If any wight wol clawe vs on the gall
That we nyl kyke, for that he sayth vs sothe
Assay, and he shal fynde it, that so dothe
For be we neuer so vicious within
we wol be holden wyse and clene of syn
And some men sayn, ý great delite haue we
For to ben holde stable and eke secre
And in o purpose stedfastly to dwel
And nat bewray thyng that men vs tel
But that tale is nat worthe a rake stele
Parde we women con nothyng hele
witnesse of Midas, wol ye here the tale
¶Ouyde, among other thynges smale
Said, Midas had vnder his long heeres
Growyng on his heed, two asses eeres
The whiche vice he hidde, as he beste myght
Ful subtelly from euery mannes syght
That saue his wyfe, there wist of it no mo
He loued her most, and trusted her also
He prayde her, that to no creature
She nolde tellen of his disfygure.
She swore him, nat for al ý world to wyn
She nolde do that villany, ne that syn
To makẽ her husbonde haue so foule a name
She nolde nat tel it for her own shame
But natheles, her thought that she dyde
That she so long shulde a counsayle hyde
Her thought it swole so sore about her hert
That nedely some worde she most a stert
And syth she durst tellen it to no man
Down to a marris fast by she ran
Tyl she came there, her hert was on a fyre
And as a byttour bumbeth in the myre
She layd her mouth vnto the water adown
Bewray me nat thou water with thy sown
Quod she, to the I tel it, and to no mo
My husbonde hath long Asses eres two
Nowe is myne hert al hole, nowe it is out
I myght no lenger kepe it out of dout.
¶Here mowe ye se, though we a tyme abyde
Yet out it mote, we can no counsayle hyde
The remenaunt of the tale, yf ye wyl here
Redeth Ouyde, and there ye may it lere.
¶This knight, of which my tale is specially
whan that he sawe, he might not cometherby
This is to say, what women louen moste

within

Within his herte sorowful was hys goste
But home he gothe, he myght nat soiourne
The day was come, he muste home returne
And in his way, it happed hym to ryde
In al hys care, vnder a foreste syde
Where he sawe vpon a daunce go
Of ladyes foure and twenty, and yet mo
Toward the daũce he drowe him, ȝ ẏ yerne
In hope that some wysedome shuld he lerne
But certaynly, er that he came fully there
Vanyshed was the daũce, he niste not where
No creature sawe he that bare lyfe
Saue in ẏ grene, he saw sytting an old wife
A fouler wyght there may no man deuyse
Agayne the knyght the olde wyfe gan aryse
And sayd: syr knight, here forth lyeth no way
Tel me what ye seken by your fay
Parauenture it may the better be
This olde folke conne moche thyng (q̃ she)
¶ My lyfe mother (q̃ thys knyght) certayne
I nam but deed, but yf that I can sayne
What thyng it is, ẏ womẽ moste desyre (hyre
Coude ye me wisse, I wolde quite wel your
Plight me thy trouth here in myhõde (q̃ she)
The next thyng that I require the
Thou shalte it do, yf it be in thy myght
And I wol tel it you, or it be nyght.
Haue here my trouth (q̃ ẏ knight) I graunt
¶ Than quod she, I may me wel auaunt
Thy lyfe is safe, for I wol stonde therby
Vpon my lyfe, the quene wyl say as I
Let se, whiche is the proudest of hem al
That weareth on a kerchefe or a cal
That dare say nay, of that I shal you teche
Let vs go forthe without lenger speche.
Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere
And bade hym to be glad, and haue no fere.
¶ whã they ben comẽ to ẏ court, thys knyght
Sayd, he had holde his day, as he had hight
And redy was hys answere, as he sayde
Ful many a noble wyfe, and many a mayde
And many a wydowe, for that they be wyse
The quene her selfe, sytting as a iustyse
Assembled ben, his answere for to here
And afterwarde this knight was bode apere
To euery wight cõmaunded was sylence
And that the knyght shulde tel in audyence
That thyng that worldly women loued best
This knyght ne stode not styl as doth a beste
But to his question anon answerde
With manly voyce, that al the courte it herde
My liege lady: generally, quod he
women desyren to haue souerayne
As wel ouer her husbondes as her loue
And for to ben in maistrye hem aboue
This is your moste desyre, though ye me kyl
Doothe as you lyste, I am here at your wyl.
¶ In al the courte nas there wyfe ne mayde
Ne wydowe, that contraried, that he sayde
But sayd, he was worthy han his lyfe.
And with ẏ worde, vp sterte the olde wyfe
which ẏ the knight fonde sytting on ẏ grene
Mercy (q̃ she) my souerayne lady quene
Er that your courte departe do me right
I taught this answere vnto thys knyght
For whiche he plight me hys trouthe there
The fyrst thyng I wolde of hym requere
He wolde it do, yf it lay in hys might
Before the courte thã praye I the sir knight
(Quod she) that thou me take vnto thy wyfe
For wel thou woste, that I haue kept thy lyfe
If I say false, saye nay vpon thy fay
¶ This knight answerd, alas and welaway
I wote right wel, that suche was my beheste
For goddes loue chese a newe requeste
Take al my good, and let my body go.
Nay q̃ she, than I shrewe vs bothe two
For though that I be foule, olde and poore
I nolde for al the metal ne the ore
That vnder erthe is graue, or lythe aboue
But yf I thy wyfe were and thy loue.
¶ My loue (q̃ he) nay my dampnation
Alas that any of my nacion
Shulde euer so foule disparaged be
But al for naught, the ende is this, that he
Cõstrayned was, ẏ nedes must he her wedde
And taketh this olde wyfe, ȝ gothe to bedde
¶ Nowe wolden some men say parauenture
That for my neglygence, I do no cure
To tellen you the ioye and the array
That at the feest was that yfe day.
To the which thing answere shortly I shal
I say there was no ioy ne feest at al
There nas but heuynesse and moche sorowe
For priuely he wedded her on a morowe
And al day after hydde hym as an oule
So wo was hym, his wife loked so foule
Gret was ẏ sorow ẏ knight had i his thought
whan he was with his wife a bedde ibrought
He waloweth, and turneth to and fro.
¶ His olde wyfe lay smylyng euermo
And sayd: O dere husbonde, O benedicite
Fareth euery knight thus as ye
Is this the lawe of kyng Artours house
Is euery

Is euery knyght of his loue so daungerouse
I am your owne loue, and eke your wyfe
I am she, whiche that saued hath your lyfe
And certes yet dyd I neuer you vnryght
Why fare ye thus with me the fyrst nyght
Ye faren lyke a man that had loste hys witte
Fy, what is my gilte: for gods loue tel me it
And it shal be amended yf I may.
¶ Amended (q̃ this knyght) alas nay nay
That wol not ben amended neuer mo
Thou arte so lothly, and so olde also
And therto comen of so lowe a kynde
That litel wōder is thogh I walow & wind
So wolde god (q̃ he) myne herte wold brest.
¶ Is this (q̃ she) the cause of your onrest:
Ye certaynly quod he, no wonder nys.
¶ Nowe syr (q̃ she) I couthe amende al this
If that me lyst, er it were dayes thre
So wel ye myght beare you vnto me.
But for ye speke of suche gentylnesse
As is discended out of olde richesse
That therfore shullen ye be gentilmen
Suche errogaunce is not worthe an hen,
Lo who that is moste vertuous alway
Preuy and aperte, and most entendeth aye
To do the gentyl dedes, that he can
Take hym for the greatest gentylman.
Christ wolde we claymed of hym our gentyl
Not of our elders, for our olde richesse (nesse
For though they yeue vs al her herytage
For which we claymen to ben of hye parage
Yet may they not byquethe, for no thyng
To none of vs, her vertuous lyuyng
That made hem gentylmen ycalled be
And badde vs folowen hem in suche degre.
¶ Wel can the wyse poete of Florence
That hyght Daunte, speke in thys sentence
Lo in suche maner ryme is Dauntes tale
Ful selde vp ryseth by his braunches smale
Prowesse of man: for god of his goodnesse
Wol that we clayme of hym oure gentylnesse
For of our elders may we nothyng clayme
But tēporal thyng, ỳ mē may hurte & maym
Eke euery wight wote this as wel as I
If gentilnesse were planted naturally
Vnto a certayne lynage downe the lyne
Preuy & aperte, than wolde they neuer fyne
To done of gentilnesse the fayre offyce
They might don no vilanye ne vice.
Take fyre & beare it in to the derkest hous
Bytwixt this and the mounte Caucasus
And let men shytte the dores, and go thenne
Yet wol the fyre as fayre lye and brenne
As twenty thousande men might it beholde
His offyce natural aye wol it holde
Up peryl of my lyfe, tyl that it dye.
¶ Here may ye se wel, howe that gentrye
Is not annexed to possession
Sythen folke don not her operacion
Alway as dothe the fyre, lo in hys kynde
For god it wotte, men may ful often fynde
A lordes sonne done shame and vilanye
And he that wol haue praise of hys gentrye
For he was borne of a gentil house
And had his elders noble and vertuouse
And nyl him selfe don no gentil dedes
Ne folowe his gentil auncetre that deed is
He nys not gentyl, be he duke or erle
For vilaynes, synful dedes maketh a cherle
For gentilnesse nys but the renomie
Of thyne aunceters, for her hygh bountie
Whiche is a stronge thyng to thy persone
The gentylnesse cometh fro god alone
Than cometh our very gentylnesse of grace
It was nothyng byqueth vs with our place.
¶ Thynketh howe noble, as sayth Valerius
Was thylke Tullius Hostilius
That out of pouertie rose to hye noblesse
Redeth Senek, and redeth eke Boece
There shal ye seen expresse, no drede is
That he is gentil, that dothe gentil dedes
And therfore dere husbonde, I thus conclude
Al were it that myne aunceters were rude
Yet may that hye god, and so hope I
Graunt me grace to lyue vertuously
Than am I gentil, whan I begynne
To lyue vertuously, and leuen synne
And there as ye of pouertie me repreue
The hye god, on whom that we byleue
In wylful pouerte chese to lede his lyfe
And certes euery man, mayde, and wyfe
Maye vnderstonde, Jesu heuen kyng
Ne wolde not chese a vicious lyuyng
Glad pouert is an honest thyng certayne
This wol Seneke and other clerkes sayne
Who so wolde hold him payde of his pouerte
I holde hym ryche, al had he not a sherte
He that coueyteth 's a ful poore wyght
For he wolde han, that is not in hys myght
But he ỳ naught hath, ne coueyteth to haue
Is rych, al though ye holde him but a knaue
Very pouert is synne properly
Juuenal saythe of pouert merily
The poore man, whan he gothe by the way
Byforne

Bykorne theues, he may synge and play
Pouert is hateful good: and as I gesse
A ful great bringer out of busynesse
A great amender eke of sapience
To hym that taketh it in pacience
Pouert is, al thoughe it seme elenge
Possession, that no wyght wol chalenge.
Pouerte ful often, whan a man is lowe
Maketh hys god and eke him selfe to knowe
Pouert a spectacle is, as thynketh me
Through which one may his very frendes se
And therfore, syn that I you not greue
Of my pouert, no more me reprenue
Now sir, eke of elde ye reprenued me
And certes sir, though none autorite
Were in no booke, ye gentils of honour
Sayne that men shuld an old wight honour
And clepe hem father for her gentilnesse
And autours shal I kynde, as I gesse.
Now there as ye sayn, ý I am foule & olde
Than drede you not to ben a cokewolde
For kylthe, elthe, and foule, also mote I the
Ben great wardeyns vpon chastite
But natheles, syn I knowe your delyte
I shal fulfyl your worldly appetyte
Chese now (q̃ she) one of these thiges twey
To haue me foule and olde, tyl that I dey
And be to you a trewe humble wyfe
And neuer you displease in al my lyfe
Or els wol ye haue me yonge and fayre
And take your auenture of the repayre
That shal come to your house, bycause of me
Or in some other place, may wel be
Now chese your selue, whether ý you lyketh
This knyght auyseth hym, and sore syketh
But at the last, he sayd in this manere:
My lady and my loue, and wyfe so dere
I put me in your wyse gouernaunce
Cheseth your selfe, which maye be more ple-
And moste honour to you and me also (sauce
I do no force whether of the two
For as you lyketh, it suffyseth me.
Thã haue I gote of you ý maistry (q̃ she)
Syn I may chese, & gouerne as my leste
Ye certes wyfe, q̃ he) I holde it for the beste.
Kysse me (q̃ she) we ben no lenger wrothe
For by my trouthe, I wol be to you bothe
This is to say, to be bothe fayre & good
I pray to god that I mote sterue wood
But I to you be also good and trewe
As euer was wyfe, sythe ý world was newe
And but I be to morowe as fayre to sene
As any lady, emprysse, or quene
That is bytwene the Este & eke the weste
Dothe with my lyfe right as you leste
Cast vp the courteyn, and loke howe it is.
And whan the knyght sawe al this
That she so fayre was, and so yonge therto
For ioy he hente her in his armes two
His herte bathed in a bathe of blysse
A thousande tymes a rowe he gan her kysse
And she obeyed hym in euery thyng
That mought done hym pleasure or lykyng
And thus they lyued vnto her lyues ende
In parfyte ioy: and Iesu Christ vs sende
Husbondes meke, yonge, and fresche a bedde
And grace to ouerlyue hem that we wedde.
And eke I pray to god, to short her lyues
That wyl not be gouerned by her wyues
And olde, and angry nygardes of dispence
God sende hem sone a very pestylence.

Here endeth the wyfe of Bathes tale, and here begynneth the Freres prologue.

This worthy lymytour, thys noble frere
He made alway a maner louynge chere
Vpon the Sompner, but for honeste
No vilaynes worde as yet to hym spake he
But at the last, he sayd to the wyfe
Dame, god yeue you right good lyfe
Ye haue touched here, also mote I the
In schole mater, a ful great difficulte
Ye haue sayd moche thyng right wel I saye
But dame, here as we ryden by the waye
Vs nedeth not to speken but of game
And lete auctorites a goddes name
To prechyng, and to schole of clergy.
But yf it lyke vnto this companye
I wol you of a Sompner tel a game
Parde ye may wel knowe by the name
That of a Sompner may no good be sayde
I pray, that none of yon be yuel a payde
A sompner is a renner vp and doun
With maundementes, for fornycation
And is ykeate at euery townes ende.
Tho spake our host & said: sir ye shulde ben
And curteys, as a man of your estate (hende
In this companye we wol no debate

Telleth

Telleth your tale, and let the sompner be
Nay (q̃ the Sompner) let hym say to me
What so hym lyst: whan it cometh to my lote
By god I shal hym quite euery grote
I shal hym tel whiche a great honour
It is, to be a flatteryng lymytour
And eke of many an other maner cryme
Whiche nedeth not to reherseu at this tyme
And hys offyce I shal hym tel iwys
Our hoste answerde: peace, no more of thys
And afterwarde he sayd vnto the frere
Tel forthe your tale, myn owen maister dere.

Here endeth the Freres prologue, and here after foloweth his tale.

Whylom there was dwellyng in my countre
An archedeken, a man of hye degre
That boldly dyd execution
In punishyng of fornication
Of witchcrafte, and eke of baudrie
Of defamacion, and aduoutrie
Of churche reues, and of testamentes
Of contractes, and lacke of sacramentes
Of vsure, and of symonye also
But certes lechours dyd he moche wo
They shulden synge, yf they weren hente
And smale tythers, they were foule ishent
If any person wolde vpon hem playne
There might asterte hem no pecunyal payne
For smale tythes, and smal offrynge
He made the people pitously to synge
For er the bishop caught hem with hys hoke
They were in the archedekens booke
And than had he (through hys iurdictyon)
Power to done on hem correction
He had a Sompner redy to his honde
A slyer boye was there none in Englonde
For subtelly he had his espiayle
That taught hym where he myght auayle.
He couthe spare of lechours one or two
To techen hym to foure and twenty mo
For thogh this sõpner wode were as an hare
To tel his harlotrye I wol not spare
For we ben out of hys correction
They haue of vs no iurdiction
Ne neuer shullen, terme of al her lyues.
Peter so ben women of the stewes
(q̃ this Sompner) yput out of our cure
Peace with mischaũce, & with misauenture
Sayd our hoste, and let hym tel hys tale
Now telleth forthe, & let the Sompner gale
Ne spareth not, myne owne maister dere.
This fals theke, this Sõpner (q̃ the frere)
Had alway baudes redy to hys honde
As any hauke to lure, in Englonde
That telleth hym al the secre that they knew
For her aquayntaũce was not come of newe
They weren his aprouers priuely
He toke hym selfe a great profyte therby
His maister knewe not alway what he wan
Without maundement, a leude man
He coude sommon, on payne of christes curse
And they were glad to fyllen hys purse
And made hym great keestes at the nale
And right as Judas had purses smale
And was a theke, right suche theke was he
His maister had but halfe his deutie
He was (yf I shal yeuen hym hys laude)
A theke, a sompner, and eke a baude.
He had eke wenches of hys retinue
That whether syr Roberde, or syr Hue
Or Johan, or Rafe, or who so that it were
That lay by hem, they tolde it in his eere
Thus were ỳ wenches and he of one assent
And he wolde fetche a fayned maundement

And sommon hem to the chapitre bothe two
And pylle the man, and let the wenche go
Than wolde he say, frende I shal for thy sake
Do stryken the out of our letters blake
The dare no more as in this case trauayle
I am thy frende, there I may the auayle
Certayne he knewe of bribries mo
Than possible is to tel in yeres two
For in this worlde nys dogge for the bowe
That can an hurte dere from an hole knowe
Bet than the Sompner knewe a slye lechour
Or auoutrer, or els any paramour
For that was the fruite of al hys rente
Therfore on it he sette al hys entent.
And so befyl that ones on a day
This Sompner waytynge euer on his pray
Rode for to sommō an old wedowe a ribybe
Faynyng a cause, for he wolde haue a bribe
And happed that he sawe beforn hym ryde
A gay yoman vnder a forest syde
A bowe he bare, and arowes bright & shene
He had vpon him a courtpye of grene
An hatte vpon his heed with strynges blake
Sir q̃ this sompner, haile and wel ytake
Welcome q̃ he, and euery good felawe
whider rideſt ÿ vnder this grenwode shawe
Sayd this yoman, wolte thou ferre to day
This sompner hym answerd, and sayd nay
Here fast by (q̃ he) is myne entent
To ryden, for to reysen vp a rent
That longeth to my lordes dewte.
Arte thou than a bayly-ye (q̃ he)
He durst nat than, for very fylth and shame
Say that he was a Sompner, for the name
Depardieux, q̃ this yoman, lefe brother
Thou arte a bayly, and I am another
I am vnknowen, as in this countre
Of thyne acqueyntaunce I wol pray the
And eke of brotherhed, yf that thou list
I haue golde and syluer in my chist
Yf that ye happe to come in our shyre
Al shal be thyne, right as thou wolt desyre
Graūt mercy q̃ this sompner, by my faithe
Euerich in other his trouthe laythe
For to be sworne brethern, tyl they dey
And with ÿ worde they riden forth her wey
This sompner w̄ that, was as ful of iāgles
As ful of venym, as ben these wariangles
And euer enquyring vpon euery thyng
Brother q̃ he, where is your dwellyng
Another day, yf that I shulde you seche
This yoman hym answerde in soft speche
Brother q̃ he, ferre in the North countre
where as I hope somtyme I shal the se
Or we departe, I shal the so wel wysse
That of myne house thou shalte neuer mysse
Now brother q̃ this sompner, I you pray
Teche me, while we ryden by the way
Sith that ye ben a baylye, as am I
Some subtelte, tel me faithfully
In myne office, howe I may most wynne
And spareth nat for conscience ne for synne
But as my brother, tel me howe don ye
Nowe by my trouth brother dere sayd he
As I shal tellen the a faithful tale
My wages ben ful straite and smale
My lorde is harde to me and daungerous
And myne office ful laborous
And therfore, by extortion I leue
Forsothe al that men wol me yeue
Algate by sleyght or by violence
From yere to yere, I wyn al my dispence
I can no better tellen faithfully
Nowe certes q̃ this sompnour, so fare I
I spare nat to take god it wote
But yf it be to heuy or to hote
That I may getten in counsayle priuely
No maner conscience of that haue I
Nere myne extorcion I myght not lyuen
Of suche iapes wol I nat be shriuen
Stonake ne conscience knowe I non
I shrewe al these shrift fathers euerichon
wel be we met by god and swete saynt Jame
But lefe brother, tel me thy name
Quod this sompner, in thys mean while
This yoman gan a lytel for to smyle
Brother q̃ he, wolte thou that I the tel
I am a fende, my dwellyng is in hel
And here I ride about my purchasyng
To wete where I may gete any thyng
My purchase is theffecte of al my rent
Loke howe thou rideſt for the same entent
To wyne good, thou reckeſt neuer howe
Right so fare I, for ride wol I nowe
Unto the worldes ende for a pray
Ah, q̃ this sompner, benedicite, what ye say
I wende ye were a woman trewly
Ye haue a mannes shappe as wel as I
Haue ye a fygure than determynate
In hel, there ye ben in your estate
Nay certaynly q̃ he, there haue we non
But whan vs lyketh, we can take vs one
Or els make you seme we ben shape
Somtyme lyke a man or lyke an ape

Or lyke an Angel can I ryde or go
It is no wonder thyng though it be so
A lousy iuggler can disceyue the
And parde yet can I more craft than he
why q̃ the Sompnour, ride ye thã or gon
In sondrie shappe, and nat alway in one
For we q̃ he, wol vs suche forme make
As most able is our prayes for to take
what maketh you to haue al this labour
Ful many a cause lefe syr Sompnour
Sayd this fende, but al thyng hath tyme
The day is short, and it is passed pryme
And yet ne gote I nothyng in this day
I wol entende to wynnyng, yf that I may
And nat entende our wyttes to declare
For brother myne, thy wyttes ben al to bare
To vnderstand al, though I wolde tel hẽ the
But for thou askest why laboren we
For somtyme be we goddes instrumentes
And meanes to don his cõmaundementes
what that hym lust on his creatures
In dyuers arte and in dyuers fygures
withouten hem we haue no might certayn
yf that him lyst to stonden there agayn
And somtyme at our praye haue we leue
Onely the body, & nought the soule to greue
wytnesse of Job, whom we deden wo
And somtyme haue we myght of bothe two
This is to sayn, of body and soule eke
And somtyme we ben suffred for to seke
Vpon a man, and don his soule vnrest
And nat his body, and al is for the best
whan he withstandeth our temptation
It is a cause of hys saluation
Al be it that it was nat our entent
He shuld be sake, but that we wolde him hent
And somtyme be we seruauntes vnto man
As the archbysshoppe saynt Dunstan
And to the Apostel eke seruaunt was I
Yet tel me q̃ this Sompnour faithfully
Make ye you newe bodies thus alway
Of elementes. the fende answered nay
Somtyme we fayn, and somtyme we aryse
with deed bodies in sondrie wise
And speke as renably, fayre and wel
As the Phitonesse dyd to Samuel
And yet wolde some men say it was nat he
I do no force of your deuynite
But o thyng I warne the, I wol nat iape
Thou wolte algates wete howe we be shape
Thou shalt herafterwarde (my brother dere)
Come, where the nedeth nat of me to lere
For thou shalt by thyne own experience
Conne in the chare rede of thys sentence
Bette than Vergyl, while he was on lyue
Or Dauut also. Nowe lette vs ride blyue
For I wol holde company with the
Tyl it be so that thou forsake me
Nay q̃ this sompnour, ẏ shal nat betide
I am a yoman knowen ful wyde
My trouth wol I holde to ẏ, as in this caas
For though thou were the deuyll Sathanas
My trouth wol I holde to my brother
As I am sworne, and eche of vs to other
For to be trewe brother in this caas
And brother, we gon to our purchaas
Take thou thy parte, that men wol the yeue
And I shal myne, and thus shal we both leue
And yf that any of vs haue more than other
Let him be trew, & parte it with his brother
I graunt q̃ the deuyl, by my fay
And w̃ that worde they riden forth her way
And right at thentrynge of the townes ende
(To which ẏ sompner shope him for to wẽd)
They sawe a carte, that charged was w̃ hay
which that a carter droue forth on his way
Depe was the way, for which the carte stode
This carter smote, & striued as he were wode
Heit scot heit brok, what spare ye for ẏ stones
The fende q̃ he, you fetch both body & bones
As ferforth as euer ye were yfoled
So moche wo as I haue for you tholed
The deuyl haue al, both horse, carte, & hay
q̃ this sompnour, here shal we haue a pray
And nere ẏ fende he drew, as nourt ne were
Ful preuily, and rowned in his ere
Herken brother herken, by thy fayth
Herest thou what the carter saith.
Hent it anon, for he hath yeue it the
Both hay and carte, and eke his caples thre
Nay q̃ the deuyl, god wotte neuer a dele
It is nat his entent trust me wele
Aske him thy selfe, yf thou trowest nat me
Or els stynt a whyle and thou shalte se.
This carter thacked his horse on ẏ croupe
And they begon to drawe and to stoupe
Heit nowe q̃ he, that Iesu christ you blesse
And al his hondy werke both more and lesse
That was wel ytwight myn own lyard boy
I pray god saue the and saynt Loye
Nywe is my carte out of the slowe parde.
Lo brother q̃ the fende, what tolde I the
Here may ye seen myn owne dere brother
The carle spake o thig but he thourt another

Lette vs go forth about our viage
Here wyn we nothyng vpon cariage
whā ý they comē somwhat out of ý town
Thys Sompner to his brother gan to rown
Brother q̃ he, here wonneth an olde rebecke
That had almost as leke to lese her necke
As for to yeue a peny of her good
I wol haue .xij. pens tho that she were wood
Or I wol sompne her to our offyce
And yet god wotte of her knowe I no vyce
But for thou canst nat, as in this countre
wynne thy cost, take here ensample of me.
This Sōpner clappeth at ý wedowes gate
Come out he sayd, thou olde veritrate
I trowe thou hast some frere or preest w̄ the
who clappeth ther said this wife, benedicite
God saue you syr, what is your swete wyl
I haue q̃ he, of sommōs of the here a byl
Up payne of cursyng loke that thou be
To morowe before our Archdeacons kne
To answere to the court of certayn thynges
Nowe lorde q̃ she, Jesu kyng of kynges
So wisely helpe me, as I ne may
I haue ben sycke, and that ful many a day
I may nat go so ferre, q̃ she, ne ryde
But I be deed, so pricketh it in my syde
May I nat aske a lybel syr Sompnour
And answere there by my proctour
To suche thyng as men wolde apposen me
Yes q̃ this Sompnour, paye anon let se
Twelfe pens to me, and I wyl the acquyte
I shal no profyte haue therof but lyte
My maister hath the profyte, and nat I
Come of and lette me ryden hastely
Gyue me .xij. pens I may no lenger tary
Twelf pens q̃ she, lady saynt Mary
So wisely helpe me out of care and synne
This wyde world though I shuld it wynne
Ne haue I nat .xij. pens within my holde
Ye knowe wel, that I am poore and olde
Kyth your almesse on me poore wretche
Nay than q̃ he, the foule fende me fetche
Yf I the excuse, though thou shuldest be spylt
Alas q̃ she, god wotte yet haue I no gylt
Paye me q̃ he, or by swete saynt Anne
I wol bere away thy newe panne
For dette, whiche thou owest me of olde
whan thou madest thyne husbonde cokolde
I payde at home for thy correction
Thou lyest q̃ she, by my saluation
Ne was I neuer er nowe, wedowe ne wyfe
Sompned vnto your court in al my lyfe
Ne neuer I nas but of my body trewe
Unto the deuyl blacke and rough of hewe
Yeue I thy body and my panne also.
And whan the deuyll herde her curse so
Upon her knees, he sayd in this manere
Nowe mably, myne owne mother dere
Is this your wyl in ernest that ye sey
The deuyl q̃ she, fette him er I dey
And pan and al, but he wol hym repent.
Nay olde stotte, that is nat myne entent
Quod this Sompner, for to repent me
For any thyng that I haue had of the
I wolde I had thy smocke and euery clothe.
Nowe brother q̃ the deuyl, be nat wrothe
Thy body and this pan is myne by right
Thou shalt with me to hel yet to nyght
where thou shalte knowen of our preuyte
More than a maister of deuynite
And with ý worde the foule fende him hēt
Body and soule, he with the deuyl went
where that Sompnours haue their heritage
And god that made after hys ymage
Mankynde, saue and gyde vs al and some
And leue the sompnour good man to become
Lordiges I coud haue told you, q̃ this frere
Had I had leyser, of this Sompnour here
After the text of Christ, Poule, and John
And of other doctours many one
Suche peynes, as your hertes myght agryse
Albeit so, that no tonge may it deuyse
Though ý I might a thousande wynter tel
The peynes of that cursed house of hel
But for to kepe vs fro that cursed place
Wake, and prayeth Jesu of hys grace
So kepe vs from the temptour Sathanas
Herkeneth this worde, beware as i this caas
The lyon sytteth in his awayte alway
To slee the innocent, yf that he may
Disposeth aye your hertes to withstonde
The fende, ý you wolde make thral & bonde
He may not tempte you ouer your myght
For Christ wol be your champion & knyght
And prayeth, that this sompnour him repēte
Of hys misdede, er that the fende hym hente.

Here endeth the Freres tale, and begynneth the Sompners prologue.

Thys

THis Sompner in his styropes hye stode
Upon this frere, his herte was so wode
That lyke an aspē leke he quoke for yre
Lordynges (q he) but one thyng I desyre
I you beseche, that of your curtesy
Sythens ye han herde this false frere lye
As suffreth me I may my tale tel
This frere bosteth that he knoweth hel
And god wote that is lytel wonder
Freres and fendes ben but lytel a sonder
For parde, ye han ofte tyme herde tell
Howe that a frere rauysched was to hel
In spyrit ones by a visyoun
And as an angel ledde hym vp and doun
To shewe hym the paynes that there were
In al the place sawe he not a frere
Of other folke he sawe ynowe in wo
Unto the aungel spake the frere tho
Nowe syr q he, han freres suche a grace
That none of hem shal come in this place?
Yes q this aungel, many a myllyoun
And vnto Sathanas ladde he hym adoun
And nowe hath Sathanas suche a tayle
Broder than of a Caryke is the sayle
Holde vp thy tayle thou Sathanas (q he)
Shewe forthe thyn erse, let the frere se
where is the neste of freres in this place
And er that halfe a forlonge way of space
(Right as bees swarmen out of an hyue)
Out of the dyuels erse they gan dryue
Twenty thousande freres on a route
And throughout hel swarmed al aboute
And comen ayen, as faste as they might gon
And into his erse they crepten euerychon
He clapte hys tayle ayen, and lay styl.
¶ This frere, whan he loked had his fyl
Upon the turmentes of thys sory place
His spyrite god restored of hys grace
Unto hys body ayen, and he awoke
But natheles, yet for fere he quoke
So was the dyuels erse aye in hys mynde
That is his heritage of very kynde
God saue you al, saue this cursed frere
My prologue wol I ende in this manere.

¶ Here endeth the Sompners prologue, and foloweth his tale.

LOrdynges ther is in yorkshyre as I gesse
A marshy countrey called Holdernesse
In whiche there went a lymytour aboute
To preach, and eke to begge, it is no doute
And so bykel that on a day thys frere
Had preched in a church in his manere
And specially aboven euery thyng
Exited he the people in hys prechyng
To trentals, and to yeuen for goddes sake

wherwith men mightē holy houses make
There as diuyne seruyce is honoured
Not there as it is wasted and deuoured
Ne there it nedeth not for to be yeuen
As to possessioners that mowen els lyuen
Thonked be god, in wele and haboundaunce
Trentals delyuereth (sayde he) fro penaunce
Her frendes soules, as wel olde as yonge
Yf that they by hastely isonge
Not for to holde a preest ioly and gay
(He syngeth not but one messe a day)
Delyuereth out (q̃ he) anon the soules
Ful harde it is with flesche hoke or w̃ oules
To ben yclawed, or to brenne or bake
Nowe spedeth you hastely for Christes sake.
And whan this frere had said al hisentent
with qui cum patre, forthe hys way he went
whē folke ī church, had yeue him what hē lest
He went his way, no lenger wolde he rest
with scryppe & typped stafke, ytucked hye
In euery house he gan to pore and prye
And begged mele and chese, or els corne
His felowe had a stafke typped with horne
A payre of tables al of Iuory
And a poyntel polished fetously
And wrote alway the names as he stoode
Of al folke, that yaue hym any goode
Alskaunce as he wolde for hem prey
Yeue vs a bushel wheate, malte or rey
A goddes kychel, or a tryppe of chese
Or els what ye lyst, I may not chese
A goddes halfpeny, or a masse peny
Or yeue vs of your brawne, yf ye haue any
A dagon of your blanket, leue dame
Our suster dere, lo here I write your name
Bacon or bese, or suche thyng as ye fynde
A sturdy harlot went hem ay behynde
That was her hostes man, and bare a sacke
And that mē yaue hem, layde it on his backe
And whan he was out at the dore anone
He planed away the names euerychone
That he before had written in his tables
He serued hem with nyfles and with fables
¶ Nay there thou lyest Sōpner (q̃ the frere)
Peace (q̃ our host) for Christes mother dere
Tel forthe thy tale, and spare it not at al
So thriue I q̃ the Sompner, so I shal
¶ So longe he went fro hous to house til he
Came to an house, ther as he was wont to be
Refreshed more than in an hundred places
Sicke lay the good man, whose the place is
Bedred vpon a couche lowe he lay
Deus hic (q̃ he) O Thomas frend good day
Sayd this frere, curtesly and softe
Thomas god yelde it you, ful ofte
Haue I vpon this benche faren ful wele
Here haue I eaten many a mery mele
And fro the benche he droue away the catte
And layde adowne hys potent and his hatte
And eke his scryppe, & set hym softe adowne
His felowe was go walked in to the towne
Forthe with his knaue, in to that hostelrye
where as he shope him that ilke night to lye.
¶ O dere maister, quod this syke man
Howe haue ye faren sythen Marche began
I sawe you not this fourtenight and more.
¶ God wot (q̃ he) laboured haue I ful sore
And specially for thy saluacion
Haue I sayd many a precioufe orison
And for our other frendes, god hem blesse
I haue this day ben at your churche at messe
And sayd a sermon, after my symple wytte
Not al after the text of holy writte
For it is harde to you, as I suppose
And therfore I wol teche you al the glose
Glosyng is a glorious thyng certayne
For letter sleeth, as we clerkes sayne
There haue I hem taught to ben charitable
And spende her good there as it is resonable
And there I sawe our dame, a where is she
¶ Yonder in the yerde, I trowe she be
Sayd thys man, and she wol come anon
¶ Eye mayster welcom ye be by saynt John
Sayd this wyfe, howe fare ye hertely
¶ This frere aryseth vp ful curtesly
And her enbraseth in his armes narowe
And kysseth her swetely, & cherketh as a spa-
w̃ his lippes, dame (q̃ he) right wele (rowe
As he that is your seruaunt euery dele
Thanked be god, that you yaue soule & lyfe
Yet sawe I not this day so fayre a wife
In al the churche, so god saue me
Ye god amende al fautes syr (q̃ she)
Algates welcome ye be, by my fay
Graūt mercy dame, ẏ haue I foūde alway
But of your great goodnesse, by your leue
I wol pray you, that ye not you greue
I wol with Thomas speke a lytel throwe
These curates ben ful neglygent & slowe
To gropen tenderly a mannes conscience
In schrift, & in prechyng is my diligence
And to studye on Peters wordes & Poules
I walke to fyshe christen mennes soules
To yelde Iesu Christ his propre rent

To spede hys wordes, is al myne entent.
Now by your leue dere mayster (q̃ she)
Chydeth hym wel for sayut charite
He is as angry as a pysse myre
Though that he haue al that he can desyre
Though I hi wry anight, & make hi warme
And ouer hym lay my legge or myne arme
He groneth lyke our bore ꝑ lyeth in the stye
Other dysporte of hym ryght none haue I
I may not please hym in no maner caas
O Thomas, ie vo⁹ die, Thomas Thomas
This maketh ꝑ fende, this must ben amēded
Ire is a thynge that god hyghly defended
And therof wol I speake a worde or two.
Now mayster (q̃ the wyke) er that I go
what wol ye dyner I wol go ther aboute.
Now dame (q̃ he) ie vous die sans doute
Haue I not of a capon but the lyuer
And of your whyte breed, but a shyuer
And after that a rosted pygges heed
(But I nolde not for me no beest were deed)
Then had I ynowe for my suffysaunce
I am a man of lytel sustinaunce
My spirite hath hys fosteryng in the byble
My body is aye so redy and so penyble
To wake, that my body is dystroyde
I pray you dame, be ye nought anoyde
Though I so frendly you my coūsaile shewe
By god, I nolde haue tolde it but a fewe.
Nowe syr (q̃ she) but one worde er ye go
My chylde is deed, within these wekes two
Sone after that ye wente out of thys toun
Hys death sawe I by reuelacioun
Sayd thys frere, at home in our dortoure
I dare wel sayne, er that halfe an houre
After hys death, I sawe hym borne to blysse
In myne auisioun, god me so wysse
So dyd our sexten, and our fermerere
That han ben true freres thys fyftye yere
They may now, god be thanked of hys lone
Waken her iubely, and walken alone
And vp I arose, and al our couente eke
wyth many a teere tryllynge on our cheke
wythouten noyse or clateryng of belles
Te deum was our songe, and nothinge elles
Saue that to Christ I sayd an orison
Thankynge hym of my reuelacion
For syr and dame, trusteth me ryght wel
Our orisons ben more effectuel
And more we sene of Christes secret thinges
Thē bozel folke, although they were kynges
we lyue in pouerte, and in abstinence
And bozel folke in rychesse and dyspence
In meate & drynke, and in her foule delyte
we han thys worldly luste al in dyspyte
Lazar and Diues, lyueden dyuersly
And dyuers guerdons had they therby
who so wol pray, he muste faste & be clene
And fatte hys soule, & make hys body lene
we fare as sayth the apostle, cloth and foode
Suffyseth vs, though they be not ful goode
The clennesse & the fastynge of vs freres
Maketh that Christ accepteth our prayeres.
Lo Moyses, fourty dayes & fourty nyght
Fasted, er that the hye god of hys myght
Spake wyth hym in the mounte of Synay
wyth empty wombe, fastynge many a day,
Receyued he the lawe, that was wrytten
wyth goddes fynger, & Hely wel ye witten
In mount Horeb, er he had any speche
wyth the hygh god, that is our soules leche
He fasted longe, and was in contemplaunce.
Aaron, ꝑ had the temple in gouernaunce
And eke the other prestes euerychone
Into the temple when they shulde gone
To prayen for the people, and done seruyce
They nolde drynke in no maner wyse
No drynke, that dronke myght hem make
But there in abstinence praye and wake
Lest that they deden take hede what I saye
But they be sobre that for the people praye
ware that I saye, no more for it suffyseth
Our lorde Jesu, as holy wryte deuyseth
Yaue vs ensample of fastynge and prayers
Therfore we mendicantes, we sely freres
Ben wedded to pouerte and continence
To charite, humblenesse, and abstinence
To persecution for ryghtwysnesse
To weepynge, mysericorde and clennesse
And therfore maye ye se that our prayeres
(I speke of vs mendicant, we freres)
Ben to the hye god more acceptable
Then yours, wyth your feest at your table.
Fro Paradyse fyrst, yf I shal not lye
was man outchased for hys glotonye
And chast was man in paradyse certayn
But herken yow Thomas what I shal sayn
I haue no texte therof, as I suppose
But I fynde it in maner of a glose
That specially our swete lorde Jesus
Spake thys by freres, when he sayd thus
Blessed be they that poore in spirite bene
And so forth al the gospel maye ye sene
whether it be lyker our perfection

Or hers that swymmen in possession
Fye on her pompe, and on her glotonye
And in her leudnesse, I hem defye
Ye thynketh they be lyke Jouinian
Fatte as a whale, and walkynge as a swan
As vinolent as botel in the spence
Her prayers is of ful lytel reuerence
when they for soules say ý psalme of Dauid
Lo bouffe they sayn (Cor meum eructauit)
who foloweth Christes gospel & hys lore
But we: that humble be, chaste, and poore
werkers of goddes worde, & not auditours
Therfore ryght as an hauke at a sours
Up spryngeth into the eyre, so prayeres
Of charitable and chast busy freres
Maken her sours to goddes eeres two
Thomas Thomas, so mote I ryde or go
And by that lorde that cleped is saynt Yue
Ne ý our brother were, ý shuldest not thryue
For in our chapiter pray we daye and nyght
To Christ that he the sende helth & myght
Thy body for to welden hastely.
¶ God wote ꝓ he, nothynge therof fele I
As helpe me Christ, as in fewe yeres
Haue I spended vpon dyuers maner freres
wel many a poūde, yet fare I neuer the bette
Certayne my good haue I almost besette
Fare wel my good, for it is almoste ago.
The frere answered, o Thomas dost ý so:
what nedeth the dyuers freres seche:
what nedeth him that hath a parfyte leche
To sechen other leches in the toun:
Your inconstaunce is your confusioun
Holde ye me then, or els our couent
To prayen for you insufficient:
Thomas, that iape nys not worth a myte
Your maladye is for we haue to lyte
A, yeue that couent halfe a quarter otes
And yeue that couent foure & twenty grotes
And yeue that frere a penny, and let hym go
Nay nay Thomas, it may nothynge be so
what is a ferthyng worth parted in twelue:
Lo, eche thynge that is oned in hym selue
Is more stronge then when it is so scatered
Thomas, of me thou shalt not ben yflatered
Thou wolst haue al our labour for nought
The hye god ý al thys world hath wrought
Sayeth, ý the workman is worthy his hyre
Thomas, nought of your treasoure I desyre
As for my selfe, but that al our couent
To praye for you is aye so dyligent
And for to buylden Christes owne chyrche
Thomas, yf ye wol lerne for to wyrche
Of buyldynge vp of chyrches may ye fynde
Yf it be good, in Thomas lyfe of Inde.
Ye lyggen here ful of anger and of yre
with which ý deuel setteth your hert on fyre
And chyden here thys holy innocent
Your wyfe, that is so meke and pacient
And therfore trowe me Thomas if you leste
Ne chyde not wyth thy wyfe, as for the beste
And beare thys worde awaye by thy fayth
Touchinge such thing, lo what ý wyse sayth
wythin thy house be thou no lyon
To thy subiectes do thou none oppression
Ne make not thyne acquayntaunce to fle
And yet Thomas, eftsones charge I the
Beware of her that in thy bosome slepeth
ware the of the serpent, that so slyly crepeth
Under the grasse, and styngeth ful subtelly
Beware my sonne, and herken pacently
That twēty thousāde mē han lost her lyues
For stryuinge with her lēmans & her wyues
Nowe sens ye haue so holy and meke a wyfe
what nedeth you Thomas to make stryfe:
There nys ywysse no serpent so cruel
(when mē treden on his tayle) ne halfe so fell
As a womā is, whē she hath caught an yre
Vengeaunce is then al her desyre.
¶ Ire is a synne, one of the greatest of seven
Abhominable vnto the hygh god of heuen
And to hym selfe it is a dystruction
Thys euery leude vycare and parson
Can saye, how yre engendreth homecyde
Ire is in soth the executour of pryde
I coulde of yre say so muche sorowe
That my tale shulde last tyl to morowe
And therfore I pray god both daye & nyght
That to an yrous man he sende lytell myght
It is great harme, and eke great pyte
To set an yrous man in hye degre

Whylom there was an yrous potestate
As sayeth Seneke, that duryng hys estate
Upon a daye out rydden knyghtes two
And as fortune wolde it shulde be so
That one of hem cam home, ý other nought
Anone the knyght before ý iudge is brought
That said thus: thou hast thy felowe slayne
For whych I deme the to the death certayne
And to another knyght cōmaunded he
Go lede hym to the death I charge the
And it hapned as they went by the wey
Towarde the place where he shulde dey

The

The knizt came, which mē wēde had be dede
Then thought they it was the best rede
To lede them both to the iudge agayne
They saydē lorde, the knight hath not slayne
Hys felowe, here he stante hole alyue.
Ye shullen be deed (q̃ he) so mote I thryue
That is to saye, both one, two, and thre,
And to the fyrst knyght, ryght thus spake he.
I dampned the, thou must algate be deed
And thou muste also lese nedes thyne heed
For thou arte cause why thy felowe deyth
And to ꝑ thyrde knyght, ryght thus he seyth
Thou hast not done that I cōmaunded the
And thus he dyd hem slayne al thre.

Jrouse Cambyses was eke dronkelewe
And aye delyted hym to ben a shrewe
And so bykel a lorde of hys meyne
That loued wel vertuous moralite
Said on a day betwyxt hem two right thus
A lorde is lost, yf he be aught vicious
And dronkennesse eke is a foule recorde
Of any man, and namely of a lorde
There is many an eye and many an eere
Awaytynge on a lorde, he notte where
For goddes loue drynketh more temporatly
Wyne maketh a man to lese wretchedly
Hys mynde and hys lymmes euerychone.
¶ The reuers shalte thou se (q̃ he) anone
And preue it by thyne owne experience
That wyne ne doth to folke no such offence
There nys no wyne bireueth me my myght
Of honde, of foote, ne of myne eye syght
And for dispyte he dronke mochel more
An hundred tymes then he dyd before
And ryght anone, thys cursed prouse wretch
Let thys knyghtes sonne bykorne him fetch
Cōmaūding him he shulde bykorne him stōde
And sodaynly he toke hys bowe in honde
And vp the strynge he pulled to hys eere
And wyth an arowe he slough ꝑ childe there
Now whether haue I a seker hōde or none
q̃ he: is al my myght and mynde agone:
Hath wyne bireued me myne eyen syght:
¶ What shulde I tel the answere of ꝑ knyght
Hys sōne was slayne, there is no more to say
Beware therfore, wyth lordes howe ye play
Synge Placebo, and I shal yf I can
But yf it be vnto a poore man
To a poore man, one shulde hys vyces tel
But not to a lorde, though he shuld go to hel.

Lo prous Cirus, thylke Percien
Howe destroyed he the ryuer of Gysen:
For that an horse of hys was dreynt therin
When he went Babylon to wynne
He made that the ryuer was so smal
That men myght ryde and waden ouer al.
¶ Lo, what sayd he, that so wel teche can
Ne be no felowe to none prous man
Ne wyth no wode man walke by the way
Leste thou repente, I wol no farther say.
¶ Now thomas leue brother, leaue thyn yre
Thou shalt me fynde as iuste, as is a squyre
Hold not the dyuels knyfe aye in thyne herte
Thyne angre doth the al to sore smerte
But shewe to me al thy confession.
¶ Nay (q̃ the sycke man) by saynt Symon
I haue be shryue thys day of my curate
I haue tolde hym al myne estate
It nedeth nomore to speke of it, sayeth he
But yf me lyst, of myne humilite.
yeue me thē of thy gold, to make our cloistre
q̃ he, for many a muskle & many an oystre
When other men haue ben ful wel at ese
Hath ben our foode, our cloystre for to rese
And yet god wote, vnneth the foundament
Parfourmed is, ne of our pauement
Is not a tyle yet wythin our wones
By god we owe fourty pounde for stones
Now helpe thomas, for him ꝑ harowed hell
For els mote we our bokes sell
And yf you lacke our predication
Then goeth thys worlde al to dystruction
For who so wol fro thys worlde vs bireue
So god me saue, Thomas by your leue
He wolde bireue out of this world the sonne
For who can techen & worchen, as we conne
And that is not of lytel tyme (q̃ he)
But syth Helye was, or Helyse
Han freres ben, that fynde I of recorde
In charite, ythanked be our lorde
Now Thomas, for saynt charite
And downe anone he sytteth on hys kne
¶ Thys sycke mā wore nye woode for yre
He wolde the frere had ben a fyre
wyth hys false dyssimulation
Suche thynges as ben in my possessyon
(q̃ he) that may I yeue, and none other
Ye sayn me thus, howe ꝑ I am your brother
Ye certes (q̃ thys frere) trusteth me wele
I toke our dame our lettre and our sele.
¶ Nowe (q̃ he) wel, & somwhat shal I yeue
Unto your holy couent whyle I lyue

And

And in thyne honde, thou shal it haue anone
On thys condicion, and other none
That thou departe it so, my leue brother
That euery frere, haue as moche as other
Thys shalt thou swere on thy profession
wythout fraude or cauelacion.
¶ I swere it (q̃ the frere) by my faythe
And therwithal hys hande in hys he laythe
Lo here my faythe, in me shalbe no lacke.
¶ Then put thyne hãde downe by my backe
Sayd thys man, and grope well behynde
Byneth my buttocke, there thou shalt fynde
A thynge, that I haue hydde in priuyte
Ah, thought the frere, that shal go with me
Adowne he shokth hys honde to the clyfte
In hope to fynde there some good gyfte
And when thys sycke man felte thys frere
Aboute hys towel, groppynge here and there
Amyd hys honde, he let the frere a farte
There nys no capel, drawynge in a carte
That myght haue let a farte of such a soun.
¶ The frere vp starte, as doth a wode lyon
A false churle (q̃ the frere) for goddes bones
Thys hast thou in dyspyte do, for the nones
Thou shalte abye thys farte, yf I may
Hys meyny, that herde of thys afraye
Came leapyng in, and chased out the frere
And forth he goeth, wyth a ful angry chere
And fette hys felowe, there as laye his store
He loked as he were a wylde bore
He grynted hys teth, so was he wrothe
A sturdy pace, downe to the court he gothe
where as there wõned a mã of great honour
To whom that he was alway confessour
This worthy man was lorde of that vylage
Thys frere came, as he were in a rage
where as thys lorde sate eatyng at his borde
Vnnethes myght the frere speke o worde
Tyl at the laste he sayd, god you se.
¶ Thys lorde gan loke, and sayd benedicite
what frere Jhõ, what maner a world is this
I se wel that somthynge is amys
Ye loke as though ẏ wod were ful of theues
Syt downe, and tel me what your grefe is
And it shalbe amended, yf that I may.
¶ I haue (q̃ he) had a dyspyte to day
God yelde it you, adowne in your village
That in this world, is none so poore a page
That he nolde haue abhominacioun
Of that I haue receaued in your toun
And yet me greueth nothynge so sore
As that the olde churle, wyth lockes hore
Blasphemed hath our holy couent eke.
¶ Now mayster (q̃ thys lorde) I you beseke
No mayster syr (q̃ he) but seruitour
Though I haue had in schole that honour
God lyketh not, that men vs Raby calle
Neyther in market, ne in your large halle
No force (q̃ he) but tel me of your grefe
¶ Syr (q̃ thys frere) an odious myscheke
Thys day is betyde, to myne ordre, & to me
And so per consequens to eche degre
Of holy churche, god amende it sone.
Syr (q̃ the lorde) ye wote what is to done
Dystempre you not, ye ben my confessour
ye ben the salte of the earth, and the sauour
For goddes loue your pacience nowe holde
Telleth me your grefe: & he anone him tolde
As ye han herde before, ye wote well what
The lady of the house, aye styll satte
Tyl she had herde what the frere sayde
Eye goddes mother (q̃ she) & blyssful mayde
Is there nought els, tel me faythfully
Madame (q̃ he) howe thynketh ye therby
Howe that me thynketh: so god me spede
I saye a churle hath done a churles dede
what shulde I saye, god let hym neuer the
Hys sycke heed is ful of vanite
I holde hym in a maner of frenesye.
Madame (q̃ he) by god I shal not lye
But I in any wyse may ben on hym awreke
I shal slaunder him ouer al, where I speke
That false blasphemour, that charged me
To parte it, that myght not departed be
To euery man ylyche, wyth myschaunce
The lorde sate styl, as he were in a traũce
And in hys herte he rolled vp and doun
Howe that thys churle had ymaginacioun
To shewe suche a probleme to the frere
Neuer erst or now ne herde I such a matere
I trowe the dyuel put it in hys mynde
In al Arsinetryke, there shal no man fynde
Byforne thys daye, of suche a question
who shulde make a demonstracion:
That euery man shulde ylyke haue his parte
Of a sowne or sauoure of a farte
O nyce proude churle, I shrewe thy face
Lo syrs (q̃ the lorde) with harde grace
Who euer hearde of such a thynge or nowe
To euery man ylyke tell me howe
It is an impossyble, it may not be
Eey nyce churle, god let hym neuer the
The rumblyge of a farte, and euery souue
Nys but of eyre reuerberacyoune

And

And euer it wasteth lytle and lytle away
There is no man can demen, by my fay
Yf that it were departed equally
What lo my churle: lo, yet how shrewdly
Unto my confessour to day he spake
I holde hym certayne a demoniake.
Now eteth your meat, & let ỳ churle go play
Let hym go hongen hym selfe a deuel way.
Now stode the lordes squyer at the borde
That carke his meate, & herd word by worde
Of al thynge of whych I haue you sayde
My lorde (q̃ he) be not euel apayde
I couth tel for a gowne cloth
To you syr frere, so that ye ben not wroth
Howe that thys farte shulde euen ydeled be
Amonges your couent, yf it lyketh the.
Tel on (q̃ ỳ lorde) & thou shalt haue anon
A gowne clothe, by god and by saynt Jhon
My lorde (q̃ he) when ỳ the weder is fayre
wythouten wynde, or perturbynge of ayre
Let brynge a carte whele here into thys hall
But loke he haue hys spokes all
Twelue spokes hath a carte whele cõmenly
And brynge me thẽ. xij. freres, wote ye why:
For thyrtene is a couent as I gesse
Your confessour here, for hys worthynesse
Shal perfourme vp the nombre of his couẽt
Thẽ shullẽ they kneleu adowne by one assẽt
And to euery spokes ende, in thys manere
Ful sadly lay hys nose shal a frere
Your noble confessour there, god him saue
Shal holde hys nose vpryght vnder ỳ naue
Then shal this churle, w̃ bely styffe & tought
As any tabour, hyther ben ybrought
And set him on the whele, right of this carte
Upon the naue, & make hym let a farte
And ye shullen se, vp peryl of my lyfe
By prefe, whych is demonstratyfe
That equally the sowne of it wyl wende
And eke the stynke, vnto the spokes ende
Saue ỳ thys worthy man your confessour
(Bycause he is a man of great honour)
Shal haue the fyrst frutes, as reson is
The noble vsage of freres yet is thys.
The worthest mã of hem shul fyrst be serued
And certaynly, he hath it wel deserued
He hath to day taught vs so moch good
wyth prechynge in the pulpet there he stood
That I may vouchsafe, I saye for me
He had the fyrst smel of fartes thre
And so wolde al hys brethren hardely
He beareth hym so fayre and holyly.
¶ The lord, ỳ lady, & eche man, saue ỳ frere
Sayd that Jankyn spake in thys matere
As wel as Ouyde dyd or Ptholome
Touchynge the churles sayd subtylte
And hye wytte made hym speke as he spake
He nys no foole, ne no demoniake
And Jankyn hath ywonne a newe gowne
My tale is done, we ben almoste at towne.

Here endeth the Sompners tale, and here foloweth the clerke of Oxenfordes prologue.

Sir clerke of Oxforde, our hoost sayde,
Ye ryde as stil and coye, as doth a mayde
were newe spoused, syttynge at the borde
This day ne herd I of your mouth a worde
I trowe that ye studye about some sophyme
But Salomon sayeth, al thynge hath tyme
For goddes sake, bethe of better chere
It is no tyme now to studye here
Tel vs some mery tale by your faye
For what man is entred into a playe
He nedes mote vnto that playe assent
But precheth not, as freres done in lent
To make vs for our olde synnes to wepe
Ne that thy tale make vs not to slepe
Tel vs some mery thynge of auentures
Your termes, your fygures, & your coloures
Kepe hem in store, tyl so be that ye endyte
Hyghe style, as when men to kynges wryte
Speketh so playne at thys tyme, I you pray
That we may vnderstande what ye say.
¶ Thys worthy clerke benyngly answerde
Hoste (q̃ he) I am vnder your yerde
Ye haue of vs as nowe the gouernaunce
And therfore wol I do you obeysaunce
As farre as reason asketh hardely
I wol you tel a tale, whych that I
Lerned at Padowe, of a worthy clerke
As preued is by hys wordes and hys werke
He is now deed, and nayled in hys chest
I praye to God sende hys soule good rest.
Fraunces Petrarke, the laureat poete
Hyght thys clerke, whose rhetorykke swete
Enlumined al Itayle of poetrye
As Lyuian dyd of Philosophye

Or lawe, or other arte perticulere
But death ỳ wol not suffre vs dwellen here
But as it were the twynklynge of an eye
Hem bothe hath slayne, and al we shal dye.
¶ But for to tellen of this worthy man
That taught me this tale, as I first began
I say that he first with hye style endyteth
(Or he the body of hys tale writeth)
A proheme, in whiche discriueth he
Piemount, and of Saluce the countre
And speketh of Apenniny the hylles hye
That ben the boundes of west Lumbardye
And of mount Vesulus in special
where as the Poo, out of a wel smal
Taketh hys first spring and hys sourc
That estwarde euer increseth in his cours
To Emelle warde, to Ferare, and to Venyse
The whiche a longe tyme were to deuyse
And truly, as to my iugement
Me thynketh it a thyng inpartinent
Saue that hym lyste conuey hys matere
But this is his tale as ye shullen here.

Here endeth the prologue of the clerke of Oxenforde, and here foloweth hys tale.

THere is, in the west syde of Itayle
Down at the rote of Vesulus the colde
A lusty playne, habundaunt of vitayle
wher many a town & tour thou maist behold
That founded were, in tyme of fathers olde
And many a nother delectable syght
And Saluces, this noble countre hight

A Markes whylom was in that londe
As were his worthy elders hym byfore
And obeysaunt aye redy to hys honde
were al hys lieges, bothe lesse and more
Thus in delyte he lyued, and hath done yore
Beloued & drad, through fauour of fortune
Bothe of his lordes and of hys commune

Therwith he was, as to speke of lynage
The gentylest yborne of al Lomberdy
A fayre person, & stronge, and yong of age
And ful of honour and curtesye
Discrete ynowe, his countre for to gye
Saue in some thynges he was to blame
And walter was this yonge lordes name

I blame him thus, that he consydred nought
In tyme cõmyng, what hym might betyde
But on his lust present was al his thought
And for to hauke and hunt on euerysyde
welny al other cures lette he slyde
And eke he ne wolde, that was worst of al
wedde no wife, for ought that myght befal

Ouely

Onely that poynt hys people bare so sore
That flockmele on a day to hym they went
And one of hem, that wiseſt was of lore
(Or els that the lorde wolde beſt aſſent
That he ſhulde tel him what his people mēt
Or els coude he ſhewe ſuche matere)
He to the Markes ſayd, as ye ſhullen here.

O noble Marques, your humanyte
Aſſureth vs, and yeueth vs hardyneſſe
As ofte tyme as is neceſſyte
That we may to you tel our heuyneſſe
Accepteth lorde of your gentylneſſe
That we to you with pitous hert playne
And lette your eares nat my voice diſdayne

Al haue I nat to done in this matere
More than another hath in this place
Yet for as moche, as ye my lorde ſo dere
Haue alway ſhewed me fauour and grace
I dare the better aſke of you a ſpace
Of audience, to ſhewen our requeſte
And ye my lorde to done right as you leſte

For certes lorde: ſo wel vs lyketh you
And al your werkes, & euer haue don, ỏ we
Ne coulde our owne ſelfe deuyſen howe
we myght more lyuen in felycite
Saue one thyng lorde, yf it your wyl be
That for to be a wedded man, you leſt
Thā were your people in ſouerayn hertes

Boweth your necke vnder the bliſſful yoke
Of ſouerayne, and not of ſeruyſe
whiche men clepen ſpouſayle or wedlocke
And thiketh lord, amōg your thoughtes wiſe
Howe that our dayes paſſen in ſundrie wyſe
For though we ſlepe or wake, ronne, or ryde
Aye fleeth the tyme, it wol no man abyde

And though your grene youthe floure, as yet
In crepeth age alway as ſtyl as ſtone
And dethe manaſeth euery age, and ſmyte
In eche eſtate, for there eſcapeth none
And alſo certayn, as we knowen echone
That we ſhul dye, & vncertayne we al
Ben of that day, that dethe ſhal on vs fal

Accepteth than of vs the trewe entent
That neuer yet refuſed your heſte
And we wol al lorde, yf ye wol aſſent
Cheſe you a wyfe in ſhorte tyme, at the leſt
Borne of the gentilleſt and of the meſte
Of al this londe, ſo that it aught ſeme
Honour to god & you, as nere as we cā deme

Delyuer vs out of al this buſy drede
And take a wyfe, for hye goddes ſake
For yf it ſo befel, as god forbede
That thorowe dethe, your linage ſhuld ſlake
And that a ſtraunge ſucceſſour ſhulde take
Your heritage, O, wo were vs on lyue
wherfore we pray you haſtely to wyue.

Her meke prayere and her pytouſe chere
Made the Markes for to haue pyte
Wol ye (q he) myne owne people dere
To that I neuer erſt thought, conſtrayne me
I me reioyced of my lyberte
That ſelden tyme is founde in mariage
There I was free, I mote ben in ſeruage

But natheles, I ſe your true entente
And truſt vpon your wytte, & haue done aye
wherfore of my fre wyl I wol aſſente
To wedden me, as ſone as euer I may
But there, as ye haue profred me to day
To cheſe me a wyfe, I you releſe
That choyce, and pray you of that profer ceſe

For god it wote, that children ofte been
Unlyke her worthy elders, hem before
Bounte cometh al of god, & nat of the ſtreen
Of whiche they ben engendred and ibore
I truſt in goddes bounte, and therfore
My mariage, myne eſtate, and reſt
I hym be take, he may don as hym leſt

Lette me alone in cheſynge of my wyfe
That charge vpon my backe I wol endure
But I you pray, and charge vpon your lyfe
That what wyfe I take, ye me enſure
To worſhip her, whiles her lyfe may dure
In worde and werke, here, and els where
As ſhe an Emperours doughter were

And furthermore, thus ſhal ye ſwere, ỏ ye
Ayenſt my choyce ſhal neuer grutch ne ſtryue
For ſythe I ſhal for go my lyberte
At your requeſt, as euer mote I thryue
There as myn hert is ſet, there wol I wyue
And but ye wol aſſent, in ſuche manere
I pray you ſpeketh no more in this matere

With herty wyl they sworen and assent
To al this thyng, there sayd no wight nay
Besechyng hym of grace er they went
That he wolde hem graunt a certayn day
Of his spousaile, as soone as euer he may
For yet alway the people somwhat dredde
Lest this Markes wolde no wyfe wedde

He graunted hem a day, suche as him lest
On whiche he wolde be wedded sekerly
And sayd he dyd al this at her request
And they with humble entent ful buxomly
Knelyng vpon her knees ful reuerently
Hym thonked al, and thus they han an ende
Of her entent, and home ayen they wende

And here vpon he toke his offycers
Commaundyng for the feest to purvay
And to his priuy knyghtes and squyers
Suche charge yaue, as he lyst on hem lay
And they to his cõmaundement obey
And eche of hem dothe hys dilygence
To done to the feest reuerence.

Explicit pars prima: et incipit pars secunda.

Nought ferre fro thylke place honorable
where as this Markes shope hys mariage
There stode a thrope, of syght ful delectable
In whiche poore folke of that village
Hadden her beestes and herbygage
And of her labour toke her sustenaunce
After that the erthe yaue hem habundaunce

Amõge this poore folke, ther dwelled a mã
which that was holden poorest of hem all
But hye god somtyme sende can
His grace vnto a lytel ore stall
Janycola, men of that thrope hym cal
A doughter had he, fayre ynoughe to syght
And Grisylde this yonge mayden hyght

But for to speke of vertuous beaute
Than was she one the fayrest vnder sonne
And ful poorely yfostred was she
No lykerouse lust was in her herte ironne
wel ofter of the wel than of the tonne
She dronke, and for she wolde vertue plese
She knewe wel laboure, but not ydel ete

But though this mayde were tender of age
yet in the brest of her virginite
There was enclosed, sadde and rype corage
And in great reuerence and charyte
Her olde poore father fostred she
A fewe shepe spynnyng on the felde she kept
She wolde not ben idel tyl she slept

And whã she homward came, she wold bring
wortes and herbes, tymes ful ofte
which she shradde & sethe for her lyuyng
And made her bedde ful hard, & nothing softe
And aye she kepte her fathers lyfe on lofte
with euery obeysaunce and dilygence
That childe might do to the fathers reuerẽce

Upon Grisylde the poore creature
wel ofte hath the Markes sette his eye
As he an huntyng rode parauenture
And whan it fel, that he myght her aspye
He (not with wanton lokyng of folye)
His eyen caste vpon her, but in sadde wyse
Upon her chere, he wolde him ofte auyse

Commending in his herte her womãhode
And eke her vertue, passyng euery wyght
Of so yonge age, as wel in chere as in dede
For though the people haue no great insyght
In vertue: he consydred ful rycht
Her bounte, and disposed that he wolde
Her wedde, yf he euer wedde shulde.

The day of weddyng com, but no wight cã
Tel, what woman it shulde be
For whiche maruaile, wondred many a man
And sayden, whan they were in her priuete
wol not our lorde yet leaue his vanyte
wol he not wedde, alas alas the whyle
why wol he thus him selfe and vs begyle

But nathelesse this Markes hath do make
Of gemmes, set in golde and in asure
Broches and rynges, for Grisyldes sake
And of her clothyng, toke he the mesure
Of a mayden lyke to her stature
And eke of other ornamentes al
That to suche a weddyng shulde fal

The tyme of vndren, in the same day
Approched, that the weddyng shulde be

And

And al the paleys put was in array
Bothe halle and chambre, eche in his degre
Houses of offyces stuffed with great plente
There mayste thou se of daynteous vitayle
That may be founde, as fer as lasteth Italye

This royal Markes, rychely arayde
Lordes and ladyes in his companye
The which that to the feest were prayde
And of his retinue the bachelery
with many a sowne of sondrie melodye
Unto the village, of which I tolde
In this aray, the right way hath holde.

¶ Grisylde (god wotte of this ful innocent
That for her was shape al this array)
To fetche water at a wel went
And cometh home as sone as euer she may
For wel she herde say, that ylke day
That ÿ Markes shuld wedde, & if she might
She wolde fayne seen some of that syght (stōde
She thought: I wold ẇ other maydens
That ben my felowes in our dere and se
The Markes, and therto wol I fonde
To done at home, as sone as it may be
The labour, which that longeth to me
And than may I at leyser it beholde
If she the way to the castel holde

And as she wolde ouer the threscholde gon
The Markes came, and gan her for to call
And she sette downe her water potte anon
Besyde the threscholde of the oxe stal
And downe vpon her knees she gan to fal
And with sadde countenaunce kneled styl
Tyl she had herde what was the lordes wyl

This thoughtful Markes spake to ÿ mayd
wel soberly, and sayd in this manere
where is your father Grisylde, he sayd
And she with reuerence and meke chere
Answerde, lorde he is al redy here
And in she gothe, without lenger lette
And to the Markes she her father fette

He by the honde than toke this olde man
And sayd thus, whan he had hym aside
Janycola, I neyther may ne can
Lenger the pleasaunce of myne herte hyde
If that thou vouchsafe, what so euer betyde
Thy doughter wol I take, or that I wende
As for my wyfe, to my lyues ende

Thou louest me, I wotte wel certayne
And arte my faythful liege man yfore
And al that lyketh me, I dare wel sayne
It lyketh the, and specially therfore
Tel me that poynte, that I haue said before
If that thou wolt to this purpose drawe
To take me for thy sonne in lawe

¶ This sodayne case, the man astoned so
That reed he wext abashed, & al quakyng
He stode, ne vnneth sayd he wordes mo
But onely thus (q̃ he) lorde my wyllyng
Is as ye wol, ne ayenst your lykyng
I wol nothyng, ye be my lorde so dere
Right as you lyste, gouerne this matere

Than wol I thus (q̃ this Markes) sothly
That in thy chambre, I, you, and she
Haue a collation, and wost thou why
For I wol aske her, yf her wyl be
To be my wyfe, and rule her after me
And al this shal she done in thy presence
I wol not speke out of thyn audyence

And in the chambre, while they were about
The treties, whiche ye shal after here
The people came into the house without
And wondred hem, in how honest manere
So tentifly she kept her father dere
But vtterly Grisylde wonder myght
For neuer erste sawe she suche a syght

No wonder is though she be astoned
To se so great a gest come into that place
She was neuer to suche gestes woned
For which she loked with ful pale face
But shortly fro this mater for to pace
These weren the wordes ÿ the Markes sayd
To this benygne and very faythful mayde

¶ Grisylde he said, ye shal wel vnderstonde
It lyketh vnto your father and me
That I you wedde, and eke it may so stonde
As I suppose, that ye wol that it so be
But these demaundes I aske first (q̃ he)
That sythen it shal be done in hasty wyse
wol ye therto assent, or els you auyse

I say thus, be ye redy with good herte
To al my luste, and that I frely may

As me best liketh, though ye laugh or smerte
And neuer ye to grutche, nyght ne day
whan I say ye, that ye say not ones nay
Neyther in word, ne by frowning coũtenãce
Swere this, & here I swere our aliaunce

¶ Wõdryng vpõ these wordes, quakyng for
She said: lorde, indigne & vnworthy (drede
Am I, to thylke honour that ye me bede
But right as ye wol, so wol I
And here I swere, that neuer wyllyngly
In word, werke, ne thoust, I nil you disobey
For to be deed, though me were loth to dey.

¶ This is ynough Grisylde myne (q̃ he)
And forthe he gothe with a sobre chere
Out at the dore, and after came she
And to the people, he said in this manere
This is my wyfe (q̃ he) that stondeth here
Honoureth her, & loueth her, I you pray
who so me loueth, there nys no more to say

And for that no thyng of her olde gere
She shulde bring in to his house, he badde
That women shulde dispoylẽ her right there
Of which these ladyes were nothing gladde
To hãdle her clothes, in which she was clad
But natheless, thys mayden bright of hewe
Fro foote to heed they clothed han al newe

Her heer han they kembed, ꝑ laye vntressed
Ful rudely, and with her fyngres smale
A crowne on her heed they han idressed
And set it ful of ouches great and smale
Of her array, what shulde I make a tale
Vnneth the people her knew for her fairnesse
whan she transfourmed was in such richesse

¶ This Markes hath her spoused w̃ a ringe
Bought for the same cause, & than her set
Vpon an horse snowe white, wel amblynge
And to his paleys, or he lenger let
with ioyful people, that her ladde and met
Conueyed her, & thus the day they spende
In reuel, tyl the sonne gan discende

And shortly forthe this tale for to chace
I saye, that to this newe Markesesse
God hath ysent suche fauour of hys grace
That it semed not, as by her lykelynesse
That she was borne and fedde in rudenesse
As in a cote, or in an oxe stal
But norished in an emperoures hal

To euery wight, she woxen is so dere
And worshipful, ꝑ folke ther as she was bore
And fro her byrthe, knewe her yere by yere
Vnneth trowed they, but durst haue swore
That to Janycola, of whiche I spake before
She doughter nas, for as by coniecture
Hem thought she was a nother creature

For though that euer vertuous was she
She was encreased in suche excellence
Of thewes good, set in hye bounte
And so discrete, and fayre of eloquence
So benygne, and digne of reuerence
And coulde the peoples hertes so enbrace
That eche her loued that loked in her face

Not onely of Saluce in the town
Publyshed was the bountie of her name
But eke besyde, in many a regioun
If one sayd wel, an other sayd the same
So spradde of her bountie the fame
That men & women, bothe yonge and olde
Gone to Saluces her to beholde.

¶ This walter lowly, and ful royally
Wedded hath wyth fortunate honeste
In goddes peace: lyueth ful easely
At whom, & outwarde grace ynough had he
And for he sawe that vnder lowe degre
was honest vertue hyd, the people him helde
A prudent man, and that is sene wel selde.

¶ Not only this Grisylde, through her wyt
Couthe al the feate of wyfely humblesse
But eke, whan the case required it
The comen profyte coulde she redresse
There nas discorde, rancour, ne heynesse
In al the londe, that she ne couthe apese
And bring hem al wysely in rest and ese

Though her husbond absent were or none
If gentylmen, or other of her countre
were wrothe, she wolde bring hem at one
So wyse and rype wordes had she
And iugement of so great equite
That she fro heuen sent was, as men wende
People to saue, & euery wronge to amende.

¶ Not longe tyme after this Grisylde
Was wedded, she a doughter had ybore

Al had she ieuer haue borne a man chylde
Glad was ý Markes and his folke therfore
For though a mayde chylde came al before
She may to a man chylde attayne
By lykelyhode, sythens she is not barayne.

¶ Explicit pars secunda: et incipit pars tertia.

Here fel, as it befalleth oft tymes mo
Whã that this childe had sucked but a throwe
This Markes in his herte lõged so
To tempte hys wyfe, her sadnesse to knowe
That he ne myght out of hys herte throwe
This marueylous desyre, hys wyfe to assaye
Nedelesse god wot, he thought her to affray

He had assayed her ynoughe before
And fonde her euer good, what nedeth it
Her for to tempte & alway more and more
Though some man praise it for a subtyl wyt
But as for me, I say ful yuel it syt
To assay a wyfe, whan that it is no nede
And put her in anguysche and in drede

For which this Markes wrought in this manere
He came alone a nyght there as she lay
with sterne face, and right vgly chere
And sayd thus: Grisylde (q he) that day
That I the toke out of thy poore aray
And put the in estate of hye noblesse
Thou hast not that forgoten, as I gesse

I say Grisylde, the present dignyte
In whiche I haue put the, as I trowe
Maketh not the forgetful for to be
That I the toke in poore astate ful lowe
For any wele, thou must thyselfe knowe
Take hede of euery worde what I sey
There is no wight that hereth but we twey

Thou wottest thy self, how ý thou came here
In to this house, it is not longe ago
And though to me thou be both lefe and dere
Unto my gentyls thou art nothyng so
They say, to hem it is great shame and wo
For to ben subiette and ben in seruage
To the, that borne arte in so smal a village

And namely syth thy doughter was yborne
These wordes haue they spoken doutles
But I desyre, as I haue done byfore
To lyue my lyfe with hem, in rest and pees
I may not in this case be recheles
I mote done with thy doughter, for the best
Not as I wolde, but as my gentyls lest

And yet god wote, this is ful lothe to me
But natheless without thy wetyng
I wol naught do, but thus I wol (q he)
That thou to me assent, as in thys thyng
Shewe nowe thy pacience, in thy werkyng
That thou me hight & swore in our village
That day that maked was our mariage

¶ whã she had herde al this, she not ameued
Neyther in word, in chere, ne in coũtenaunce
For as it semed, she was not agreued
She sayd lorde, al lyeth in your plesaunce
My childe and I, with hertely obeysaunce
Ben yours al, and ye may saue or spyl
with your owne, worketh your owne wyll

There may nothyng, so god my soule saue
Lykyng to you, that may displese me
Ne I desyre nothyng for to haue
Ne drede for to lese, saue onely ye
This wil is in my herte, and aye shal be
No length of tyme, or deth it may deface
Neyther chãge my corage into another place

¶ Glad was the Markes of her answering
But yet he fayned as he were not so
Al drery was his chere, and his lokyng
whan that he shulde out of the chambre go
Sone after thys, a forlonge way or two
He priuely had tolde al his entent
Unto a man, and to his wyfe him sent

In maner of a sergeãt was this priuy mã
The which he faithful ofte founde had
In thynges great, & eke suche folke wel can
Done execucyon of thynges badde
The lorde knewe wel, he him loued & dradde
And whan this sergeant wyst his lordes wil
In to the chambre he stalked hym ful styl

¶ Madame he sayd, ye mote forgeue it me

Though I do thing, which I am cõstrayned
Ye be ful wyse, and ful wel knowe ye
That lordes hestes may not be fayned
They may wel bewayled and complayned
But men muste nedes vnto her luste obey
And so wol I, there nis no more to sey

This childe I am cõmaunded to take
And spake no more, but vp the chylde he hent
Dispitously, and gan a chere to make
As though he wolde haue slayne it or he wẽt
Grisylde must al suffre, and consent
And as a lambe, she sytteth meke and styl
And let this cruel sergeaunt do his wyl

¶ Suspecte was the fame of this man
Suspecte his face, suspecte hys worde also
Suspecte the tyme in whiche he this began
Alas her doughter, that she loued so
Shewende he wold haue slayne it right tho
But natheleſſe, she neyther wepte ne syked
Conformyng her to that the Markes lyked

But at the laste to speke she began
And mekely she the sergeaunt prayde
(So as he was a worthy gentilman)
That she might kysse her chylde er ẏ it deyde
And in her barme, this lytel chylde she leyde
with ful sadde face, and gan the chylde blysse
And lulled it, and after gan it kysse

And thus she sayd in her benygne voyce
Farwel my chylde, I shal the neuer se
But sythen I haue marked ẏ with the croyce
Of thylke father yblessed mote thou be
That for vs dyed vpon the rode tree
Thy soule lytel chylde, I him betake
For this nyght shalte thou dyen for my sake

¶ I trowe that to a norice in thys caas
It had ben harde, this routhe for to se
Wel might a mother than crye alas
But natheleſſe, so sadde and stedfast was she
That she endured al her aduersyte
And to the sergeaunt mekely she sayde
Haue here ayen your lytel yonge mayde

And goth now (qꝑ she) ꝯ doth my lordes hest
And o thing wolde I pray you of your grace
But yf my lorde forbyd it you at the leste
Buryeth this lytel body in some place
That no beestes ne byrdes it do race
But he no worde to that purpose wolde say
But toke the childe, and went anon his way.

This sergeaunt came to the lorde agayne
And of Grisyldes wordes, and of her chere
He tolde him worde by word, short ꝯ playne
And him presented with his doughter dere
Somwhat this lord had routh i his manere
But natheleſſe, his purpose helde he styl
As lordes done, whã they wol haue her wyl

And badde the sergeaunt that ful priuely
He shuld this child wel sokt wynd ꝯ wrappe
with al the circumstaunce tenderly
And cary it in a cofre, or in a lappe
But on payne of hys heed of to swappe
That no man shulde knowe of his entent
Ne whence he came, ne whyther he went

But at Boleyne, to his suster dere
That thilke tyme of Pauye was countesse
He shulde it take, and shewe her this matere
Besechyng her to done her busynesse
This childe to fostre in al gentylnesse
And whose chylde ẏ it was, he bade her hyde
From euery wight, for ought ẏ might betyde

This sergeaunt gothe, and hathe fulfylled thys thyng
But to thys Markes nowe retourne we
For nowe gothe he ful ofte ymaginyng
If by his wyues chere, he myght se
Or by her wordes, perceyue that she
were chaunged, but he neuer coulde fynde
But euer in one ilyke sadde and kynde

As glad, as humble, as busy in seruyse
And eke in loue, as she was wont to be
Was she to hym, in euery maner wyse
Ne of her doughter one worde spake she
None accident, for none aduersyte
was sene in her, ne neuer her doghters name
Nempned she, for ernest ne for game.

¶ Explicit tertia pars: et incipit pars quarta.

IN thys estate, passed ben foure yere
Er she wyth chylde was, but as god wolde
A man chylde she bare by this waltere

wel

wel gracious, and fayre to beholde
And when folke it to the father tolde
Not onely he, but al the countre merye
was for the chyld, & god they thonke & herye

when it was two yere olde, & from the brest
Departed from hys norrye on a daye
Thys Markes caught yet another lest
To tempten hys wyke efte sones, yf he maye
O nedelesse was she tẽpted, I dare wel saye
But wedded men ne conne no mesure
when they fynde a pacient creature

wyke (q̃ this Markes) ye haue herd of this
My people heuely bareth our mariage
And namely sythen my sonne borne is
Now is it worse then euer in our age
The murmure sleeth my herte & my corage
For to myne eeres cometh ỳ voyce so smerte
That it wel nye destroyed hath my herte.

Now say they thus, whẽ walter is agone
Then shal the bloode of Janicula succede
And ben our lorde, for other haue we none
Suche wordes say my people, it is no drede
wel ought I of suche murmure take hede
For certaynly I drede suche sentence
Though they not playnly speke ỉ my audiẽce

I wolde lyue in peace, yf that I myght
wherfore I am dysposed vtterly
As I hys syster serued by nyght
Ryght so I thynke to serue hym priuely
Thus warne I you, that ye not sodeynly
Out of your selfe, for no wo shulde outraye
Beth pacient, and therof I you praye.

I haue (q̃ she) sayd, and euer shal
I wol ne nyl nothynge certayne
But as you lyst: Nought greueth me at al
Though ỳ my doughter & my sõne be slayne
At your cõmaundement: thys is to sayne
I haue had no parte of chyldren twayne
But fyrst sycknesse, & after wo and payne.

Ye ben our lord, doth w̃ your owne thyng
Ryght as you lyste, and taketh no rede of me
For as I lefte at home my clothyng
when I came fyrst to you, ryght so (q̃ she)
Lefte I my wyll, and al my lyberte
And toke your clothing: wherfore I you pray
Do your wyl, I wol to it obey

And certes, yf I had prescience
Your wyl to knowe, er ye your lust me tolde
I wolde it done, wythout negligence
But now I wote your lust, & what ye wolde
Al your plesaunce, fyrme & stable I holde
For wyste I ỳ my death wolde done you ese
Gladly wolde I suffre it you to please.

Death may make no comparisoun
Unto your loue: And whẽ thys Markes say
The constaũce of hys wyke, he cast adoun
Hys eyen two: and wondred how she may
In suche pacience, suffreth al thys array
And forth he goeth, wyth drery countenaũce
But to hys herte, it was ful great pleasaũce.

Thys eygre sergeant, in the same wyse
That he her doughter caught, ryght so he
Or worse, yf he coulde werse deuyse
Hath hente her sonne, ỳ was ful of beaute
And euer in one so pacient was she
That she no chere made of heuynesse
But kysseth her chylde, & after gan him blesse

Saue thys she prayd him, yf that he might
Her lytel sonne he wolde in erth graue
Hys tendre lymmes, delycate to syght
Fro foules and fro beastes to saue
But she none answere of hym myght haue
He went hys waye as he nothynge rought
But to Boleyne he tenderly it brought.

This Markes wõdred euer lẽger ỳ more
Upon her pacience, and yf that he
Ne had sothely knowen there before
That parfytly her chyldren loued she
He wolde haue wende, ỳ for some subtelte
And of malyce, or cruel corage
That she had suffred thys w̃ sadde bysage.

But he knewe wel, ỳ nert hym selfe certayne
She loued her chyldren best, in euery wyse
But now of women wolde I aske fayne
yf these assayes mayght not suffyse
what coulde a sturdy husbonde more deuyse
To preue her wykehode, & her stedfastnesse
But be contynuynge euer in sturdynesse

But there be folke of suche condicion
That whẽ they han a certayne purpose take
They couth not stynte of her entencion
But as they were bounden to a stake

They wol not of that purpose slake
Rygh̃t so thys Markes, hath fully purposed
To tẽpte hys wyfe, as he was fyrst dysposed

He wayteth, yf by wordes or coũtenaunce
She were to hym chaunged of corage
But neuer coulde he fynde variaunce
She was aye in one herte and vysage
And euer the further that she was in age
The more truer (yf it were possible)
She was to hym in loue, and more penyble.

For whych it semeth thus, that of hem two
There nas but one wyl: for as walter lest
The same lust was her pleasaunce also
And god be thanked, al fel for the beste
She shewed wel, for no worldly vnreste
A wyfe, as for her selfe, nothynge sholde
wyllen in effecte, but as her husbonde wolde

The sclaũder of walter, wõder wyde spread
That of cruel herte, ful wretchedly
(For he a poore woman wedded had)
Hath murdred both hys chyldren priuely
which murmure was amonge hem comenly
No wonder was: for to the peoples ere
Ther cãe no word, but ỏ they murdred were

For whych, there as hys people ther before
had loued him wel, disclaũdred of his defame
Made hem, that they hated hym therfore
To ben a murtherer is an hateful name
But natheleſſe, for ernest ne for game
He of hys cruel purpose wolde not stent
To tempt hys wyfe, was al hys entent.

when ỏ hys doughter. xij. yere was of age
He to the court of Rome, in subtel wyse
(Enfourmed of hys wyl) sent hys message
Cõmaundyng hem, suche bylles to deuyse
As to hys cruel purpose may suffyse
Howe that the pope, for hys peoples reste
Bade hym wedde another, yf that hym leste.

I saye he bade, they shulde countrefete
The popes bulle, makynge mencion
That he hath leue, hys fyrst wyfe to lete
As by the popes dyspensacion
To stynte rancoure and dyscencion
Betwyxt hys people & him, thus spake ỏ bul
The whych they han publyshed at the full
The rude people, as no wonder nys
wenden ful wel it had ben rygh̃t so
But when these tydynges come to Grisyldis
I deme, that her herte was ful wo
But she was lyche sadde euermo
Dysposed was thys humble creature
The aduersite of fortune to endure

Abydynge euer hys luste & hys pleasaũce
To whome she was yeuen, herte and all
As to her worldly suffysaunce
But certaynly, yf I thys storie tel shal
Thys Markes ywritten hath in special
A letter, in whych he shewed hys entent
And priuely, he it to Boloyne sent

To the erle of Pauy, whych that had tho
wedded hys syster: he prayde specially
To bryngen him ayen hys chyldren two
In honorable estate al openly
But one thynge he hym prayde al vtterly
that he to no wight, though mẽ wold enquire
Shulde tellen whose chyldren they were.

But say ỏ the mayden shulde wedded be
Unto the Markes of Saluce anone
And as the erle was prayde, so dyd he
For at a daye yfette, he on hys way is gone
Towarde Saluce, and lordes many one
In ryche aray, thys mayden for to gyde
Her yonge brother rydynge by her syde.

Arayed was towarde her mariage
Thys mayden freshe, ful of gemmes clere
And her brother, that seuen yere was of age
Arayed was eke freshely in hys manere
And thus in great noblesse and glad chere
Towarde Saluce, shapen her iournay
Fro day to day, rydynge forth her way.

¶ Explicit quarta pars:
Et sequitur pars
quinta.

Amonge al thys, after hys wycked vsage
Thys Markes hys wyfe yet to temptẽ more
To the vtterest prose of her corage
Fully to haue experience and lore
yf that she were as stedfast (as before)
He on a daye in open audience
Ful boystously hath sayd her thys sentence.

Certes

Certes Grisylde, I had ynough of plesaũce
To han you to my wyfe, for your goodnesse
And for your trouth, and your obeysaunce
Not for your lynage, ne for your rychesse
But I nowe knowe in very sothfastnesse
That in great lordshyp, yf I me wel adwyse
There is great seruitude in sondry wyse

I may not done, as euery ploughmã maye
My people me constrayneth for to take
Another wyfe, and cryen daye by daye
And eke the pope, thys rancoure for to slake
Consenteth it, that dare I vndertake
And truely, thus moche I wol you saye
My newe wyfe is comynge by the waye.

Be strõge of herte, & voyde anone her place
And thylke dowry that ye brought to me
Take it ayen, I graunt it of my grace
Retourneth to your fathers house (q̃ he)
No man may alwaye haue prosperite
wyth euen herte, I rede you to endure
The stroke of fortune, or of auenture.

And she ayen answerde in pacience:
My lorde (q̃ she) I wote and wyst alwaye
Howe that bytwyxte your magnificence
And my pouert, no man can ne maye
Maken no comparison, it is no naye
I helde me neuer dygne in no manere
To ben your wyfe, ne yet your chamberere

And in thys house, there ye me lady made
(The hye god take I, as for my wytnesse
And also wysely, as he my soule glade)
I helde me neyther lady ne maystresse
But humble seruaunt to your worthynesse
And euer shal, whyle my lyfe may endure
Abouen euery worldly creature.

That ye so longe of your benignite
Haue holde me in honour and nobley
(where I was not worthy for to be)
That thanke I god & you, to whom I prey
So yelde it you, there is no more to sey
Unto my father gladly wolde I wende
And wyth hym dwel to my lyues ende.

There I was fostred of a chylde ful smale
Tyl I be deed, my lyfe there wol I lede
A wydowe clene in herte, body and al
For sythen I yaue to you my maydenhede
And am your trewe wyfe, it is no drede
God shylde suche a lordes wyfe to take
Another man, to husbonde or to make.

And of your newe wyfe, god of hys grace
So graunt you welth and hygh prosperite
For I wol gladly yeue her my place
In whych I was blyssful wonte to be
For sythen it lyketh you my lorde (q̃ she)
(That whylom weren al my hertes reste)
That I shal gone: I shal go when you leste.

But there as ye me profred such dowayre
As I fyrst brought, it is wel in my mynde
It were my wretched clothes, nothing fayre
The which to me now wer ful hard to kinde
Oh, good god: howe gentel & how kynde
Ye semed by your speche and your vysage
The daye that maked was our mariage.

But soth is sayd, algate I fynde it trewe
For in effecte it is proued nowe on me
Loue is not olde, as when it is newe
For certes lorde, for none aduersite
To dyen in thys case, it shal neuer be
That euer in worde or worke I shal repent
That I you yaue myne herte in good entent

My lorde ye wote, that in my fathers place
Ye dyd me strype out of my poore wede
And rychely ye cladde me of your grace
To you brought I nought els out of drede
But fayth, nakednesse, and maydenhede
But here ayen your clothynge I restore
And eke my weddynge ryngs for euermore

The remenaunt of your iewels redy be
wythin your chambre, dare I safely sayne
Naked out of my fathers house (q̃ she)
I came: and naked I mote turne agayne
Al your pleasaunce wolde I folowe fayne
But yet I hope it be not your entent
That I smocklesse out of your paleys went

Ye coulde not do so dyshonest a thynge
That ylke wõbe, in whych your chyldrẽ lay
Shulde before the people, in my walkinge
Be sene al bare: wherfore I you pray
Let me not lyke a worme go by the way
Remembreth you myne owne lorde so dere
I was your wife, though I vnworthy were
wherfore

Wherfore in rewarde of my maydenhede
Which I to you brought, & not ayen bere
As vouchesafe to yeue me to my mede
But suche a smocke as I was wonte to were
That I therwith may wrie ý wombe of here
That was your wyfe: & here I take my leue
Of you, myne owne lorde, lest I you greue

¶ The smock (q̃ he) ý thou hast on thy bake
Let it be styl, and bere it forthe with the
But wel vnneth that worde he spake
But went his way, for routhe and pyte
Before the folke her selfe strypeth she
And in her smocke, with foote & heed al bare
Towarde her fathers house forth is she fare

The folke folowed wepyng in her wey
And fortune euer they cursed as they gone
But she fro wepyng kept her eyen drey
Ne in this tyme, worde spake she none
Her father, that this tydinges herde anone
Cursed the day and tyme that nature
Shope him to ben a lyues creature

For out of doute, this olde poore man
Was euer suspecte of her maryage
For euer he demed, sythen it began
That whan the lorde ykylled had his corage
Hym wolde thynke it was a disparage
To his estate, so lowe for to alyght
And voyden her, as sone as euer he might.

¶ Ayenst his doughter hastely gothe he
(For he by ý noyse of folk knew her cõming)
And with her olde cote, as it might be
He couered her, ful sore wepyng
But on her body might he it not bring
For rude was the clothe, & she more of age
By dayes fele than was her mariage.

¶ Thus with her father, for a certayne space
Dwelleth this floure of wyfely pacience
That neuer by her wordes, ne by her face
Byfore the folke, ne eke in absence
Ne shewed she, that her was done offence
Ne of her hye estate no remembraunce
Ne had she, as by her countenaunce

No wonder is, for in her great estate
Her goste was euer in playne humylite
No tender mouthe, ne herte delycate
Ne pompe, ne semblaunce of royalte
But ful of pacience and benygnyte
Discrete, and prydelesse, and aye honorable
And to her husbonde euer meke and stable

¶ Men speke of Job, & most of his hũblesse
As clerkes (whan hem lyste) can wel endyte
Namely of men: but in sothfastnesse
Though clerkes prayse women but a lyte
There can no man in humblesse hem aquyte
As women can: ne be halfe so trewe
As women ben, but it befal of newe.

¶ Explicit quinta pars: et sequitur pars sexta.

ERo Boloyne is the erle of Pauy come
Of whiche the fame sprynge to more and lesse
And to the peoples eeres, al and some
Was couthe eke, howe a newe Marquesesse
He ẇ him brought, in pompe & suche richesse
That was neuer sene with mannes eye
So noble aray, in west Lumbardye.

¶ The Markes, that shope & knewe al this
Er ý this erle was come, sent hys message
To thylke poore and sely Grisyldis
And she with humble herte, & glad vysage
Not with swellyng herte in her corage
Came at his heste, & on her knees her sette
And reuerently and wysely she hym grette.

¶ Grisylde (q̃ he) my wyl is vtterly
This mayde, that wedded shal be vnto me
Receyued be to morowe al so royally
As it is possyble in my house to be
And eke that euery wyght in his degre
Haue his estate in syttyng and seruyse
And also plesaunt, as ye can beste deuyse

I haue no woman suffycient certayne
The chambres for to araye in ordynaunce
After my luste: and therfore wolde I fayne
That thyne were al suche gouernaunce
Thou knowest eke of olde al my plesaunce
Though thyn aray be badde, & yuel besey
Do thou thy deuer at the leste wey.

¶ Not onely lorde that I am glad (q̃ she)
To done your luste, but I desyre also
You for to please, and serue in my degre
Withouten faynyng, and shal euer mo

Ne neuer

Ne neuer for no wele, ne for no wo
Ne shal the goste wythin my herte stent
To loue you best, wyth all my true entent

And with ý word, she gan ý house to dyght
And tables to sette, and beddes to make
And payned her to done al that she myght
Prayenge the chamberers for goddes sake
To hasten hem, and fast swepe and shake
And she the moste seruisable of hem al
Hath euery chambre arayed, and hys hal.

Abouten vndren gan thys erle alyght
That wh hi brought these noble childrē twey
For whych the people ranne to se that syght
Of her araye, so rychely besey
And then at erste amonges hem they sey
That walter was no foole, though hym lest
To chaunge hys wyfe: for it was for ý best.

For she is fayrer, as they demen al
Then is Grisylde, and more tender of age
And fayrer frute bytwene hem shal fal
And more pleasaunce, for her hye lynage
Her brother eke, so fayre was of hys age
That hi to sene ý people had cauzt plesaūce
Cōmendyng now the Markes gouernaūce

O sterne people, vnsad and vntrewe
Aye vndiscrete, and chaungynge as a fane
Delytynge euer in rumer that is newe
For lyke the moone euer waxe ye & wane
Euer ful of clappynge, dere ynough a iane
Your dome is false, your cōstāce euel preueth
A ful great foole is he that on you leueth

Thus sayden sad folke in that cyte
when that the people gased vp and downe
For they were glad, ryght wyth the nouelte
To haue a newe lady of her toun
Nomore of thys make I nowe mencioun
But to Grisylde ayen wol I me dresse
And tellen her constaūce, and her busynesse

Wel busy was Grisylde on euery thyng
That to the feest was appertinent
Right nauzt was she abashed of her clothing
Though they were rude, & somwhat to rent
But wyth glad chere, to the yate is went
wyth other folke, to greten the Marquesesse
And after doth she forth her busynesse
wyth ryght glad chere, ý gestes she receiueth
And buxomly, euerych in hys degre
That no man defaute there perceyueth
But euer they wondren, what she myght be
That in so poore araye was for to se
And coulde suche honour, and reuerence
And worthely they praysen her prudence

In al the meane whyle she ne stente
Thys mayden and eke her brother to cōmēde
wyth al her herte, and benygne entente
So wel, that no man coude her pryse amēde
But at the laste, when these lordes wende
To sytten adowne to meate, he gan to cal
Grisylde, as she was busy in the hal.

Grisylde (q̃ he) as it were in hys play
Howe lyketh the my wyfe, and her beaute
Ryght wel my lorde (q̃ she) for in good fay
A fayrer sawe I neuer none then she
I praye to god so yeue you prosperite
And so hope I, that he wol to you sende
Plesaunce ynough, vnto your lyues ende.

But one thynge I besech, and warne also
That ye prycke wyth no turmentynge
Thys tender mayden, as ye han do mo
For she is fostred in her norysshynge
More tenderly, in my supposynge
She coulde not aduersite endure
As coulde a poore fostred creature.

And when thys walter sawe her pacience
Her glad chere, and no malyce at al
And he so ofte hath done her offence
And she aye constante, & stable as a wal
Contynuyng euer her innocence ouer al
Thys sturdy Markes, gan hys herte dresse
To rewe vpon her wyfely stedfastnesse

Thys is ynough, Grisylde myne (q̃ he)
Be no more agaste, ne yuel apayde
I haue thy fayth, and thy benignite
As wel as euer woman was assayde
In great estate, or poorely arrayde
Nowe knowe I dere wyfe thy stedfastnesse
And her in armes toke, and gan to kesse

And she for wonder, toke therof no kepe
She herde not what thynge he to her sayde
She fared as she had sterte out of her slepe
Tyl she out of her masednesse abrayde.

Grisylde

Grisylde(q he)by god that for vs deyde
Thou arte my wyfe, and none other I haue
Ne neuer had,as god my soule saue.

Thys is thy doghter, which ȳ hast supposed
To ben my wyfe, and none other faythfully
And this shal bē myn heyre,as I haue dyspo
Thou bare hem in thy body truely (sed
At Boleyne haue I kepte hem sekerly
Take hem ayen,for now mayst thou not say
That ȳ hast lorne any of thy chyldren tway

And folke,that other wyse han sayd of me
I warne hem wel, ȳ I haue done thys dede
For no malyce,ne for no cruelte
But for to assaye in the thy womanhede
And not for to slee my chyldren, god forbede
But for to kepen hem priuely and styl
Tyl I thy purpose knewe,and al thy wyl

whē she this herd, a sowne down she falleth
For pytous ioye,and after her sownynge
She both her yonge chyldren to her calleth
And in her armes,pytously weppynge
Enbraced hem both,tenderly kyssynge
Ful lyke a mother,wyth her salte teeres
She bathed both her vysage and her heeres

O whych a pytous thynge it was to se
Her sownynge,& her pytous voyce to here
Graūt mercy lorde,god thanke it you(q she)
That ye haue saued me my chyldren dere
Nowe recke I neuer to be deed ryght here
Sythē I stāde in your loue,& in your grace
No force of deth,ne when my spirite pace

O tendre, O dere, O yonge chyldrē myne
Your woful mother wende stedfastly
That cruel houdes,or some foule vermyne
Had eaten you,but god of hys mercy
And your benigne father,so tenderly
Hath done you kepe:& in that same stounde
Al sodainly she swapte downe to the groūde

And in her swounyng,so sadly holdeth she
Her chyldrē two,when she gan hem enbrace
That wyth great sleyght and dyfficulte
The chyldrē frō her armes they gan to race
O many a tere,on many a pytous face
Downe ran,of hem that stoden there besyde
Vnneth aboute her myght no man abyde.
walter her gladdeth,& her sorowe slaketh
She rysetb vp al abashed from her traunce
And euery wyght her ioye and feest maketh
Tyl she hath caught ayen her countinaunce
walter her doth so faythfully plesaunce
That it was deynty to sene the chere
Betwyxt hem two,whē they were met yfere

These ladyes,when they her tyme sey
Han taken her,and into chambre gon
And strypen her out of her rude arrey
And in a cloth of golde,that bryght shone
wyth a crowne of many a ryche stone
Vpon her heed, they her into hal brought
And there she was honoured as she ought

Thus hath this pytous day a blyssful ende
For euery man & woman doth hys myght
Thys daye in myrth and reuel to dyspende
Tyl on the welken shone the sterres bryght
For more solempne in euery mannes syght
Thys feest was,and greater of costage
Then was the reuel of her mariage

wel many a yere, in hye prosperite
Lyuen these two,in concorde and in rest
And rychely hys doughter maried he
Vnto a lorde,one of the worthyest
Of al Itayle,and then in peace and rest
Hys wyues father in hys courte he kepte
Tyl that hys soule out of hys body crepte

Hys sonne succedeth in hys heritage
In reste and peace,after hys fathers day
And fortunate was eke in mariage
Al put he not hys wyfe in great assaye
Thys worlde is not so stronge,it is no naye
As it hath ben in olde tymes yore
And herkneth what thautour sayth therfore

This story is said,not for ȳ wiues shol
Folowē Grisyld,in al humilite (de
For it were importable,tho they wol
But that euery wyght in hys degre (de
Sulde be constante,in al aduersite
As was Grisild,wherfore Petrarke writeth
This story, whych ẇ hye style he endyteth.

For sythe a woman was so pacient
Vnto a mortal man, wel more we ought
Receyue al in gree that God vs sent
For great skyll he preueth that he wrought
But he ne tempteth no man that he bought

As

As sayeth saynt Jame, yf ye hys pystel rede
He preueth folke but a daye, it is no drede

And suffreth vs as for our exercyse
wyth sharpe scourges of aduersyte
wel ofte to be beaten, in sondry wyse
Not for to knowe our wyl, for certes he
Or we were borne, knewe al our frelte
And for our best, is al hys gouernaunce
Let vs lyue then in vertuous suffraunce.

But one word herkneth lordynges or ye go
It were ful harde to fynde now a dayes
In al a countre Grisyldes thre or two
For yf they were put to suche assayes
The golde of hem hath so bad a layes
wyth brasse, for though it be fayre at eye
It wolde rather braste a two then plye

For which here, for ý wyues loue of Bathe
whose lyke and secte, myghty god mayntene
In hygh maystry, or els were it skathe
I wyl wyth lusty herte, freshe and grene
Saye you a songe, to glade you I wene
And let vs stynte of ernest matere
Herkeneth my songe, ý sayth in thys manere

Lennoye de Chaucer a les
mariz de nostre temps.

GRisylde is deed, & eke her pacience
And both at ones buryed in Itayle
For which I crye in open audience
No wedded man be so hardy to assayle
Hys wyues pacience, in truste to fynde
Grisyldes, for in certayne he shal fayle.

O noble wyues, ful of hye prudence
Let no humilite your tonge nayle
Ne let no clerke haue cause ne deligence
To wryte of you a storye of suche maruayle
As of Grisylde, pacient and kynde
Lest Chechiface swalow you in her entraile

Folowetb Ecco, that holdeth no sylence
But euer answereth at the countre tayle
Beth not adafted for your innocence
But sharpely taketh on you the gouernayle
Enprinteth wel thys lesson in your mynde
For cõmen profyte, sythnesse it maye auayle

Ne dredeth hem not, doth hem no reuerẽce
For though thyn husbãd armed be in mayle
The arrowes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce hys brest, & eke hys aduentayle
In ielousye eke, loke thou hym bynde
And ý shal make him couch as doth a quayle

Yf ý be fayre, there folke bene in presence
Shewe thou thy visage, & thyne apparayle
Yf thou be foule, be fre of thy dyspence
To get the frendes aye do thy trauayle
Be aye of chere, as lyght as lefe on lynde
And let hym care, wepe, wrynge, and wayle

Ye archwyues, stõdeth aye at your defence
Syth ye be stronge, as is a great camayle
Ne suffreth not, that men do you offence
And ye sklendre wyues, feble as in batayle
Beth eygre as any tygre is in Inde
Aye clappeth as a myl, I you counsayle.

Here endech the clerkes tale of Oxforde, and here foloweth the wordes of our hoost.

This worthy clerk, whẽ ended was his tale
Our hoost sayd and swore by cockes bones
We were leuer then a barel of ale
My wyfe at home had herd this legẽde ones
Thys is a gentle tale for the nones
As to my purpose, wyste ye my wyl
But thynge that wol not be, let it be styl.

Here ende the wordes of our hoste, and here foloweth the Frankeleyns prologue.

THese old gẽtyll Britons in her dayes
Of dyuers auentures maden layes
Rymed fyrst in her mother tonge
which layes, w̃ her instrumentes they songe
Or els reden hem for her pleasaunce
And one of hem haue I in remembraunce
wyche I shal saye, as wyllinge as I can
But sys, bycause I am a borel man
At my begynnynge fyrst I you beseche
Haue me excused of my rude speche
I lerned neuer rethorike certayne
Thynge that I speke, mote be bare & playne
I slepte neuer on the mounte of Pernaso
Ne lerned neuer Marcus Tullius Cicero
Coloures ne knowe I none, withoutẽ drede
But suche coloures as growen in the mede
Or els suche as men dyen or paynte
Coloures of rhetorike, ben to me quaynte
My spirite feleth not of suche matere
Thys is my tale, yf ye wol it here.

Here endeth the Frankeleyns prologue.

Here begynneth the franklyns tale.

IN Armorike, ỳ called is britain
There was a knyght, that loued and dyd hys payne
To serue ladyes in hys best wyse
And many a labour, & many a great empryse
He for hys lady wrought, er she were wonne
For she was one the fayrest vnder sonne
And eke therto cõmen of hye kynrede
That wel vnneth durst thys knyzt for drede
Tel her hys wo, hys payne, and his dystresse
But at the laste, she of her worthynesse
And namely for hys meke obeysaunce
Hath suche a pyte caught of hys penaunce
That priuely she fyl of hys accorde
To take hym for her husbonde & her lorde
Of such lordship, as mẽ haue ouer her wiues
And for to lede in the more blysse her lyues
Of hys fre wyl, he swore her as a knyght
That neuer in al her lyfe, daye ne nyght
Ne shulde he take vpon hym no maystry
Agayne her wyl, ne kythe her ielousye
But her obeye, and folowe her wyl in al
As any louer to hys lady shal
Saue that the name of soueraynte
That wolde he haue, for shame of his degre.
She thãked him, & with ful great humblesse
She sayd: syr, syth of your gentylnesse
Ye profred me to haue so large a rayne
Ne wolde god neuer betwyxte vs twayne
As in my gylt, were it eyther warre or stryfe
Syr, I wol be your trewe humble wyfe
Haue here my trouth, tyl that my herte breste
Thus ben they both in quiete and in reste.
For one thynge syrs, safely dare I seyne
That frendes, euerych other must obeyne
Yf they wol longe holden companye
Loue wol not be constrayned by maystry
When maystry cõmeth, the god of loue anone
Beateth hys wynges, & farewel he is gone
Loue is a thynge, as any spirite free
Women of kynde desyren lyberte
And not to be constrayned as a thral
And so done men, yf I sothe say shal
Loke who that moste pacient is in loue
He is at hys auauntage al aboue
Pacience is an hye vertue certayne
For it vaynquysheth, as these clerkes sayne
Thynges that rygour shal neuer attayne
For euery word mẽ may not chyde or playne
Lerneth to suffre, or els so mote I gone
Ye shal it lerne, whether ye wol or none
For in thys world certayn no wyght ther is
That he ne doth or sayeth somtyme amys
Ire, sycknesse, or constellacion
Wyne, wo, or chaungynge of complection
Causeth ful often to done amysse or speken
On euery wronge, a mã may not be wreken
After the tyme must be temperaunce

To

To euery wight that can of gouernaunce
And therfore, hath this worthy wyse knight
To lyue in ease, suffraunce her hight
And she to hym ful wysely gan swere
That neuer shulde there be defaut in here
Here may men se, humble and wyse accorde
Thus hath she take her seruant & her lorde
Seruaunt in loue, and lorde in mariage
Than was he bothe in lordshyp and seruage
Seruage: nay, but in lordshyp aboue
Sythen he hath both his lady and his loue
His lady certes, and his wyke also
The which that lawe of londe accordeth to
And whan he was in this prosperite
Home with his wife he goth, in to his coūtre
Nat fer fro Dēmarke, ther his dwelling was
Where as he lyueth in ioye and in solas
Who coude tel, but he had wedded be
The ioye, the ease, and the prosperite
That is bitwirt an husbande & his wyke
Euermore lasted this blysful lyke
Tyl that this knyght, of which I speke thus
That of Caere Juda, was cleped Arueragus
Shope him to dwel, a yere or twayne
In Englande, that cleped was Britayne
To seken in armes worship and honour
For al his lust he sette in suche labour
And dwelt there two yere, the boke saith thus
¶ Nowe wol I stynt of this Arueragus
And speke I wol of Dorigen his wyke
That loueth her husbonde as her hertes lyke
For his absence, wepeth she and syketh
As don these noble wyues whan hem lyketh
She mourneth, wayleth, fasteth, & playneth
Desyre of his presence, her so constrayneth
That al this wyde worlde set she at nought
Her frendes, whiche knewe her heuy thought
Conforten her, in al that euer they may
They prechen her, and tellen her night & day
That causeles she slewe her selfe, alas
And euery comfort possyble in this caas
They don to her, with al her busynesse
And al for to maken her leue her heuynesse.
¶ By processe, as ye knowē euerychone
Men mowen so longe grauen in a stone
Tyl some fygure therin printed be
So longe han they comforted her tyl, she
Receyued hath by hope and by reson
The enprintyng of her constellacion
Through which her great sorow gā aswage
She may not alway induren suche a rage
And eke Arueragus in al this care
Hath sent his letters home of his welfare
And that he wol come hastely agayne
Or els had this sorowe her herte slayne.
Her frendes sawe her sorowe gan to slake
And prayden her on knees, for goddes sake
To come and romen in her companye
Away to driuen her derke fantasye
And fynally she graunted that requeste
For wel she sawe it was for the beste.
¶ Nowe stode her castel faste by the see
And ofte with her frendes walked she
Her to disporte on the bankes hey
Where as she may shyppes and barges sey
Sayling her course, where hem lyst go
But yet was that a parcel of her wo
For to her selfe ful ofte alas sayd she
Is there no shyppe, of so many as I se
Wol bring home my lorde: thā were my herte
Warished of these bytter paynes smerte.
¶ Another tyme, wolde she sytte and thynke
And caste her eyen downward fro the brinke
But whan she sawe the grysly rockes blake
For very feare, so wolde her herte quake
That on her fete she myght not her sustene
Than wolde she sytte adown vpon the grene
And pitously in to the see beholde
And say right thus, with sorowful sykes colde
¶ Eterne god, that through thy purueyaūce
Ledest this worlde, by certayne gouernaūce
In ydle as mē sayn, doste thou nothing make
But lorde, these grisly fendely rockes blake
That semen rather a foule confusyon
Of werke, than a fayre creacion
Of suche a parfyte god, wyse and ful stable
Why haue ye wrought this werke vnresonable
For by this werke, north, south, west, ne este
There nys fostred, man, byrde, ne beste
It dothe no good, but anoyeth
Se ye not lorde, howe mākinde it distroyeth
An hundred thousande bodyes of mankynde
Haue rockes iflayn, al be they not in mynde
Sin mākind is so fayre aparte of thy werke
That thou it madest like thyn owne werke
Than semed it ye had a great cherte
Towarde mākynde, but how thā may it be
That ye suche menes maken it to distroyen
Which menes don no good, but euer anoyen.
¶ I wote wel clerkes wol sayne as hem lest
By argumentes, that al is for the best
Though I ne can not the causes wel knowe
But thilke god, ꝑ made the wynde to blowe
As kepe my lorde, this is my conclusyon

To clerkes let I al thys dysputacion
And wolde God that al these rockes blake
were sonken in to hel for hys sake.
These rockes slee myne herte for feare
Thus wolde she say w̄ many a pytous teare
Her frendes sawe it was for her no dysport
To romen by the see, but dyscomfort
And shapen hem to playen somwhere elles
They leden her by ryuers and by welles
And eke in other places delytables
They dauncen and they playen at the tables
So on a daye, ryght in the morowe tyde
Unto a gardeyne, that was there besyde
In which that they had made her ordinaũce
Of vytayles, and other purueyaunce
They gone and playen hem al the longe day
And thys was in the syxte morowe of May
which May hath paited w̄ his softe shoures
Thys gardayne ful of leues and of floures
And crafte of mannes hande so curiously
Arayed had thys garden truely
That neuer nas there garden of such pryse
But yf it were the very paradyse
The odour of floures, and the freshe syght
wolde haue made any herte lyght
That euer was borne, but yf to gret sicknesse
Or to great sorowe helde it in dystresse
So was it ful of beautye, wyth pleasaunce.
And after dyner gone they daunce
And synge also, saue Dorigene alone
That yet vnto her selfe made her mone
For she ne sey hym on the daunce go
That was her husbande, and her loue also
But nathelasse, she muste her tyme abyde
And wyth good hope, let her sorowe slyde.
¶ Upon thys daunce, amonge other men
Daunced a squyer before Dorigen
That fresher was, and iolyer of aray
As to my dome, then is the moneth of May
He syngeth & daunseth, passynge euery man
That is or was, sythen the worlde began
And therwythal, & men shulde hym dyscriue
One of the best faryngе men on lyue
Yonge, stronge, vertuouse, ryche, and wyse
And welbeloued, and holden of great pryse
And shortly, yf I the soth tel shal
Unwetynge of thys Dorigene at al
Thys lusty squyer, seruaunt to Venus
whych yclypped was Aurelius
Had loued her beste of any creature
Two yere and more, as was hys auenture
But neuer durst he tel her hys greuaunce
wythouten cuppe he dronke al hys penaunce
He was dyspayred, nothynge durst he say
Saue in hys sõges, somwhat wold he wray
Hys wo, as in general complaynynge
He said he loued, and was beloued nothinge
Of whych matter made he many layes
Songes, complayntes, roundels, verilayes
Howe that he durste not hys sorowe tel
But languyshe, as doth a fury in hel
And dye he muste (he sayd) as dyd Ecco
For Narcissus, that durst not tel hys wo
¶ In other maner then ye herde me say
Ne durst not he to her hys wo bewray
Saue perauenture somtyme at daunces
There yonge folke kepen her obseruaunces
It maye wel be, he loked on her face
In suche a wyse, as men that asken grace
But nothynge wyst she of hys entent
Nathelesse it happed, er they thence went
Bycause that he was her neyghbour
And was a man of worshyppe and honour
And had knowen hym of tymes yore
They fel in speche, & so forth more & more
Unto hys purpose then drowe Aurelius
And when he sawe hys tyme he sayd thus.
¶ Madame (q̃ he) by god ẏ this world made
So ẏ I wyste, ẏ I myght your herte glade
I wolde that day, that your Aruyragus
went ouer the see, that I Aurelius
Had went ther ẏ I shuld neuer come agayne
For wel I wote my seruyce is in vayne
My guerdon nys but bresting of myne herte
Madame rueth vpon my paynes smerte
For with one worde ye may me slee or saue
Here at your foote godwold ẏ I were graue
I ne haue as nowe no leyser more to sey
Haue mercy swete, or ye wol do me dey.
¶ She gan to loke vpon Aurelius
Is thys your wyl (q̃ she) and saye ye thus.
Neuer erste (q̃ she) ne wyst I what ye mente
But nowe I knowe Aurelius your entente
By thylke god, that yaue me soule and lyfe
Ne shal I neuer be vntrewe wyfe
In word ne i werke, as ferre as I haue wyt
I wol be hys to whom I am knyt
Take thys for a fynal answere of me
But after thys in play thus sayd she.
¶ Aurellus (q̃ she) by god aboue
Yet wol I graunt you to ben your loue
(Sythen I se you so pytously complayne)
Loke what daye that endelonge Britayne
ye remeue al the rockes, stone by stone

That

That they ne let shyppe ne bote to gone
I say whē ye haue made these costes so clene
Of rockes, that there nys no stone ysene
Then wol I loue you best of any man
Here haue my trouth, in al that euer I can.
Is there none other grace in you (q he)
No by that lorde (q she) that maked me
For wel I wote that it shal neuer betyde
Let suche foly out of your herte glyde
What deyntye shulde a man haue in hys lyke
For to go loue another mannes wyke
That hath her body whē so that hym lyketh
Aurelius ful ofte sore syketh
Wo was Aurely, when he thys herde
And w̄ a sorowful chere he thus answerde.
Madame (q he) thys were impossible
Then mote I dye on sodayne death horrible
And wyth that worde he turned hym anone.
Tho come her other frendes euerychone
And in the aleyes romeden vp and doun
And nothynge wyst of thys conclusioun
But sodeynly began to reuel newe
Tyl that the bryght sonne loste hys hewe
For the orizont hath reste the sonne his light
Thys is as much to saye, as it was nyght
And home they gone in ioye and in solas
Saue onely wretched Aurelius, alas
He to hys house is gone with sorowful harte
He sayd he myght not from hys death astarte
Hym semed, that he felte hys herte colde
Up to heuen hys handes gan he holde
And on hys knees bare, he set hym adoun
And in hys rauynge sayd thys orisoun
For very wo out of hys wytte he brayde
He ne wyst what he spake, but thus he sayde
With pitous hert hath his cōplaynt begonne
Unto the goddes, and kyst vnto the sonne
He sayd: God Appollo and gouernour
Of euery plante, herbe, tre, and flour
That yeuest after thy declinacion
To yke of hem hys tyme and ceson
As thyne herberowe chaungeth lowe & hye
Lorde Phebus, caste thy merciable eye
On wretched Aurelius, whych am but lorne
Lo lorde, my lady hath my death ysworne
wythout gylte, but thy benignite
Upon my deadly herte haue some pyte
For wel I wote lorde Phebus, yf ye leste
Ye maye me helpe saue my lady beste
Nowe bouche ye saue, that I you deuyse
Howe that I may be holpen & in what wyse
Your blysful suster Lucina the shene
That of the see is goddesse and quene
Though Neptunus hath deite in the see
Yet emprysse abouen hym is she
Ye knowen wel lorde, ryght as her desyre
Is to be quyckened and lyghted of your fyre
For whych that she koloweth you ful besely
Ryght so the see desyreth naturally
To kolowen her that is goddesse
Both of the see, and ryuers more and lesse
Wherfore lorde Phebus, thys is my request
Do thys myracle, or do myne herte brest
That nowe nexte at thys opposicion
Which in sygne shalbe the lyon
As prayeth her so great a floode to brynge
That fyue fadome at the lest, it ouer sprynge
The hyest rocke in Armoryke Britayne
And let thys floode dure yeares twayne
Then certes to my lady may I saye
Holdeth your heste, the rockes ben awaye
Thys thynge may ye lyghtly done for me
Pray her to gone no faster course then ye
I say thus, pray her your suster that she go
No faster course then ye in yeres two
Then shal she be at the ful alway
And spryng floode lastyng both nyght & day
And but she vouchsafe in suche manere
To graunt me my souerayne lady dere
Pray her to synken euery rocke adoun
In to her owne darke regioun
Under the grounde, there pluto dwelleth in
Or neuer more shal I my lady wyn
Thy tēple in Delphos, wol I barefote seke
O lorde Phebus, se the teres on my cheke
And on my payne haue some compassioun
And wyth ý worde, in swoune he fel adoun
And longe tyme he lay in a traunce
His brother, which ý knew of his penaūce
Up caught hym, and to bed hym brought
Dyspayred in thys turmēt & this thought
Lette I thys woful creature lye
Chese he whether he wol lyue or dye.
Aruyragus wyth heale and great honour
(As he that was of chyualry the floure)
Is comen home, and other worthy men
O blysful arte thou nowe Dorigen
That hast thy lusty husbōde in thyne armes
That freshe knight, ý worthy man of armes
That loueth the, as hys owne hertes lyke
Nothynge lyst hym to be ymaginatyke
Yf any wyght had spokē (while he was out)
To her of loue, therof had he no dout
He entendeth not to suche matere

But dāceth, iusteth, & maketh her good chere
And thus in ioye & blysse let hym dwel
And of woful Aurelius wol I tel
¶ In langour and in tourment dyspitous
Two yere and more, lay wretched Aurelius
Er any fote on erth he myght gone
Ne comforte in thys tyme had he none
Saue of hys brother whych was a clerke
He knewe of al thys wo and al thys werke
For to none other creature certayne
Of thys mater durst he no worde sayne
Under hys brest he bare it more secre
Then euer dyd Pamphilus for Galathe
Hys brest was hole wythout for to sene
But in hys herte aye, was the arowe kene
And wel ye knowen that of a sursanure
In surgery, is perlous the cure
But mē myght touch ẏ arow or come therby
Hys brother wepeth and wayleth priuely
Tyl at the last hym fel in remembraunce
That whyle he was at Orliaūce in Fraūce
(As these clerkes yonge that ben lykerous)
To reden artes they ben curiouse
Seken in euery halke and in euery herne
Perticuler science for to lerne
He hym remembred that vpon a dey
At Orliaunce in studye a boke he sey
Of magyke naturel, whych hys felawe
That was in that tyme a bacheler of lawe
Al were he there to lerne another crafte
Had priuely vpon hys dere ylafte
whych booke spake of mochel aperacions
Touchynge the. xxiiij. mansions
That longen to the moone, and such folye
As in our dayes is not worth a flye
For holy church sayeth in our byleue
Ne suffreth none illusyon vs to greue
And when thys boke was in his remēbraūce
Anone for ioye hys herte gan daunce
And to hym selfe he sayd priuely
My brother shalbe warysched sykerly
For I am syker that there be sciences
By whych men maken dyuers aparences
Suche as these subtel tregetores play
For ofte at feestes haue I wel herde say
That tragetors, wythin an hal large
Haue made come in water and a barge
And in the hall rowen vp and doun
Somtyme hath semed a grym lyoun
And somtyme floures spryngc as in a meede
Somtyme a vyne, and grapes whyte & rede
Somtyme a castel of lyme and stone
And when hym lyked, voyden hem anone
Thus semed it to euery mannes syght.
¶ Now then conclude I thus, yf ẏ I myght
At Orliaunce some olde felowe fynde
That had this moones mansions in mynde
Or other magyke naturel aboue
He shuld wel make my brother haue his loue
For wyth an apparaunce a clerke may make
To mannes syght, that al the rockes blake
Of Britayne, were yuoyded euerychone
And shyppes by the brynke to comen & gone
And in such forme enduren a yere or two
Then were my brother warysched of hys wo
Then muste she nedes holde her behest
Or els he shal shame her at the lest.
¶ What shuld I make a lenger tale of thys
Unto hys brothers bedde he comen is
And suche comforte he yaue hym for to gone
To Orliaunce, that he vp sterte anone
And on hys way then is he forth ykare
In hope to ben lessed of hys care.
¶ When they were comen almoste to ẏ cyte
(But yf it were a two furlonge or thre)
A yonge clerke roming by him selfe they met
whych that in latyn thryftely hem gret
And afterwarde he sayd a wonder thynge
I knowe the cause of your cōmynge
And er they farther any foote wente
He tolde hem al that was in her entente.
¶ Thys Breton clerke asked him of felowes
The whych he had knowen in olde dayes
He answered hym, that they deed were
For whych he wept ofte ful many a tere
¶ Downe of his horse Aurelius light anone
And wyth this magicien forth is he gone
Home to hys house, & made hym wel at ese
Hem lacked no vytaile that hem might plese
So wel arayed an house as there was one
Aurelius in hys lyfe sawe neuer none.
¶ He shewed hym, or he went to suppere
Forestes and parkes, ful of wylde dere
He sawe there hertes, wyth her hornes hye
The greatest that euer were sene wyth eye
He se of hem an hundred slaine with hoūdes
And some of arowes bled wb bytter woūdes
He sawe, when voyded were the wylde dere
These fauconers, vpon a fayre ryuere
That wyth the haukes han the heron slayne
Tho saw he knightes iustyng in a playne
And after thys he dyd hym suche pleasaunce
That he hym shewed hys lady in a daunce
On which him selfe daūced as hym thought

And

And whā this maister, ý this magike wrought
Sawe it was tyme, he clapped his hōdes to
And farwel our reuel, al was ago
And remeued neuer out of his house
whyle they sawe al this syght merueylouse
But in his studye there his bokes be
They saten styl, no wight but they thre
¶ To him this maister called his squyer
And sayd hym thus, is redy our supper
Almost an hour it is, I vndertake
Sythen I you bade our supper redy make
whan that these worthy men went with me
Into my studye, there as my bokes be
¶ Sir (q̃ the squier) whan it lyketh you
It is al redy, though ye wol right nowe.
¶ Go we suppe than (q̃ he) for the best
These amerous folke sōtyme mote haue rest
And after supper fel they in trete
what somme shuld this maisters guerdon be
To remeue al the rockes of Britayne
And eke frō Gironde to the mouth of sayne
¶ He made it strāge, & swore so god him saue
Lasse thā a thousād poūde wold he not haue
Ne gladly for that somme nolde he it don.
¶ Aurelyus with blysful herte anon
Answerde thus: Fye on a thousande poūde
This wyde worlde, which men say is roūde
I wolde it yeue, yf I were lorde of it
This bargayne is ful driue, for we be knyt
Ye shal be payde truely by my trouthe
But loke nowe for no negligence or slouthe
Ye taryen vs here no lenger than to morowe
Nay (q̃ this clerke) here my trouth to borow
¶ To bedde is gon Aurelius whan him leste
And wel nye alnight he had his reste
what for his labour, and his hope of blysse
His woful herte of penaunce had a lysse.
¶ Upon the morowe whan that it was day
To Britayne toke they the right way
Aurelius, and this magicyen him beside
And ben discended there they wolde abyde
And this was, as the boke dothe remembre
In the colde frosty ceson of Decembre.
¶ Phebus wared olde, & hewed ilyke laton
That afore in his hote declynacion
Shone as ý brēning golde w̄ stremes bright
But nowe in Capricorne adowne he lyght
where as he shone ful pale, I dare wel sayne
The bytter froste, with the slidder rayne
Distroyed hath the grene in euery yerde
Janus syt by the fyre with double berde
And drinketh of his bugle horne the wyne
Biforn him stont braune of the tusked swyne
And nowel cryeth euery lusty man.
¶ Aurelius, in al that euer he can
Dothe to this maister chere and reuerence
And prayeth him to don his dyligence
To bryngen him out of his paynes smerte
Or with a swerde that he wold slyt his herte
This clerke suche routhe hath on this mā
That night & day he spedeth him that he can
To wayte a tyme of hys conclusyon
This is to say, to make illusyon
Or suche an apparence or iogelrye
I ne can no termes of astrologye
That she and euery wight shulde wene & say
That of Britayne the rockes were away
Or els they were sonken vnder the grounde
Tyl at the laste he hath his tyme yfounde
To make his iapes and his wretchydnesse
Of suche superstycious cursydnesse
His tollytan tables he forthe brought
Ful wel corrected, hym lacked nought
Neyther his collecte, ne his expans yeres
Ne his rootes, ne his other geres
As syn his centrys, and his argumentes
And his proporcionel conuenyences
For his equacions in euery thyng
And by his eyght speres in his werkyng
He knew ful wel howe far alnath was shoue
Fro the heed of thylke syre Aries aboue
That in the nynthe spere consydred is
Ful subtelly he had calked al this
And whan he had founde hys first mansyon
He knewe the remenaunt by proporcion
And knewe the rysyng of the moone wele
And in suche face, the terme and euery dele
And knewe also his other obseruaunces
For suche illusyons and suche mischaunces
As hethen folke vsed in thylke dayes
For whiche ne maked he no lenger delayes
But through his magike, for a weke or tway
It semed that al the rockes were away.
¶ Aurelius, whiche that dispayred is
whether he shal haue his loue, or fare amys
Awayteth night and day on thys myracle
And whan he knewe there was non obstacle
But ý voyded were these rockes euerychon
Downe to the maisters fete he fel anon
And sayd, I woful wretche Aurelius
Thanke you lorde and lady myne Venus
That me hath holpen fro my caves colde
And to ý temple his way forth hath he holde
where as he knewe he shulde his lady se

And whan he sawe his tyme, anon right he
With dredful herte, & with humble chere
Salued hath his souerayne lady dere.
Myy rightful lady (q̃ this wofull man)
Whom I serue and loue, as I best can
And lothest were of al this worlde displese
Nere it that I for you haue suche disese
That I must dye here at your fete anon
Nought wold I tel you how wo me is begõ
But certes eyther muste I dye or playne
Ye slee me gyltlesse for very payne
But of my dethe. though ye haue no routhe
Auysen you, er that ye breken your trouthe
Repenteth you, for that ylke god aboue
For ye slee me, bycause that I you loue
For madame, wel ye wote that ye haue hight
Not that I chalenge any thyng of right
Of you my souerayn lady, but of your grace
But in a garden yonde in suche a place
Ye wotte right wel what ye heyght me
And in myn honde your trouth plyght ye
To loue me best, god wotte ye sayd so:
Al be it I am vnworthy therto
Madame I speke it for the honour of you
More than for to saue myn hertes lyfe nowe
I haue done right as ye commaunded me
And yf ye vouchsafe, ye may go se
Doth as you list, haueth your heste in mynde
For quicke or deed, right ther ye shal me fynde
In you lythe al to do me lyue or deye
But wel I wote the rockes ben aweye
He toke his leue, and she astonyed stode
In al her face there nas a droppe of bloode
She wende neuer han come in such a trappe
Alas (q̃ she) that euer this shulde happe
For wende I neuer by possibylite
That such a mister or meruayle might be
It is ayenst the processe of nature
And home she gothe a sorowful creature
For very feare vnnethes may she go
She wepeth and wayleth a day or two
And swouneth, that it was routhe to se
But why it was to no wight tolde she
For out of towne was gon Arueragus
But to her selfe she spake, and sayd thus
In her complaynt, as ye shal after here
With face pale, & with sorowful chere.
Alas (q̃ she) on the fortune I playne
That vnware hast wrapped me i thy chayne
Fro whiche to escape, wot I no socoure
Saue onely dethe, or els dishonoure
One of these two behoueth me to chese
But natheless, yet had I leuer to lese
My lyfe, than of my body to haue a shame
Or knowe my selfe false, or lese my name
And with my dethe, I may be quyt i wys
Hath there not many a wyfe er this
And many a mayd, islayn her selfe alas
Rather than with her body done trespas
And certes lo, these stories beren wytnesse
Whan thurty tyrantes, ful of cursydnesse
Had slayne Phidon, in Athenes at the feest
They commaunded his doughters to arest
And bringen hem byforne hem in dispyte
Al naked, to fulfyl her foule delyte
And in her fathers bloode, he dyd hem daũce
Upon the pauemẽt, god yeue him mischaunce
For which these wofull maydens ful of drede
Rather thẽ they wold lesen her maydenhede
They priuely ben sterte in to a wel
And drenched hem selfe, as bokes tell.
They of Messene let enquire and seke
Of Lacidomony fyfty maydens eke
On which they wolde haue don her lechery
But there was none of al that company
That she nas slayne, and with a glad entent
Chese rather for to dyen, than for to assent
To ben oppressed of her maydenhede
Why shulde I than to dye ben in drede:
Lo eke the tyraunt Aristodides
That loued a mayde, ẏ hight Symphalydes
Whan that her father slayne was on a nyght
Unto Dyanes temple gothe she anon ryght
And hente the ymage, with her armes two
Fro whiche ymage wolde she neuer go
No wight might fro it her hondes race
Tyl she was slayne, right in the selfe place.
Now sythnes ẏ maydens had such dispyte
To ben defouled with mannes foule delyte
Wel ought a wyfe rather her selfe slee
Than be defouled, as thynketh me.
What shal I say of Haloruballes wyfe:
That at Cartage byrakte her selfe her lyfe
For whã she sawe ẏ romanes wan the town
She toke her chyldren al, and lepte adown
Into the fyre, and chese rather to dye
Than any roman dyd her villanye.
Hath not Lucrece islayne her selfe, alas
At Rome, there she oppressed was
Of Tarquyne, for her thought it was shame
To lyue, whan that she had lost her name.
The eyght maydens of Melesye also
Han slayn hem selue for very drede and wo
Rather than folke of Gaule shuld hẽ oppresse

Mo than a thousande stories, as I gesse
Couthe I nowe tel, as touchyng this matere
Whan Abradas was slayn, his wife so dere
Her selfe stowe, and let her bloode to glyde
In Abradas woundes, brode and wyde
And sayd, my body at the leste way
There shal no wight defoule yf I may.
What shulde I mo ensamples herof sayn
Sythens that so many han hem selfe slayn
Wel rather than they wolde defouled be
I wol conclude that it is best for me
Wel rather slee my selfe in some manere
As dyd demoutious doughter dere
Bycause that she nolde not defouled be.
O Sedasus, it is ful great pyte
To reden howe thy doughters dyden, alas
That stowen hem selfe for such a maner caas
As great a pyte was it or wel more
The Theban mayden, that for Nychanore
For one of Macedone had her oppressed
With her dethe her maydenhede she redressed
What shal I sayne of Nycerates wyfe
That for suche case birafte her selfe her lyfe
Howe trewe was eke to Alcibyades
His loue, that for to dyen rather chees
Than for to suffren his body vnburyed be
Lo whiche a wyfe was Alceste (q̃ she)
what saythe Homere of good Penelope
Al Grece knoweth of her chastyte.
Parde of Laodomia is written thus
That whã at Troy was slayn Protheselaus
No lenger nolde she lyue after his day.
The same of noble Portia tel I may
Withouten Brutus couthe she not lyue
To whom she had al her herte ygyue.
The parfyte wyfehode of Artemisy
Honoured is, throughout al Barbary
Oh Thenta quene, thy wifely chastyte
To al wyues may a myrrour be.
The same thyng I saye of Bilia
Of Rodogone, and eke Valeria.
Thus playned Dorigene a day or twey
Purposyng euer that she wolde dey
But natheleſſe vpon the thyrde nyght
Home came Arueragus, the worthy knight
And asked her why she wepte so sore
And she gan wepen euer lenger the more
Alas (q̃ she) that euer was I borne
Thus haue I said (q̃ she) thus haue I sworn
And tolde him al, as ye haue herde before
It nedeth not to reherce it no more.
This husbõde w̃ glad chere in sõdrie wyse
Answerde and sayd, as I shal you deuyse
Is there aught els Dorigene but this.
Nay nay (q̃ she) god helpe me so as wys
This is to moche, and it were goddes wyl.
Ye wyfe (q̃ he) let slepe that is styl
It may be wel yet parauenture to day
Ye shal your trouthe holde by my fay
For god so wysly haue mercy on me
I had wel leuer stycked for to be
For very loue, whiche that I to you haue
But yf ye shulde your trouthe saue
Trouth is the hyest thyng that mẽ may kepe
But with that worde he brast anon to wepe
And said, I you forbyd on payne of dethe
That neuer whiles you lasteth lyfe or brethe
To no wight tel of this misauenture
As I may beste I wol my wo endure
Ne make no countenaunce of heuynesse
That folke of you may deme harme ne gesse
And forthe he cleped a squier and a mayde
Gothe forthe anon with Dorigene he sayde
And bringeth her in suche a place anone
They toke her leue, & on her way they gone
But they ne wyste why she thyder went
She nolde no wight tel her entent.
This squier, whiche that hyght Aurelius
On Dorigen, whiche that was so amerous
Of auenture happed her to mete
Amydde the towne, right in the hye strete
As she wolde haue gon the way forthe right
Towarde the garden, there as she had hyght
And he was to the garden warde also
For wel he spyed whan she wolde go
Out of her house, to any maner place
But thus they met of auenture or of grace
And he salueth her with glad entent
And asked of her whyther that she went.
And she answerde halfe as she were madde
Unto the garden as my husbonde badde
My trouthe for to holde, alas alas.
Aurelius gan wondren of this caas
And in his hert had great compassyon
Of her chere, and of her lamentation
And of Aruyragus the worthy knyght
That bade her holde al that she had hyght
So loth he was ẏ̃ she shuld breke her trouth
And in hys herte he caught of it great routh
Consydryng the beste on euery syde
That fro his luste were him better abyde
Than do so hye a churlishe wretchydnesse
Ayenst fraunchise, & ayenst al gentylnesse
For whiche in fewe wordes said he thus

Madame

Madame, saythe to your lorde Arviragus
That sythen I se this great gentylnesse
Of hym, and eke I se wel your distresse
That ye to me thus shuld holde your trouthe
Certes me thynketh it were great routhe
I haue wel leuer euer to suffre wo
Than departe the loue bytwyxt you two
I you relese madame into your honde
Quyte euery surement and euery bonde
That ye haue made to me, as here byforne
Sythens thylke tyme that ye were borne
my trouth I plight, I shal you neuer repreue
Of no behest, and here I take my leue
As of the trewest and the beste wyfe
That euer yet I knewe in al my lyfe
But euery wight beware of her byheste
On Dorigene remembreth at the leste
Thus can a squyer done a gentyl dede
As wel as can a knyght, withouten drede.
¶ She thonked hym vpon her knees al bare
And home vnto her husbonde is she fare
And tolde him al, as ye han herde me sayde
And be ye syker, he was so wel apayde
That it were vnpossible me to write
What shulde I lenger of this case endyte.
Arueragus, and Dorigen his wyfe
In souerayne blysse leden forthe her lyfe
Neuer after was there anger hem bytwene
He cherished her, as though she were a quene
And she was to him trewe for euermore
Of these two folkes ye get of me nomore.
Aurelius, that his coste hath al forlorne
Curseth the tyme that euer he was borne
Alas (q he) alas that euer I beheyght
Of pured golde a thousand poūde of weight
Unto this philosopher, howe shal I do.
I se no more, but that I am for do
Myne heritage mote I nedes sel
And ben a begger, here may I no lēger dwel
And shame al my kynrede in this place
But I of hym may get better grace
But natheless I wol of hym assay
At certayne dayes, yere by yere to pay
And thonke hym of hys great curtesye
My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol not lye.
With herte sore, he gothe vnto his coffer
And brought golde vnto this phylosopher
The value of fyue hundred poūde as I gesse
And hym besecheth of hys gentylnesse
To graunt him dayes of the remenaunt
And sayd: mayster I dare wel make auaunt
I fayled neuer of my trouthe as yet
For sykerly my dette shal be quyt
Towardes you, howe that euer I fare
To gon a beggyng in my kyrtel bare
But wolde ye vouchesafe vpon suerte
Two yere or thre for to respyte me
Than were I wel, for els mot I sel
Myne heritage, there is no more to tel.
This philosopher soberly answerde
And sayd thus, whan he this worde herde
Haue I not holde couenaunt vnto the.
Yes certes, wel and truely (q he)
Haste thou not had thy lady as the lyketh.
No no (q he) and sorily he syketh
What was the cause, tel me yf that thou can.
Aurelius anon his tale began
And tolde hym al as ye han herde byfore
It nedeth not to reherce it any more.
He sayd Arueragus of gentylnesse
Had leuer dye in sorowe and in distresse
Than his wyfe were of her trouthe fals
The sorowe of Dorigene he tolde hym als
Howe lothe she was to ben a wycked wyfe
And that she had leuer haue loste her lyfe
And ý her trouth she swore throug innocēce
She neuer erste herde speke of apparence
That made me haue of her so great pyte
And right as frely as he sent her to me
As frely sent I her to hym agayne
This is al & some, there nys no more to sayn.
The philosopher answerde, leue brother
Eueriche of you dyd gentilly to other
Thou arte a squier, and he is a knyght
But god forbyd, for his blisful myght
But yf a clerke coulde done a gentyl dede
As wel as any of you, it is do drede.
Syr I relese the thy thousande pounde
As now thou were crope out of the grounde
Ne neuer er nowe haddest thou knowen me
For syr, I wol not taken a peny of the
For al my crafte, ne nought for my trauayle
Thou haste ipayed right wel for my vitayle
It is ynough, and farwel & haue good day
And toke his horse, & rode forthe on his way.
Lordynges this question wold I aske now
Whiche was the moste fre, as thynketh you.
Nowe telleth me, er that I ferther wende
I can no more, my tale is at an ende.

Here endeth the franklyns tale, and begynneth the seconde nonnes prologue.

The

The mynistre & the norice vnto vyces
Which that men clepen in englische idlenesse
That is porter of the yate of delyces
To eschue, & by her contrarie her oppresse
That is to sayne, by leful besynesse
wel ought we to don your entent
Leste that the fende through idlenesse vs hēt

For he that with his thousande cordes slye
Contynually vs wayteth to be clappe
whan he may man in ydlenesse espye
He can so lightly catche him in his trappe
Tyl that a man be hente, right by the lappe
He nis not ware the fende hath him in honde
wel ought vs werche, & ydlenesse wittstonde

And though men dredden neuer for to dye
Yet se men wel by reson doutles
That ydlenesse is rote of slogardye
Of which there cometh neuer no good encres
And sythnes that slouth holdeth hē in a lees
Only to slepe, and for to eate and drynke
And to deuouren al that other swynke

And for to put vs from suche ydelnesse
That cause is of so great confusyon
I haue here done my faythful besynesse
After the legende in translacion
Right of thy glorious lyfe and passyon
Thou w̄ thy garlōde, wrought w̄ rose & lely
The mene I, mayd and marter seynt Cecely

And thou that arte floure of virgins all
Of whom that Bernarde lyst so wel to write
To the at my begynnyng fyrst I cal
Thou comforte of vs wrecches, do me endyte
Thy maydēs deth, ꝑ wan thorow her merite
The eternal lyfe, and of the fende victorie
As men may after rede in her storie

Thou maydē & mother, doughter of thy sōne
Thou wel of mercy, synful soules cure
In whom that god of boūte chese for to wōne
Thou humble and hye ouer euery creature
Thou noblest, so farre ouer nature
That no disdayne the maker had of kynde
His sōne in bloode & flesche to clothe & wynde

Whiche in the cloystre of thy blisful sydis
Toke mannes shappe, the eterne loue & pees
That of the true compas, lorde & gyde is
whom heuen, erthe, and see, withouten les
Aye heryen, and thou virgyne wemles
Bare of thy body, & dweldest mayden pure
The creatour of euery creature

Assembled is in the magnifycence
with mercy, goodnesse, and with suche pyte
That thou arte the sonne of excellence
Not onely that helpest hem that prayen the
But often tyme of thy benignyte
Ful frely, or that men thyne helpe beseche
Thou goest before, and arte her lyues leche.

Now helpe thou blisful, & meke fayre mayde
Ye flemed wretche, in this deserte of gal
Thynke on the woman of Canane, that sayd
That whelpes eaten some of ꝑ crōmes smal
That from her lordes table ben ifal
And though ꝑ I vnworthy doughter of Eue
Be synful, yet accepteth my beleue

And for ꝑ fayth is deed withouten werkis
So for to werche, yeue me wytte and space
That I be quyt from ꝑ place ꝑ most derke is
O thou that arte so fayre and ful of grace
Be myne aduocate in that hye place
There as without ende is songe Osanna
Thou Christes mother, & doughter of Anna

And of thy light, my soule in prison lyght
That troubled is by the contagyon
Of my body, and also by the wyght
Of erthly luste, and also false affection
O hauen, O refute, O saluacion
Of hem that ben in sorowe and distresse
Now helpe, for to my werke I wol me dresse

Yet I pray you that reden that I write
Forgeueth me, that I do no dyligence
This ylke storie subtelly to endyte
For bothe haue I the wordes & the sentence
Of hym that at the sayntes reuerence
The storie wrote, and folowen her legende
And pray you that ye wol my werke amende

Fyrst wol I you the name of seynt Cecily
Expowne, as men may in her storie se
It is to say in englische, heuens lylly
For pure chastnesse of virgynite
Or for the wytnesse had of honeste

And

And grene of conscience, and of good fame
The sote sauoure lylye was her name

Or Cecily is to say, the way to blynde
For she ensample was by good techyng
Or els Cecily, as I written fynde
Is ioyned by a maner conioynyng
Of heuen and Lya, in her fyguring
The heuen is set for thought of holynesse
And lya, for her lastyng besynesse

Cecily may eke be sayd in this manere
wantyng of blyndnesse, for her great lyght
Of sapience, and for her thewes clere
Or els Lo, this maydens name bright
Of heuen & Leos cometh, of whiche by ryght
Men might the heuen of people her cal
Ensample of good and wyse werkes al

For Leos people, in Englishe is to say
And right as men may in the heuen se
The sunne, and moone, & sterres euery way
Right so men gostly, in this mayden fre
Sawen of faythe, the great magnanymite
And eke the clerenesse hole of sapience
And sondrie werkes, bright of excellence

And right so as these philosophers write
That heuen is swyfte, rounde, & eke brēnyng
Right so was fayre Cecily the whyte
Ful swyfte and besy in euery good workynge
And rounde and hole in good perseuerynge
And brennyng euer in charyte ful bright
Nowe haue I declared you what she hight.

Here endeth the seconde nonnes Prologue, and begynneth her tale.

This mayden bright Cecile, as her lyfe sayth
was comen of Romanes, and of noble kynde (fayth
And so forthe fostred vp in the
Of Christ, & bare his gospel in her mynde
She neuer cessed, as I written fynde
Of her prayere, and god to loue and drede
Besechyng hym to kepe her maydenhede

And whan this mayde shulde vnto a man
I wedded be, that ful yonge of age
whiche that yeleped was Valeryan
And daye was come of her maryage
She ful deuoute and humble in her corage
Under her robe of golde, ꝑ sate ful fayre
Had next her flesche yclad her in an heyre

And whyles that the organs made melodye
To god alone thus in herte songe she
O lorde, my soule and eke my body gye
Unwemmed, leste I counfounded be

And for his loue that dyed vpon a tre
Euery seconde or thirde day she faste
Aye byddyng in her orisons ful faste.

¶ The night came, & to bedde must she gone
With her husbonde, as often is the manere
And priuely she sayd vnto hym anon
O swete and wel byloued spouse dere
There is a counsayle, and ye wol it here
Which that right fayne I wold to you sayne
So that ye me ensure, it not to bewrayne.

¶ Valeryan gan faste vnto her swere
That for no case, ne thyng that myght be
He shulde neuer to none bewrayen here
And than at erste, thus to hym sayd she
I haue an angel, whiche that loueth me
That w̃ gret loue, where so I wake or slepe
Is redy aye, my body for to kepe

And yf that he may felen out of drede
That ye me touche or loue in vylonye
He right anon wyl slee you with the dede
And in your youthe thus shal ye dye
And yf that ye in clene loue me gye
He wol you loue as me, for your clennesse
And shewe you of hys ioye and brightnesse.

¶ This Valeryan, corrected as god wolde
Answerde ayen, yf I shal trust the
Let me that aungel se, and hym beholde
And yf that it a very aungel be
Than wol I done as thou haste prayde me
And yf thou loue another man forsothe
Right w̃ this sworde thã wol I sle you both

¶ Cecyle answerde anon in this wyse
If that ye luste, that angel shul ye se
So that ye trowe on Christ and you baptyse
Gothe forthe to Via apia (q̃ she)
That from this town ne stãt but myles thre
And to the poore folke that there dwel
Say hem right thus, as I shal you tel

Tel hem that I Cecyle, you to hem sende
To shewen you the good Vrban the olde
For secret nedes, and for good entent
And whan that ye saynt Vrban han beholde
Tel hym the wordes, that I to you tolde
And whã that he hath purged you fro synne
Than shal ye se that aungel er ye twynne.

Valeryan is to that place ygon
And right as him was taught by his lerning
He founde this holy Vrban anon
Amonge these sayntes buryals loutyng
And he anon, without taryeng
Dyd his message, and whan he had it tolde
Vrban for ioy, gan his hondes vp holde

The teres from his eyen let he fall
Almighty god, O Jesu christ (q̃ he)
Sower of chaste counsayle, hierde of vs al
The frute of thilke sede of chastyte
That thou haste sowe in Cecyle, take to the
Lo lyke a besy bee, withouten gyle
The serueth aye thyne owne thral Cecyle

For thylke spouse, that she toke but newe
Ful lyke a fierse lyon, she sendeth here
As meke as any lambe was to ewe
And with that worde, anon there gan apere
An olde man, cladde in whyte clothes clere
That had a boke with letters of gold in hõde
And gan byforne Valeryan for to stonde.

¶ Valeryan as deed fel downe for drede
Whan he this olde man sawe standyng so
Whiche forwith anon he herde him rede
O lorde, O faythe, O god withouten mo
Of christendom, and father of al also
Abouen al, and ouer al euery where
These wordes al with golde written were

Whã this was radde, thã sayd this olde mã
Leuest thou this thyng or none, say ye or nay
I leue al this thyng (q̃ Valeryan)
Under the heuen no wight ne thynke may
Sother thyng than this, I dare wel say
Tho vanyshed the olde man, he nyst where
And pope Vrban hym christened right there

¶ Valeryan gothe home, & fyndeth Cecilye
Within his chambre, with an aungel stonde
This aungel had of rose and of lyllye
Crownes two, the whiche he bare in honde
And fyrst to Cecyle, as I vnderstonde
He yaue that one, and after gan he take
That other to Valeryan her make

With body clene, & w̃ vnwemmed thought
Kepeth aye wel these crownes (q̃ he)
From paradyse to you I haue hem brought
Ne neuer more shullen rotten be

Ne lese her swete sauour, trusteth me
Ne neuer wight shal sene hem with eye
But he be chaste, and hate vilonye

And thou Valeryan, for thou so sone
Assenteddest to good counsayle also
Say what ȳ lyst, & thou shalt haue thy bone
I haue a brother (q̃ Valeryan tho)
That in this world I loue no man so
I pray you that my brother may haue grace
To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this place.

The angel answerd, god lyketh your request
And bothe with the palme of martyrdome
Shal ye come vnto the blisful feest
And with ȳ word Tyburce his brother come
And whan that he the sauoure vndernome
whiche that the roses and the lylyes caste
within his herte he gan to wonder faste

¶ And sayd: I wōder this tyme of the yere
whence that this sote sauoure cometh so
Of roses and lylyes, that I smel here
For though I had hem in myne hondes two
The sauour might in me no deper go
The swete smel, that in my herte I fynde
Hath chaunged me al in another kynde.

¶ Valeryan sayd, two crownes haue we
Snowe whyte & rose reed, that shyneth clere
which that thyne eyen han no might to se
And as thou smellest hem thrugh my prayere
So shalt thou seen hem my leue brother dere
If it so be that thou wylte without slouthe
Byleue a right, and knowe the very trouthe.

¶ Tyburce answerd, sayest thou this to me
In sothnesse, or in dreme herken I this.
In dremes (q̃ Valerian) han we be
Unto this tyme, brother myne iwys
But nowe at erst, our dwellyng in trouthe is
Howe wost thou (quod Tyburce) & in what wyse
Quod Valeryan, that I shal the deuyse.

The angel of god hath me ȳ trouth itaught
which thou shalt seen, & thou wilt reney
The ydols, and be clene, and els naught
And of the myracles of these crownes twey
Saynt Ambrose in his preface luste to sey
Solempnly this noble doctour dere
Cōmendeth it, and saythe in this manere.

¶ The palme of martyrdom for to receyue
Seynt Cecile, fulfylled of goddes yefte
The world & eke her chambre gan she weyue
witnesse Tyburce, and Cecyles shrifte
To which god of his bounte wolde shyfte
Crownes two, of floures wel smellyng
And made the angel hē tho Crownes bryng

The mayde hath brought hem to blisse aboue
The world hath wist what it is worth certai
Deuotion and chastyte wel for to loue
Tho shewed him Cecyle al open and playn
That al ydolles ben but thynges in bayne
For they ben dombe, & therto they ben defe
And charged hym hys ydoles for to lefe

Who that troweth not this, a beest he is
(Quod this Tyburce) yf that I shal not lye
She kyssed his brest whan she herde this
And was ful glad he couthe trouthe espye
This day take I the for myne allye
Sayd this blisful mayden fayre and dere
For after that she sayd as ye may here.

¶ Lo right so as the loue of Christ (q̃ she)
Made me thy brothers wyfe, right in ȳ wyse
Anon for myn alye here take I the
Sythēs that thou wolte thyn ydoles dispyse
Go with thy brother nowe, & the baptyse
And make the clene, so ȳ thou mayst beholde
The angels face, of whiche thy brother tolde.

Tyburce answerd, and said: brother dere
First tel me whyther I shal, & to what man
To whom he sayd, come forth w̄ good chere
I wol the lede vnto the pope Urban
To Urban brother myne Valeryan
(q̃ this Tyburce) wylt thou me thyder lede:
Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede

Ne meneſt thou Not Urban (q̃ he tho)
That is so ofte dampned to be deed
And wonneth in halkes to and fro
And dare not ones put forthe his heed
Men shulde him brenne in a fyre so reed
If he were founde, and men might hym spye
And we also, that bere him companye

And whyles we seken thylke diuinite
That is yhidde in heuen priuely
Algate ybrent in this worlde shulde we be
To whom Cecile answerde boldely

Men might drede wel and skylfully
This lyfe to lese, myne owne dere brother
If this were lyuing only and non other

But there is better lyuyng in other place
That neuer shal be loste, ne drede the nought
Which goddes sone vs told through his grace
That fathers sonne hath al thyng wrought
And al ý wrought is with a skilful thought
The goste that from the father gan procede
Hath souled hym without any drede

By worde and by myracle, lo goddes sonne
Whan he was in this worlde, declared here
That there is other lyfe ther men may wõne
To whom answerde Tyburce: O suster dere
Ne saydest thou right nowe in this manere
There nas but one god lord in sothfastnesse
And nowe of thre howe may ÿ bere witnesse

¶ That shal I tel (q̃ she) or that I go
Right as a man hath sappences thre
Memorye, engyne, and intellecte also
So in suche beyng of diuinite
Thre persons may there right wel be
Tho gan she there ful besily hym preche
Of Christes sonne, and of his paynes teche.

And many poyntes of his passyon
Howe goddes sonne in thys worlde was
witholde
To do mankynde playne remyssyon
That was bounde in synnes & cares colde
Al these thynges she vnto Tyburce tolde
And after this Tyburce in good entent
With Valeryan to pope Vrban went

That thonked god, & with glad hert & light
He christned him, and made him in that place
Perfyte in his lernyng goddes knyght
And after this Tiburce gate suche grace
That euery day he sawe in tyme and space
The aungel of god, and euery maner boone
That he god asked, it was sped ful soone

¶ It were ful harde by order for to sayne
How many wonders Jesu for him wrought
But at the laste, to tel shorte and playne
The sergeaunt of the towne hem sought
And hem byfore Almache ÿ preuost brought
Whiche hem aposed, & knewe al her entent
And to the ymage of Jupiter hem sent

And sayd, who so wol do no sacrifyce
Swappe of his heed, this is my sentẽce here
Anon these martyrs, that I you deuyse
One Maximus that was an officere
Of the prefectes, and his councelere
Hem hent, & whã he forth the sayntes ladde
Hym selfe he wept for pyte that he had

Whan Maximus had herde this sayntes lore
He gate hem of the turmentours leue
And had hem to hys house withouten more
And with her prechyng, er that it were eue
They gonne from the turmentour reue
And from Maximus, & from hys folke echon
The false faythe, to trowen in god alone

¶ Cecyle came, whan it was woxen nyght
With preestes, that hem christened al in fere
And afterward, whan day was woxen light
Cecile hem sayd with a sober chere
Nowe Christes owne knyghtes leue & dere
Casteth al away the werkes of derknesse
And armeth you in armoure of brightnesse

Ye han for sothe ydone a great batayle
Your cours is don, your fayth hath you conserued
Gothe to ÿ crowne of life that may not fayle
The rightful iudge, which ye han serued
Shal yeue it you as ye it deserued
And whan this thing was sayd, as I deuyse
Men ladde hem forth to done the sacrifyse

But whã they were vnto the place ibrought
To tel shortly the conclusyoun
They nold ensence ne sacrifyce right nought
But on her knees, they saten hem adoun
With humble herte and sadde deuocioun
And losten bothe her heedes in the place
Her soules went to the kyng of grace.

¶ This Maximus, ÿ saw this thyng betyde
With pytouse teres tolde it anon right
That he her soules sawe to heuen glyde
With aungels ful of clerenesse and of lyght
And with his word cõuerted many a wight
For which Almachius dyd hym so to bete
With whyppes of leede, tyl he his lyfe gã lete

Cecyle hym toke, and buryed hym anone
By Tyburce and Valeryan sothly
Within her buryeng place vnder a stone

And after this Almachius hastely
Bad hys mynisters fetchen openly
Cecily, so that she might in his presence
Do sacrifyce, and Jupyter encence

But they conuerted at her wyse lore
wepten ful sore, and yaue ful credence
Unto her worde, and cryden more and more
Christ goddes sonne, without difference
Is very god, this is all our sentence
That hath a seruaunt so good him to serue
Thus w o voyce we trow though we sterue

¶ Almachius, that herde al this doyng
Bad fetche Cecily, that he might her se
And alderfyrst this was his asking
what maner woman arte thou (q̃ he)
I am a gentylwoman borne (q̃ she)
I aske of the (q̃ he) thought it the greue
Of thy relygion and of thy byleue.

¶ Ye haue bygon your question folishly
(q̃ she) that wolde two answers conclude
In one demaunde, ye asken leudly
Almachius answerde to that symilitude
Of whence cõmeth thyn answere so rude
Of whence (q̃ she) whã that she was frayned
Of conscience, and of good fayth vnfayned.

¶ Almachius sayd, ne takest thou none hede
Of my power: and she hym answerde thys
Your might (q̃ she) ful lytel is to drede
For euery mortal mannes power nys
But ilyke a bladder ful of wynde twys
For with a nedels poynte, whan it is yblowe
May al the boste of it be layde ful lowe

Ful wrongfully beganste thou (q̃ he)
And yet in wronge is thy perseueraunce
woste thou not howe our mighty princes fre
Haue thus cõmaunded & made ordinaunce.
That euery christen wight shal haue penaũce
But yf that he his cristendome withsey
And gon al quyte, yf he wol it reney.

¶ Your princes erren, as your nobles dothe
Quod tho Cecile, in a wode sentence
ye make vs gilty, and it is not sothe
For ye that knowen wel our innocence
For as moche as we done a reuerence
To Christe, and for we bere a christen name
ye put on vs a cryme and eke a blame

But we that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may is not withsey.
Almachius answerd, chese one of these two
Do sacrifyce, or christendom reney
That thou may scapen by that wey
At which worde the holy blisful mayde
Gan for to laught, & to the iuge she sayde.

¶ O iugge confused in thy nycete
Wolte thou that I renye innocence
To make me a wycked wight (q̃ she)
Lo he dissymuleth here in audience
He stareth and wodeth in his aduertence
To whom Almachius sayd: O sely wretch
Thou wost not how far me mizt may stretch

Hath not our mightye princes yeuen
To me, bothe power and eke auctorite
To make folke to dyen or to lyuen:
why spekest thou so proudely than to me.
I ne speke it not but stedfastly (q̃ she)
Not proudly, for I say as for my syde
I hate deedly thilke vyce of pryde

And yf thou drede not a sothe for to here
Than wol I shewen al openly by right
That thou hast made a ful great lesyng here
Thou saylte thy princes han yeue the might
Bothe to slee and eke to quicke a wight
Thou ne mayest but only lyke byreue
Thou haste non other power ne leue

But thou mayst say, thy princes hã ý maked
Mynistre of dethe, for yf thou speke of mo
Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked
Doway thy boldnesse, sayd Almachius tho
And do sacrifyce to our goddes er thou go
I recke not what wronge thou me proffer
For I can suffre, as can a philosopher

But thilke wronges may I not endure
That thou spekest of our goddes here (q̃ he)
Cecile answerde, O nyce creature
Thou saydest no worde sythens thou spakest to me
That I ne knewe therwith thy nycite
And that thou were in euery maner wyse
A leude offycer, and a vayne iustyce

The lacketh nothyng to thyne vtter eyen
That thou nart blynd, for thing ý we seen al
That is a stone, that men may wel espyen

That

That ylke stone, a god thou wolte it cal
I rede the let thyn honde vpon it fal
And taste it wel, & stone thou shalte it fynde
Sens that thou seest not w̃ thyn eyen blynde

It is a shame that the people shal
So scorne the, and laugh at thy folye
For comenly men wotte it wel ouer al
That mighty god is in his heuens hye
And these ymages, wel mayste thou aspye
To the ne to hem selfe may they not profyte
For in her effecte, they be not worthe a myte

Thus and suche other wordes sayde she
And he wore wrothe, & bad she shulde be lede
Home to her house, and in her house (q̃ he)
Brenne her in a bathe, with flames rede
And as he bade, right so was done the dede
For in a bathe they gan her faste sheten
And nyght & day great fyre vnder they beten

Al the longe night, and eke the day also
For al the fyre, and eke the bathes hete
She sate al colde, and felte of it no wo
It made her not a droppe for to swete
But in that bathe her lyfe she mote lete
For Almachie, with a ful wicked entent
To sleen her in the bathe, hys sonde sente

Thre strokes in the necke he smote her tho
The turmentour, but for no maner chaunce
He might not smyte al her necke a two
And for there was that tyme an ordynaunce
That no mã shuld do no person such penaũce
The fourth stroke to smyte, softe or sore
This turmentour durste smyte no more

But halfe deed, with her necke ycorue̅ there
He lette her lye, and on his way he went
The christen folke that aboute her were
With shetes home ful fayre her hente
Thre dayes lyued she in this turmente
And neuer cesed she the faythe to teche
That she had fostred hem, she gan to preche

And hem she yaue her mouables & her thyng
And to the pope Vrban bytoke hem tho
And sayd, I asked this of the heuen kyng
To haue respyte thre dayes and no mo
To recõmaunde to you, er that I go
These soules, and that I might so werche
Here of myne house perpetuellyche a cherche

Saynt Vrban, with his dekens priuely
The body fette, and buryed it by night
Amonge his other sayntes honestly
Her house the churche of saynt Cecile hyght
Saynte Vrban halowed it, as he wel might
In which vnto this day in noble wyse
Men don to Christ & to his sayntes seruyce.

Here endeth the seconde nonnes tale, and here begynneth the Prologue of the chanons yeman.

Whã ended was the lyfe of saynt Cecyle
Er we fully had rydden fyue myle
At Boughton vnder the blee, vs gan a take
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake
And vnder that he had a whyte surplyse
His hakeney, that was al pomely gryse
So swette, that it wonder was to se
It semed that he had pricked myles thre
The horse eke that his yoman rode vpon
So swette, that vnneth might he gon
Aboute the paytrel stode the fome ful hye
He was of fome as flecked as a pye
A male twyfolde on his croper lay
It semed that he caryed lytel aray
All lyght for sommer rode this worthy man
And in my herte wondren I began
what that he was, tyl I vnderstode
Howe that his cloke was sewed to his hode
For which, whan I had longe auysed me
I demyd him some chanon for to be
His hatte hynge at his backe by alace
For he had rydden more than trot or pace
He rode aye prickyng as he were wode
A clote lefe he had layde vnder hys hode
For swette, and for to kepe his heed fro hete
But it was ioye for to se hym swete
His forheed dropped, as a stylatorie
were ful of plantayne or of peritorie
And whan he was come, he gan crye
God saue (q̃ he) this ioly companye
Faste haue I pricked (q̃ he) for your sake
Bycause that I wolde you ouertake
To ryden in this mery company
This yoman was eke ful of curtesye
And sayd sys, nowe in the morowe tyde

Out of your hostery I sawe you ryde
And warned here my lorde and souerayne
whiche that to ryden with you is ful fayne
For his disporte, he loueth dalyaunce.
Frēde for thy warnig god yeue ꝑ good chāce
Than sayd our host, certayne it wolde seme
Thy lorde were wyse, & so I may wel deme
He is ful ioconde also dare I lay
Can he ought tel a mery tale or tway
with which he glade may this companye.
¶ Who syr my lorde-ye without lye
He can of myrthe and eke of iolyte
Not but ynough also syr trusteth me
And ye hym knewe also wel as do I
Ye wolde wonder howe wel and thriftely
He couthe werke, and that in sondrie wyse
He hath taken on him many a great empryse
which were ful harde, for any that is here
To bring aboute, but they of him it lere
As homely as he rydeth amonge you
If ye him knewe, it wold ben for your prowe
Ye nolde not forgon his aquayntaunce
For mochel good I dare lay in balaunce
All that I haue in my possessyon
He is a man of hye discressyon
I warne you wel he is a passyng wyse man.
¶ Wel (q̃ our hoste) I pray the tel me than
Is he a clerke or non-tel what he is.
¶ A clerke, nay he is greter thā a clerke iwys
Sayd the yoman, and in wordes fewe
Hoste of his crafte somwhat wol I shewe
I say my lorde can suche a subtelte
But al his crafte ye may not wete of me
And somwhat helpe I yet to his worchyng
That al the grounde that we be on rydyng
Tyl we come to Caunterbury towne
He coulde al clene turne vp and downe
And paue it al of syluer and of golde.
¶ And whan this yoman had thus ytolde
Unto our hoste: he sayd benedicite
This thyng is wonder meruaylous to me
Sens that thy lorde is of so hye prudence
(Bycause of which, men shuld hym reuerēce)
That of his worshyp recketh he so lyte
His ouerest sloppe is not worthe a myte
As in effecte to hym, so mote I go
It is al baudy and to tore also
why is thy lorde so slotlyche I the pray
And is of power better clothes to bey-
If that his dede acorde with thy speche
Tel me that, and that I the beseche.
¶ Why (q̃ this yeman) wherto aske ye me-
God helpe me so, for he shal neuer ythe
But I wol not auowe that I saye
And therfore kepe it secret I you praye
He is to wyse in fay, as I beleue
That is ouerdone nyl not preue
And right as clerkes sayne, it is a vyce
wherfore I holde hym in that, leude & nyce
For whan a man hath ouer great a wytte
Ful ofte it happeth hym to misusen it
So dothe my lorde, and that me greueth sore
God amende it, I can say you no more.
¶ Therof no force good yeman (q̃ our host)
Sens of the connyng of thy lorde thou wost
Tel howe he dothe, I pray the hertely
Sens that he is so crafty and so sly
where dwellen ye, yf it to tel be-
¶ In the subbarbes of a towne (q̃ he)
Lurkyng in corners and in lanes blinde
where these robbers, and theues by kynde
Holden her priuy fearful resydence
As they that dare not shewen her presence
So fare we, yf that I shal say the soth.
¶ Yet (q̃ our hoste) let me talke tothe
why arte thou so discoloured in thy face-
¶ Peter (q̃ he) god yeue it harde grace
I am so vsed in the hotte fyre to blowe
That it hath chaūged my colour as I trowe
I am not wonte in no myrrour to prye
But swynke sore, and lerne to multiplye
we blondren euer, and poozen in the fyre
And for al that, we faylen of our desyre
For euer we lacken our conclusyon
To moche folke we do illusyon
And borowe golde, be it a pounde or two
Or ten or twelue, or many sommes mo
And make hem wene at the leste way
That of a pounde we coulde make tway
Yet is it false, and aye han we good hope
It for to done, and after it we grope
But that science is so ferre vs byforne
we mowe not, al though we had it sworne
It ouertake, it flytte away so fast
It wol vs make beggers at the laste.
¶ whiles this yeman was thus i his talkyng
This chanon drewe him nere, & herd al thing
which this yeman spake, for suspection
Of mennes speche euer had this chanon
For Cato saythe, he that gylty is
Demeth al thing be spoke of hym iwys
Bycause of that, ge gan so nyghe to drawe
To his yeman, to herken al his sawe
And thus he sayd vnto his yeman tho

Holde

Holde now thy peace, & speke no wordes mo
For yf thou do, thou shalt it sore abye
Thou slaūdrest me here in thys companye
And eke dyscoueresst ý thou shuldest hyde.
Cye (q our host) tel on what so euer betyde.
Of al hys thr[illegible]tyng, recke the not a myte
In fayth (q ye) no more do I but lyte
And when thys chanon sawe it wolde not be
But hys yeman wolde tel hys priuite
He fled away for very sorowe and shame
A (q the yeman) here shal ryse a game
Al that I can, anone wol I you tel
Sens he is gone, the foule fende hym quel
For neuer here after wol I wyth hym mete
For peny ne for pounde, I you behete
He that me brought fyrst vnto that game
Er that he dye, sorowe haue he and shame
For it is ernest to me by my fayth
That fele I wel, what so any man sayeth
And yet for al my smerte and al my grefe
For al my sorowe, laboure and myschefe
I couth neuer leaue it in no wyse
Nowe wolde god my wytte myght suffyce
To tellen al that longeth to that arte
But natheleſſe, yet wol I tel you a parte
Sens that my lord is gone, I wol not spare
Suche thynge as I knowe I wol declare.

Here endeth the prologue of the chanons yeman, and here foloweth hys tale.

With thys chanon I dwelt seuen yere
And of hys science am I neuer the nere
All that I had, I haue lost therby
And god wote, so hath many mo then I:
There I was wonte to be ryght fresh & gay
Of clothynge, and eke of other good aray
Nowe may I weare an hose vpon my heed
And wher my colour was both freshe & reed
Nowe it is wanne, and of a leeden hewe
who so it vseth, sore shal hym rewe
And of my swynke, yet blered is myne eye
Lo whych auauntage it is to multiplye
That slydynge science hath me made so bare
That I haue no good, where ý euer I fare
And yet I am endetted so therby
Of golde, that I haue borowed trewly
That whyle I lyue, I shal it quyte neuer
Let euery man beware by me euer
what maner man that casteth hym therto
yf he continue, I holde hys thryfte ydo
So helpe me god, therby shal he neuer wyn
But empteh his purse, & make his wittes thyn

And when he thorow hys madnesse and foly
Hath lost hys owne good, through ieopardy
Then he excyteth other men therto
To lese her good, as hym selfe hath do
For vnto shrewes, ioye it is and ese
To haue her felowes in payne and dysese
For thus was I ones lerned of a clerke
Of ý no charge, I wol speake of our werke
¶ When we be there, as we shal exercyse
Our elvysh crafte, we semen wonder wyse
Our termes ben so clergial and so quaynte
I blowe the fyre tyl myne herte faynte.
¶ What shulde I tel eche proporcion
Of thynges, whych we werchen vpone
As on fyue or fyre vnces, maye wel be
Of syluer, or of some other quantite
And besye me to tellen you the names
Of orpyment, brent bones, yron squames
That into poudre grounden ben ful small
And in an erthen potte, howe put is all
And salt yput in, and also papere
Byfore these poudres that I speake of here
And wel ycouered wyth a lampe of glas
And of moche other thynge that there was
And of the pottes and glas englutynge
That of the ayre myght passe out no thynge
And of the esy fyre and smerte also
whych that was made, and of the care & wo
That we had in our matters sublymynge
And in amalgamyng, and calsenynge
Of quycsyluer, yclypped Mercurye crude
For al our sleyght, we conne not conclude
Our orpyment, and sublymed Mercurye
Our grounde lytarge eke on the porphirye
Of eche of these, vnces a certayne
Not helpeth vs, our labour is in vayne
Ne eke our spirites assencioun
Ne yet our matters, that lyen al fyre adoun
Howe in our werkynge nothynge auayle
For loste is al our laboure & our trauayle
And al the coste, a twenty dyuel waye
Is loste also, whych we vpon it laye.
¶ There is also ful many an other thynge
That is to our crafte apertaynynge
Though I by ordre hem ne reherce can
Bycause that I am a leude man
Yet wol I tellen hem, as they come to minde
Though I ne can sette hem in her kynde
As bole Armonyake, verdegrece, borras
And sondry vessels made of erth and glas
Our vrinals, and our dyscensories
Vrols, crosselettes, and sublymatories
Concurbytes, and alembykes eke
And other suche, dere ynough a leke
It nedeth not to reherce hem al
Waters rubyfyeng, and boles gal
Arsneke, sal armoniake, and brymstone
And herbes coulde I tel eke many one
As Egrimonye, valerian, and lunarye
And other suche, yf that me lyst to tarye
Our lampes brennyng both nyght and daye
To bryngē aboute our craft, yf that we maye
Our fournyce eke of calcinacion
And of waters albifycation
Unslekeed lyme, chalke, and gleyre of an eye
Poudres dyuers, ashes, donge, pysse, & cley
Sered pokettes, salt peter, and vytriole.
And dyuers fyres, made of woode and cole
Sal tartre, alcaly, and sal preparate
And combust maters, and coagulate
Cley made wt horse dūge, mans heere, & oyle
Of tartre alim, glas, berme, wortе, & argoile
Resalgor, and other maters enbybynge
And eke of our maters encorporynge
And of our syluer cytrination
Our sementynge, and eke fermentacion
Our Ingottes testes, and many mo
I wol you tel as was me taught also
The foure spirites, and the bodyes seuen
By order, as ofte I herde my lorde nemene.
¶ The fyrst spirite quycke syluer cleped is
The seconde orpyment, the thyrde ywys
Sal armonyake, the fourth brymstone
¶ The bodyes seuen eke, lo here hem anone
Sol golde is, and Luna syluer we threpe
Mars yron, Mercurye quycksyluer we clepe
Saturnus leede, and Iupiter is tynne
And Venus coper, by my father kynne
¶ Thys cursed crafte, who so wol exercyse
He shal no good haue that may hym suffyse
For al the good he spendeth theraboute
He lese shal, therof haue I no doute
who so that lysten to vtter hys folye
Let hym come forth & lerne to multiplye
And euery man that hath aught in hys cofer
Let hym apere, and were a philosopher
Alsaunce that crafte is so lyght for to lere
Nay nay god wote, al be he monke or frere
Preest or chanon, or any other wyght
Though he syt at his boke both day & nyght
In lernynge of thys elvysche nyce lore
Al is in vayne, and parde moche more
Is to lere a leude man thys subtelte
Fye speake not therof, it wol not be

Al coulde he letture, or coulde he none
As in effecte, he shal synde it al one
For both two, by my saluacion
Concluden in multiplicacion
Ilyche wel, when they haue al ydo
Thys is to sayne, they faylen both two.
Yet forgate I moche rehersayle
Of waters corosyfe, and of lymayle
And of bodyes mollifycacion
And also of her induracion
Oyles, ablucions, metal fusyble
To tellen you al, wolde passe any byble
That o where is, wherfore as for the beste
Of al these names nowe wol I reste
For as I trowe, I haue you tolde ynowe
To reyse a fende, al loke he neuer so rowe.
Al nay let be the phylosophers stone
Elixer cleped, we seken faste echeone
For had we him, thē were we syker ynowe
But vnto god of heuen I make auowe
For al our crafte, when that we han al ydo
And al our sleyght, he wol not come vs to
He hath made vs spende moche good
For sorow of which, almost we waxē wood
But that good hope crepeth in our herte
Suppolynge euer, though we sore smerte
To ben releued by hym afterwarde
Suppolynge and hope is sharpe and harde
I warne you wel it is to syken euer
That future temps hath made men dysceuer
In trust therof, all that euer they had
Yet of that arte, they coulde not waxe sad
For vnto hym it is a bytter swete
So semed it, for ne had they but a shete
Which ý they myght wrappē thē in anyght
And a bratte to walken in the daye lyght
They wolden hem sel, & spēde it on this craft
They conne not stynte, tyl nothynge be laft
And euer more, where that euer they gone
Men may hem ken by smel of brymstone
For al the worlde they stynken as a gote
Her sauour is so rammysh & so hote
That though a man a myle from hem be
The sauour wol enfecte hym trusteth me
Lo, thus by smellyng, & by thred bare aray
Yf that men lyst, thys folke knowe they may
And yf a man wol aske hem priuely
Why they be clothed so vnthryftely
Ryght anone they wol rowne in hys ere
And sayne, yf that they aspyed were
Men wolde hem slee, bycause of her science
Lo thus these folke bytrayen innocence
Passe ouer thys, I go my tale vnto.
Er that the potte be on the fyre ydo
Of metalles, wyth a certayne quantyte
My lorde hem temprcth, & no man but he
Nowe he is gone, I dare saye boldely
For as men sayne, he can do craftely
Algate I wotte wel he hath suche a name
And yet ful ofte he renneth in the blame
And wote ye howe, ful ofte it happeth so
The potte to breketh, and farewel al is go
These metalles ben of so great violence
Our walles may not make hem resystence
But yf they were wrought of lime and stone
They percen so, & through the wal they gone
And some of hem synken in to the grounde
Thus haue we lost by tymes many a poūde
And some are scatered al the floore aboute
Some lepen into the rofe wythouten doute
Tho ý the fende not in our syght hym shewe
I trowe that he with vs be, that ylke shrewe
In hel where that he is lorde and syre
Ne is there no more wo, ne angre ne yre
when that our potte is broke, as I haue sayd
Euery man chyte, & holte hym yuel apayde
Some sayd it was longe of the fyre makyng
Some sayd nay, it was on the blowyng
Then was I ferde, for that was myn offyce
Strawe (q̃ the thyrde) ye ben leude & nyce
It was not temprcd as it ought to be
Nay (q̃ the fourth) stynte & herken me
Bycause our fyre was not made of beche
That is the cause, and none other so theche
I can not tel wheron it is alonge
But wel I wote great stryfe is vs amonge.
what (q̃ my lord) ther nys no more to done
Of these perylles I wol beware efte sone
I am ryght syker, that the potte was crased
Be as be maye, be ye not amased
As vsage is, let swepe the floore as swythe
Plucke vp your hert, and be glad and blythe.
The mullocke on an heape yswepte was
And on the floore caste a canuas
And al thys mulloke in a syue ythrowe
And ysyfted and aplucked many a throwe.
Parde (q̃ one) somwhat of our metall
yet is there here, though we haue not all
And tho this thyng mishapped hath as now
An other tyme it may ben wel ynow
we mote put our good in auenture
A marchaunt parde, maye not aye endure
Trusteth me wel in hys prosperite
Somtyme hys good is drowned in the see
And

And somtyme it cometh safe vnto the londe
Peace(q̃ my lord)ẏ next tyme I wol fonde
To bryngе our crafte al in an other plyte
And but I do syrs, let me haue the wyte
There was defaute in somwhat wel I wote
Cin other sayd, the fyre was ouer hote
But be it hote or colde, I dare saye this
That we concluden euer more amys
we faylen of that whych we wolde haue
And in our madnesse euer more we raue
And when we be together euerychon
Euery man semeth as wyse as Salomon
But al thyng, whych that shyneth as ẏ golde
Is not golde, as I haue herde tolde
Ne euery appel that is fayre at eye
Nys not good, what so men clappe or crye.
CRyght so it fareth amonge vs
He that semeth the wysest by Jesus
Is moost foole, when it cometh to the preke
And he that semeth truest is a theke
That shal ye know, er that I from you wede
By that I of my tale haue made an ende.
CThere was a chanon of religioun
Amonges vs, wolde enfecte al a toun
Though it as great were as Niniue
Rome, Alysaundre, Troye, and other thre
Hys sleyght and hys infinite falsnesse
There couth no man wryten as I gesse
Though that he might lyue a thousand yere
In al thys worlde of falsnesse nys hys pere
For in hys termes he wol hym so wynde
And speake hys wordes in so slye a kynde
when he comen shal wyth any wyght
That he wol make hym dote anone ryght
But it a fende be as hym selfe is
Ful many a man hath he begyled er thys
And mo wol, yf that he may lyue a whyle
And yet men ryden & gone ful many a myle
Hym for to seke, and haue aquayntaunce
Not knowynge of hys false gouernaunce
And yf ye lust to gyue me audience
I wol it tellen here in your presence.
CBut worshypful chanons religiouse
Ne demeth not that I sclaunder your house
Al though my tale of a chanon be
Of euery ordre some shrewe is parde
And god forbyd that al a companye
Shulde rue a syngler mannes folye
To slaunder you is not myne entente
But to correcte that mysse is mente
Thys tale was not only tolde for you
But eke for other mo, ye wote wel howe
That amonge Christes apostles twelue
Ther was no traytour but Judas hym selue
Then why shulde the remnaũt haue blame
That gyltlesse were, by you I saye the same
Saue only thys, yf ye wol herken me
yf any Judas in your couent be
Remeueth hym betyme, I you rede
yf shame or losse may causen any drede
And be nothynge dyspleased I you praye
But in thys case herkeneth what I saye.

In Londen was a preest annuellere
That therin had dwelt many a yere
whych was so pleasaunt and so seruysable
Unto the wyke, where he was at table
That he wolde suffre hym nothynge to pay
For borde ne clothyng, went he neuer so gay
And spendynge syluer had he ryght ynowe
Therof no force, I wol procede as nowe
And tel forth my tale of the chanon
That brought thys preest to confusyon.
CThys false chanon came vpon a daye
Unto thys preestes chambre, where he laye
Besechynge hym to lene hym a certayne
Of golde, and he wolde quyte hym ayen
Leneth me a marke(q̃ he) but dayes thre
And at my daye I wol quyte it the
And yf it so be, chat thou fynde me false
Another daye hange me by the halse
This preest toke him a marke & that swyth
And thys chanon hym thanked ofte syth
And toke hys leaue, and went forth hys wey
And at thyrde daye brought hys money
And to thys preest he toke thys golde aeyen
wherof thys preest was glad and fayn
CCertes(q̃ he) nothynge anoyeth me
To lene a man a noble, two or thre
Or what thynge were in my possession
when he so trewe is of condicion
That in no wyse he breke wol hys daye
To suche a man I can neuer saye naye.
what q̃ this chanon, shulde I be vntrewe
Nay, that were thynge fallen of newe
Trouth is a thynge that I wol euer kepe
Unto the daye, in whych I shal crepe
Into my graue, or els god forbede
Beleueth thys as syker as your crede
God thanke I, & in good tyme be it sayde
That there nas neuer man yet yuel apayde
For golde ne syluer that he to me lent
Ne neuer falshede in myne herte I ment.
And syr(q̃ he) nowe of my priuete

Sens ye so goodlyche haue ben to me
And kythe to me so great gentylnesse
Somwhat to quyte with your kyndenesse
I wol you shewe, yf ye wol it lere
(I shal it shewe to you anon right here)
Howe I can werche in philosophye
Taketh good hede, ye shal it se with your eye
That I wol done a maistrye or I go.
Tye syr (q̃ the preest) and wol ye so
Warye therof I pray you hertely.
At your cõmaundement ser truely
(q̃ the chanon) and els god forbede
Lo howe this theke couthe his seruyce bede
Ful sothe is that suche profered seruyse
Stynketh, as wytnesseth the olde wyse
And that ful sone I wol it verifye
In this chanon, rote of al trecherie
That euermore delyte hath and gladnesse
Such fendely thoughtes in his hert empresse
How christes people he may to mischekebryng
God kepe vs from his false dissymulyng.
What wyst thys preest w̃ whom ꝑ he delte
Ne of hys harme cõmyng nothyng he felte
O sely preest, O sely innocente
With couetyse anon thou shalte be blente
O graceless, ful blynde is thy conceyte
Nothyng arte thou ware of hys disceyte
Which that this fore hath shapen to the
His wylye wrenches thou mayste not fle
Wherfore to go to the conclusyon
That referreth to thy confusyon
Unhappy man, anon I wol me hye
To tel thyne vnwytte ne thy folye
And eke the falsnesse of that other wretche
As ferforthe as my connyng wol stretche
This chanon was my lord ye wolde wene
Syr host in faythe, and by the heuen quene
It was another chanon, and not he:
That can an hundred folde more subtelte
He hath betrayed folke many a tyme
Of his falsnesse it doleth me to ryme
Euer whan I speke of hys falseheed
For shame of hym, my chekes waxen reed
Algates they begynnen for to glowe
For rednesse haue I non, right wel I knowe
In my visage, for fumes dyuerse
Of metals, whiche ye haue herde me reherse
Consumed and wasted hath my rednesse
Nowe take hede of this chanons cursydnesse.
Syr (q̃ he) to the preest, let your man gon
For quicksyluer, that we it had anon
And let hym bryngе vnces two or thre
And whan he cõmeth, as faste shul ye se
A wonder thyng, which ye saw neuer er this
Syr (q̃ the preest) it shal be done iwys
He badde his seruaunt fetch him this thyng
And he al redy was at hys byddyng
And went him forth, and came anon agayne
With this quicksyluer, shortly for to sayne
And toke these vnces thre to the chanoun
And he hem layde wel and fayre adoun
And bade the seruaunt coles for to bryng
That he anon might go to hys werkyng
The coles right anon were yfet
And this chanon toke out a crosselet
Of his bosome, and shewed it to the preest
This instrument (q̃ he) which that thou seest
Take in thy honde, and put thy selfe therin
Of this quicksyluer an vnce and begyn
In the name of Christ to wexe a philosopher
There be ful fewe, whiche I wolde it proffer
To shewe hem this moche of my science
For here shul ye se by experience
That this quicksyluer I wol mortifye
Right in your syght anon withouten lye
And make it as good syluer and as fyne
As there is any in your purse or myne
Or els where, and make it malliable
And els holde me false and vnstable
Amonges folke euer to appere.
I haue a poudre, that coste me dere
Shal make al good, for it is cause of al
My connyng, whiche I you shewe shal
Voydeth your man, and let him be therout
And shette the dore, whyles we ben aboute
Our priuetie, that no man vs espye
Whyles that we werken in our philosophye
Al as he bade, fulfylled was in dede
This ylke seruaunt anon out yede
And hys maister shette the dore anon
And to her labour spedily they gon
This preest at this cursed chanons byddyng
Upon the fyre anon set this thyng
And blewe the fyre, & besyed hym ful faste
And this chanon into this crosset caste
A pouder, I not wherof it was
Ymade, eyther of chalke, erthe, or glasse
Or somwhat els, was not worthe a flye
To blynde with this preest, & badde hym hye
These coles for to couchen al aboue
The crosselet, for in token that I the loue
(Quod this chanon) thyne hondes two
Shal werke al thyng that here shal be do.
Graunt mercy, q̃ the preest, & was ful glad

And

And couched coles, as the chanon bad
And whyle he busy was, thys fedely wretch
Thys false chanon, the foule fende him ketch
Out of hys bosome toke a bechen cole
In whych ful subtelly was made an hole
And therin was put of syluer limayle
An vnce, and stopped was wythout fayle
The hole wyth ware, to kepe the limayle in
And vnderstandeth that thys false gyn
was not made there, but it was made before
And other thynges that I shal you tel more
Hereafter, whych that he wyth him brought
Er he came there, to begyle hym he thought
And so he dyd, er they wente a twynne
Tyl he had turned hym, could he not blynne
It dulleth me, when that I of hym speke
On hys falshede, fayne wolde I me wreke
Yf I wyst howe, but he is here and there
He is so variaunt, he bydeth no where
But taketh hede syrs now for goddes loue
He toke hys cole, of whych I spake aboue
And in hys hande he bare it priuely
And whyles the preest couched besely
The coles, as I tolde you er thys
Thys chanon sayd, frende ye done amys
Thys is not couched as it ought to be
But sone I shal amende it (q̃ he)
Nowe let me medle therwyth but a whyle
For of you haue I pyte by saynt Gyle
Ye ben ryght hotte, I se wel howe ye swete
Haue here a cloth and wype awaye the wete
And whyle the preest hym wyped hace
This chanon toke the cole, I shrewe his face
And layde it abouen vpon the mydwarde
Of the crosset, and blewe well afterwarde
Tyl that the coles gonne faste brenne
Nowe yeue vs drynke, q̃ thys chanō then
As swyth al shall be wel I vndertake
Sytte we downe, and let vs mery make
And when thys chanons bechen cole
was brent al, the limayle out of the hole
Into the crosselette anone fel adown
And so it muste nedes by resoun
Sens it so euen aboue couched was
But therof wyst the preest nothynge, alas
He demed al the coles lyche goode
For of the sleyght, nothynge he vnderstode.
And whē thys alkamystre sawe his tyme
Rysteth vp syr preest (q̃ he) & standeth by me
And for I wote wel yngot haue I none
Goth walketh forth, & brynge a chalke stone
For I wol make it of the same shappe
That an yngot is, yf I maye haue happe
And brynge eke wyth you a bolle or a panne
Ful of water, and ye shal se thanne
Howe that our busynesse shal happe & preue
And yet for ye shal haue no mysbeleue
Ne wronge conceyte of me in your absence
I wol not ben out of your presence
But go wyth you, & come wyth you agayne
The chambre dore, shortly to sayne
They opened & shette, & went forth her wey.
And forth wyth hem they caryed the key
And comen ayen wythouten any delaye
what shulde I taryе al the longe daye
He toke the chalke, and shope it in the wyse
Of an yngot, as I shal you deuyse
I saye he toke out of hys owne sleue
A teyne of syluer, yuel mote he cheue
whych that was but an vnce of weyght
And taketh hede nowe of hys cursed sleyght
He shope hys yngot, in lenght and in brede
Of the teyne, wythouten any drede
So slyly that the preest it not aspyde
And in hys sleue agayne he gan it hyde
And from the fyre toke vp hys matere
And in to the yngot it put wyth mery chere
And into the water vessel he it caste
when that hym lyst, & bad the preest as faste
Loke what ther is, put in thyn hāde & grope
Thou shalt fynde there syluer as I hope
what dyuel of hel shulde it els be
Shauynge of syluer, syluer is parde.
He put in hys hande, and toke vp a teyne
Of syluer fyne, and glade in euery vayne
was thys preest, when he sawe it was so
Goddes blyssynge and hys mothers also
And al hallowes, haue ye syr chanon
Sayd thys preest, and I her malyson
But and ye vouchsafe to teche me
Thys noble crafte and thys subtelte
I wol be yours, in al that euer I may
q̃ the Chanon, yet wol I make assay
The seconde tyme, that ye nowe take hede
And ben expert of thys, and in your nede
Another daye assay in myne absence
Thys dysciplyne, and thys crafty science
Lette take another ounce (q̃ he) tho
Of quycke syluer, wythouten wordes mo
And done therwyth, as I haue done er thys
wyth that other, whych that nowe syluer is.
Thys preest hym besyeth in al that he can
To done as thys Chanon, thys cursed man
Commaunded hym, and faste blewe the fyre

For to come to the effecte of his desyre
And this chanon, right in the mean while
Al redy was, this preest efte to begyle
And for a countynaunce in his honde bare
An holowe sticke, take kepe and beware
In thende of which an vnce and no more
Of syluer lymaile putte was al before
Was in his cole, and stopped with were wele
For to kepen in his lymaile euery dele
And whiles this preest was in his besynesse
This chanon with his sticke gan him dresse
To hym anon, and his pouder cast in
As he dyd erst, the deuyl out of hys skyn
Him torne, I praye to god for his falshede
For he was euer false in thought and dede
And with his sticke, aboue the crosselette
That was ordayned with that false iette
He styrreth the coles, tyl al relent gan
The ware agayne the fyre, as euery man
But he a fole be, wot wel it mote nede
And al that in the hole was, out yede
And into the crosselet hastely it fel
The preest supposed nothyng but wel
But besyed hym faste, & was wonder fayne
Supposyng nought but trouth, soth to sayn
He was so glad, that I can nat expresse
In no manere hys myrthe and his gladnesse
And to the chanon he profered efte sone
Body and goods: ye (q̃ the chanon) anone
Tho I be poore, cratty thou shalt me fynde
I warne the yet is there more behynde
Is there any coper here within sayd he:
Ye syr (q̃ the preest) I trowe there by.
Els go bye some, and that alwythe
Nowe good syr go forth thy way & hythe.
¶ He went his way, & with ỳ coper he came
And this Chanon in his honde it name
And of that coper wayed out but an vnce
Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce
As to minystre of my wytte the doubleness
Of this chanon, rote of al cursydnesse
He semed fredly, to hem ỳ knew him nought
But he was fendly, both in werke & thought
It weryeth me to tel of hys falsenesse
And natheleſſe, yet wol I it expresse
To the entent that men may beware therby
And for none other cause truely.
¶ He put this vnce of coper into the crosselet
And on the fyre as swythe he hath it sette
And cast in pouder, & made ỳ preest to blowe
And in his workyng for to stoupe lowe
As he dyd erste, and al nas but a iape
Ryght as hym lyst, ỳ preest he made hys ape
And afterwarde in the yngot he it caste
And in the panne put it at the laste
Of water, and in he put hys owne honde
And in hys sleue, as ye beforehonde
Herde me tel, he had a syluer teyne
He slily toke it out, thys cursed heyne
Unwetynge thys preest of hys false crafte
And in the pannes botome he hath it lafte
And in the water rombleth to and fro
And wonder priuely toke vp also
The coper teyne, not knowynge thys preest
And hyd it, and hent hym by the brest
And to hym spake, & thus sayd in hys game
Stoupeth adowne, by god ye be to blame
Helpeth me nowe, as I dyd you wylere
Put in your honde, and loketh what is there
¶ This preest toke vp this syluer teyne anon
And then sayd the chanon, let vs gon
With these thre teines, which we han wrought
To some goldsmyth, and wete yf it be ought
I or by my fayth, I nolde for my hoode
But yf it were syluer fyne and good
And that as swyth proued shalbe.
¶ Unto ỳ goldsmyth, with these teynes thre
They went, and put them in assaye
So fyre and hãmer, might no man say naye
But they were as them ought for to be.
This sotted preest, who was gladder thẽ he
was neuer byrde gladder ayenst the day
Ne nyghtyngale, ayenst the cesson of May
was neuer none, that lyste better to synge
Ne lady lustyer in carollynge
And for to speake of loue and womanhede
Ne knyght in armes, to don a hardy dede
To standen in grace of hys lady dere
Then had thys preest, thys crafte to lere
And to the chanon, thus he spake, and sayd
For the loue of God, that for vs al deyd
And as I may deserue it vnto you
what shal this receit cost, telleth me nowe:
¶ By our lady (q̃ thys chanon) it is dere
I warne you wel, saue I and a frere
In Englande, there can no man it make.
No force (q̃ he) nowe syr for goddes sake
what shall I paye, tel me I you praye.
I wys (q̃ he) it is ful dere I saye
Syr at one worde yf that ye lyst it haue
ye shal pay fourty pounde, so god me saue
And here the frendshyp that ye dyd er thys
To me, ye shulde paye more ywys.
¶ This preest ỳ sume of fourty poũde anone

Of nobles fette, and tolde hem euerychone
To thys chanon, for thys ylke receyte
Al hys worchynge was fraude and dysceyte
Sir preest he said, I kepe for to haue no loos
Of my crafte, for I wolde it were kept cloos
And as ye loue me, kepeth it secre
For and men knowe al my subtelte
By god men wolde haue so great enuye
To me, bycause of my philosophye
I shulde be deed, there were none other way
¶ God it forbyd (q̃ the preest) what ye say
Yet had I leuer spende al the good
whych that I haue, and els ware I wood
Then that ye shulde fallen in suche myschefe
For your good wyl haue ye ryght good prefe
(q̃ the chanon) and farewel graunt mercy
He went hys way, & neuer the preest hym sey
After that day: & when that thys preest sholde
Maken assay, at such tyme as he wolde
Of thys receyte, farewel it nolde not be
Lo thus beiaped and begyled was he
Thus maketh he hys introduction
To brynge folke to her destruction.
Consydereth syrs, howe in eche estate
Betwyxt men and golde is debate
So kerforth, that vnnethes there is none
Thys moultiplyenge blyndeth so many one
That in good fayth, I trowe that it be
The greatest cause of suche scarsite
These phylosophers speaken so mystely
In this craft, that men can not come therby
For any wytte that men haue now a dayes
They may wel chattre & iãgle as do ỳ iayes
And in her termes, set her luste and payne
But to her purpose shul they neuer attayne
A man may lyghtly lerne, yf he haue ought
To multiplye, & brynge hys good to nought
Lo, suche a lucre is in thys lusty game
A mans myrth it wol turne al to grame
And empten also great and heuy purses
And maken folke to purchase curses
Of hem that han also her good ylente
O fye for shame, they that han be brente
Alas, can not they flye the fyres hete
ye that it vsen, I rede that ye it lete
Lest ỳ ye lesen al, for better thẽ neuer is late
Neuer to thryue, were to longe a date
Though ỳ ye prolle aye, ye shal it neuer fynd
ye ben as bolde as is bayarde the blynd
That blõdereth forth, & peryl casteth he none
He is as bolde to renne ayenst a stone
As for to go besyde in the waye
So faren ye, that multiplyen I saye
yf that your eyen can not sene aryght
Loketh that your mynde lacke not his syght
For though ye loke neuer so brode & stare
ye shal not wynne a myte in that chaffare
But wast al that ye may repe and renne
wythdrawe the fyre, leste it to fast brenne
Medleth wyth that arte no more I mene
For yf ye done, your thryfte is gone ful clene
And ryght as swyth I wol you tellen here
what ỳ the philosophers sayn in this matere
¶ Lo thus sayeth Arnolde of the new toun
As hys rosarye maketh mencioun
He sayeth ryght thus, wythouten any lye
There may no man Mercurye mortifye
But yf it be wyth hys brothers knowlegyng
Lo howe ỳ he, whych fyrst sayde thys thyng
Of philosophers father was, Hermes
He sayeth howe the dragon doutles
Ne dyeth not, but yf he be slayne
wyth hys brother: And thys is for to sayne
By the dragon Mercurye, and none other
He vnderstode ỳ brimstone was his brother
That out of Sol and Luna were ydrawe
And therfore sayd he, take hede to my sawe
Let no mã busye hym this arte for to seche
But he that the entencion and speche
Of philosophers vnderstande can
And yf he do, he is a leude man
For thys science, and thys connyng (q̃ he)
Is of the secre of che secres parde.
¶ Also there was a dysciple of Plato
That on a tyme sayd hys mayster to
As hys boke Semor wol bere wytnesse
And thys was hys demaũde in sothfastnesse
Tel me the name of the preuy stone
¶ And Plato answered vnto hym anone
Take the stone that Tytanos men name.
¶ whych is ỳ (q̃ he) Magnatia is the same
Sayd Plato: yea syr and is it thus?
Thys is ignotum per ignotius
what is Magnatia, good syr I you pray.
¶ It is a water that is made I say
Of elementes foure (quod Plato)
¶ Tel me the roche good syr (q̃ he tho)
Of that water, yf it be your wyl.
Nay nay (q̃ Plato) certayne that I nyll
The philosophers were yswoorne echone
That they shulde dyscouer it vnto none
Ne in no boke it wryte in no manere
For vnto Christ it is so lefe and dere
That he wol not that it dyscouered be

But

But where it lyketh to hys deite
Man to enſpyre and eke for to defende
When that hym lyketh, lo thys is his ende
Then conclude I thus, ſens ꝟ god of heuē
Ne wyl not that the phyloſophers nemen
Howe that a mā ſhal come vnto thys ſtone
I rede as for the beſt, let it gone
For who ſo maketh god hys aduerſarye
As for to werch any thynge in contrarye
Vnto hys wyl, certes neuer ſhal he thriue
Though that he multiplye terme of his lyue
And there a poynte, for ended is my tale
God ſende euery true man bote of hys bale.

Here endeth the tale of the chanons yeman, and here foloweth the doctour of phiſykes prologue.

When thys yeman hys tale ended had
Of thys falſe chanon, whych was ſo bad
Our hoſte gan ſaye, truely and certayne
Thys preeſt was begyled, ſothe for to ſayne
He wenynge for to be a philoſopher
Tyl he ryght no golde lefte in hys cofer
And ſothly thys preeſt had alther iape
Thys curſed chanon put in hys hode an ape
But al thys paſſe I ouer as now
Syr doctour of phiſyke, yet I pray you
Tel vs a tale of ſome honeſte matere
It ſhalbe done, yf that ye wol it here
Sayd thys doctour, & hys tale began anone
Now good mē (q̃ he) herkeneth euerychone.

Here endeth the doctour of phiſykes prologue, and here begynneth hys tale.

There was, as telleth vs Tytus Liuius
A knyght, that clypped was Virginius
Fulfylled of honour and of worthyneſſe
And ſtronge of frendes, and of rycheſſe
A doughter he had by hys wyfe
And neuer had he mo in al hys lyfe
Fayre was thys mayde in excellent beaute
Abouen euery wyght that man may ſe
For nature hath, wyth ſouerayne diligence
Formed her in ſo great excellence
As though ſhe wolde ſay, lo I nature
Thus can I forme and paynt a creature
When that me lyſte, who can me counterfete
Pigmaliō not, though he alway forge & bete
Or graue or paynte, for I dare wel ſayne
Appelles, or zeuſis, ſhulde werche in vayne
To graue or paynte, or forge or bete
Yf they preſumed me to counterfete
For he that is the former principall
Hath made me hys vicar generall

To fourme and paynte erthely creaturis
Right as me lyste, for al thyng in my cure is
Under the moone, that may wane and wax
And for my werke, nothyng wol I axe
My lorde and I ben fully of a corde
I made her to the worshyp of my lorde
So do I al myne other creatures
Of what coloure they be, or of what fygures
Thus semeth me that nature wolde say.
This mayd was of age twelue yere ⁊ away
In which that nature hath suche delyte
For right as she can paynte a lyllye whyte
And rody as rose, right with suche paynture
She paynted hath this noble creature
Er she was borne, vpon her lymmes fre
Were als bright as suche colours shulde be
And Phebus died had her tresses grete
Lyke to the stremes of his burned hete
And yf that excellent were her beaute
A thousande folde more vertuous was she
In her ne lacketh no conditioun
That is to preyse, as by discretioun
As wel in body as in gost, chaste was she
For whiche she floured in virginite
with al humylyte and abstynence
With al attemperaunce and pacience
with mesure eke, and beryng of array
Discrete she was in answeryng alway
Tho she were wyse as Pallas, dare I sayn
(Her faconde eke, ful womanly and playn)
No counterfayted termes had she
To seme wyse: but after her degree
She spake, and al her wordes more ⁊ lesse
Sownyng in vertue and in gentyllesse
Shamfast she was, ī maydēs shamfastnesse
Constant in hert, and euer in busynesse
To dryue her out of al slogardry
Bacchus had of her mouthe no maistry
For wyne and youth done Venus encrece
As men in fyre wol casten oyle or grece
And of her owne vertue vnconstrayned
She hath ful ofte her sicke yfayned
For that she wolde flye the company
Where lykely was to treten of foly
As is at feestes, at reuels, and at daunces
That ben occasyons of dalyaunces
Suche thynges maken chyldren for to be
To sone rype and bolde, as men may se
whiche is ful perillous, and hath ben yore
For al to sone may she lerne lore
Of boldnesse, whan she is a wyke.
And ye maistresses in your olde lyke
That lordes doughters han in gouernaunce
Ne taketh of my worde no diplesaunce
Thynke that ye ben set in gouernynges
Of lordes doughters, onely for two thynges
Eyther for ye han kepte your honeste
Eyther ye han fal in freelte
And knowen wel ynough the olde daunce
And conne forsake fully mischaunce
For euermore, therfore for Christes sake
Kepeth wel tho that ye vndertake.
¶ A theke of venyson that hath forlafte
His lykerousnesse, and al his theues crafte
Can kepe a forest best of any man
Nowe kepeth hem wel, for ⁊ ye wol ye can
Loketh wel, to no vice that ye assent
Lest ye be dampned for your yuel entent
For who so dothe, a traytour is certayn
And taketh kepe of that I shal you sayn
Of al treyson souerayne pestilence
Is, whan a wight betrayeth innocence
Ye fathers, and eke ye mothers also
Though ye han chyldren, be it one or mo
Yours is the charge of al her sufferaunce
whiles they ben in your gouernaunce
Beth ware, that by ensample of your lyueng
Eyther by your neglygence in chastisynge
That they ne perishe: for I dare wel say
If that they don, ye shal ful sore obey
Under a shepeherde softe and neglygent
The wolf hath many a shepe ⁊ lambe to rent
Suffyseth one ensample nowe as here
For I mote turne ayen to my matere.
¶ This maid, of which I tel my tale expresse
She kepte her selue, she neded no maistresse
For in her lyueng maydens myght rede
As in a boke, euery good worke and dede
That longeth to a mayde vertuous
She was so prudent and so bountuous
For whiche out sprynge on euery syde
Bothe of her beaute and of her bounte wyde
That thorowe ÿ lōde they preysed her echon
That loued vertue, saue enuy alone
That sorye is of other mennes wele
And gladde is of her sorowe, and vnhele
The doctour maketh this discriptioun
This mayde went on a day into the toun
Towarde the temple, with her mother dere
As is of yonge maydens the manere.
¶ Nowe was there a Justice in the toun
That gouernour was of that regioun
And so befyl, this Justice his eyen cast
Upon this mayde, auisyng her ful fast

As the

As she came foreby, there as the Juge stode
Anone hys herte chaungeth and hys mode
So was he caught w̄ beaute of this mayde
And to hymselfe ful priuely he sayde
Thys mayde shalbe myne for any man
Anone the fende into hys herte ran
And taught hym sodeynly, by what sleyght
The mayde to his purpose wynne he myght
For certes, by no force, ne by no mede
Hym thought he was not able for to spede
For she was stronge of frendes, and eke she
Conforymed was in such souerayne beaute
That wel he wyst he myght her neuer wyn
As for to make her wyth her body synne
For whych wyth great delyberatioun
He sent after a clyent into the toun
The whych he knew ful subtyl & full bolde
This iuge vnto thys cliēt his tale hath tolde
In secrete wyse, and made hym to ensure
He shulde tel it vnto no creature
And yf he dyd, he shulde lese hys hede
When assented was thys cursed rede
Glad was the iuge, and made good chere
And yaue hym gyftes precious and dere
¶ When shapen was al thys conspiracie
Fro poynt to poynt, howe that hys lecherie
Parfourmed shulde be ful subtelly
As ye shullen after here openly
Home goeth thys clyent, ý hyght Claudius
Thys false iuge, that hyght Appius
So was hys name, for it is no fable
But knowē for an hystorial thynge notable
The sentence of it sothe is out of doute
Thys false iuge goeth nowe fast aboute
To hasten hys delyte, al that he maye
And so bykell, that sone after on a daye
Thys false iuge, as telleth vs the storie
As he was wonte, sate in hys consystorie
And yaue hys domes vpon sondry caas
Thys false clyent came forth a ful gret paas
And sayd lorde, yf it be your wyll
As doth me ryght vpon thys pytous byll
In whych I playne vpon Virginius
And yf he wol say it is not thus
I wol proue it, and fynde good wytnesse
That soth is that my byl wol expresse
The iuge answerde, of thys in hys absence
I maye not yeue diffynite sentence
Let do hym cal, and I wol gladly here
Thou shalt haue ryght, and no wronge here
Virginius came to wete the iuges wyl
And ryght anone was radde thys cursed byl
The sentence of it, was as ye shal here.
¶ To you my lorde Appius so dere
Sheweth your poore seruaunt claudius
Howe that a knyght called Virginius
Ayenst the lawe, and ayenst al equite
Holdeth expresse ayenst the wyl of me
My seruaunt, whych ý is my thrale by right
whych krō myne house was stolē on a nigh
whyles he was ful yonge, I wol it preue
By wytnesse lorde, so that ye you not greue
She is not hys doughter, what so he saye
wherfore my lorde iustyce I you praye
Yelde me my thrale, yf it be your wyll
Lo thys was al the sentence of that byll.
¶ Virginius gan vpon the clyent beholde
But hastely, er he hys tale tolde
He wolde haue defēded it, as shulde a knight
And by wytnesse of many a trewe wyght
That al was false, that sayd hys aduersarye
Thys cursed iuge wolde no lenger tarye
Ne here a worde more of Virginius
But yaue hys iudgement, and sayd thus.
¶ I deme anone this clyent his seruaūt haue
Thou shalt no lēger her in thyne house saue
Go bryngе her forth, & put her in our warde
This cliēt shal haue his thral, thus I award
¶ And whē thys worthy knyght Virginius
Through the assent of the iudge Appius
Muste by force hys dere doughter yeuen
Unto the iudge, in lechery to lyuen
He goeth hym home, and set hym in hys hall
And let anone hys dere doughter call
And wyth face deed as ashen colde
Upon her humble face he gan beholde
with fathers pyte, stickyng through his hert
Al wolde he not from hys purpose conuert.
¶ Doughter (q̄ he) Virginia by thy name
There ben two wayes, eyther deth or shame
That thou muste suffre, alas ý I was borne
For neuer thou deseruedest wherforne
To dyen, wyth a sworde or wyth a knyfe
Oh dere doughter, comforte of my lyfe
whych I haue fostred vp wyth such plesaūce
That thou ne were out of my remembraūce
O doughter, whych that arte my last wo
And in my lyfe my last ioye also
O lemme of chastite, in pacience
Take thou thy death, thys is my sentence
For loue, and not for hate thou must be deed
My pytous hande mote smyte of thyne heed
Alas that euer Appius the sey
Thus hath he falsly iudged the to dey

And tolde her al the caſe, as ye before
Han herde, it nedeth not to tel it more
¶ O mercy dere father (q̃ thys mayde)
And wyth that worde, both her armes layde
About hys necke, as ſhe was wont to do
The teeres braſte out of her eyen two
And ſayd, O good father ſhal I dye
Is there no grace, is there no remedye.
¶ No certes dere doughter myne (q̃ he)
Then yeue me leaue father myne (q̃ ſhe)
My death to complayne a lytel ſpace
For parde, I ſepte yaue hys doughter grace
For to complayne, er he her ſlough, alas
And god it wote, nothynge was her treſpas
But that ſhe ranne her father fyrſt to ſe
To welcome hym wyth great ſolempnyte
And with that word ſhe fel a ſwoune anone
And after, when her ſwounynge was gone
She ryſeth vp, and to her father ſayd
Blyſſed be god that I ſhal dye a mayde
Yeue me my death, er that I haue a ſhame
Doth w̃ your child your wil a goddes name
And wyth ỳ worde, ſhe prayeth hym ful ofte
That w̃ his ſwerd he ſhould ſmitte her ſofte
And with that word, a ſwoune down ſhe fel
Her father, wyth ſorowfull herte and fell
Her heed of ſmote, and by the toppe it hente
And to the iudge he it yaue in preſente
As he ſate in dome in conſyſtorye.
when the iudge it ſawe as ſayth the ſtorye
He bade take hym, and hange hym alſo faſte
But ryght anone al the people in thraſt
To ſaue the knyght, for routh and for pytie
For knowen was the iudges iniquitie
The people anone had ſuſpect in this thing
By maner of thys clyentes chalengynge
That it was by the aſſent of Appius
They wyſte wel that he was lecherous
For wyych vnto Appius they gone
And caſten hym in priſon ryght anone
where as he ſlowe hym ſelfe, and Claudius
That ſeruaunt was vnto thys Appius
was demed for to be hanged vpon a tre
But Virginius, of hys great pyte
So prayed for hym, that he was exiled
And els certes he had ben begyled
The remnaunt were hanged, more and leſſe
That conſented were to thys curſydneſſe
Here may men ſe how ſyn hath hys meryte
Beware, for no mã wot how god wyl ſmyte
In no degre, ne in no maner wyſe
The worme of conſcience wol aryſe
Of wycked lyfe, though it ſo priuy be
That no man wote of it but god and he
whether he be leude man or lered
He not howe ſone he may be affered
Therfore I rede you thys counſayle take
Forſake ſynne, or ſynne you forſake

Here endeth the doctour of Phiſykes tale, and folowyth the wordes of the hoost.

OUr hoſte gan ſwere as he were woode
Harowe (q̃ he) by nayles and by bloode
Thys was a falſe theke, and a curſed iuſtyce
As ſhameful death, as herte may deuyſe
Come to the iuſtyce and her aduocas
Algate thys ſely mayden is ſlayne, alas
Alas to dere bought ſhe her beaute
wherfore I ſaye, that al men maye ſe
That yeftes of fortune, or of nature
Ben cauſe of death of many a creature
Her beaute was her death, I dare wel ſayne
Alas ſo pytouſly as ſhe was ſlayne
But here of wol I not procede as nowe
Men haue ful ofte more harme then prowe
But truely myne owne mayſter dere
Thys is a pytous tale for to here
But natheleſſe, paſſe ouer is no force
I pray to god to ſaue thy gentel cors
And thy vrinalles, and thy iordanes
Thyne ypocras, and eke thy galyanes
And euery bore ful of letuarye
God bleſſe hem and our lady ſaynt Marye
So mote I the, thou arte a propre man
And ylyke a prelate, by ſaynt Runian
Saue that I can not ſpeake wel in terme
But wel I wote, ỳ doeſt myn herte to yerne
That I haue almoſt ycaught a cardyacle
By corpus domini, but I haue tryacle
Or els a draught of moyſte corny ale
Or but I here anone an other mery tale
My herte is loſte, for pyte of thys mayde
Thou belamy, thou Johan pardoner he ſaid
Tel vs ſome mery tale, or iape, ryght anone.
It ſhalbe done (q̃ he) by ſaynt Runyon
But fyrſt (q̃ he) here at thys ale ſtake
I wol both drynke, and eate of a cake
But ryght anone, theſe gentyls gan to crye

Naye

Nay, let hym tel vs of no rebaudrye
Tel vs some moral thing, that we mow lere
Some wytte, and than wol we gladly here
I graunt (q he) iwys, but I mote thynke
On some honest thyng, whyles ý I drynke.

Here ende the wordes of the host, and here folowetb the prologue of the Pardoner.

Ordynges (q he) in chyrche whan I preche
I payne me to haue an hauteyn speche
And ring it out, as rounde as dothe a bel
For I can al be roote, that I tel
My teme is alwaye, and euer was
(Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas)
First I pronounce fro whens I come
And than my bylles I shewe al and some
Our liege lorde seale on my patent
That shewe I first, my body to warent
That no man be so bolde, preest ne clerke
Me to disturbe, of Christes holy werke
And after that, tel I forthe my tales
Bulles of Popes, and of Cardynales
Of Patriarkes, and of Bysshoppes I shewe
And in latyn I speke wordes a fewe
To sauer with my predication
And for to steere men to deuotion
Than shewe I forth my long christal stones
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones
Relykes they ben, as wene they echone
Than haue I in laton a sholderbone
Whiche that was of an holy iewes shepe
Good men saye I, take of my wordes kepe
If that this bone be washen in any wel
If cowe or calke, shepe, or ore swel
That any worme hath eeten, or hem stonge
Take water of this wel, and washe his tong
And it is hole anon: and farthermore
Of pockes, and of scabbes, and euery sore
Shal shepe be hole, that of this wel
Drinketh a draught, take kepe of that I tel
¶ If the good man that the beestes oweth
Wol euery day, er the cocke croweth
Fastyng drynke of this wel a draught
As thilke holy iewe our elders taught
His beestes and his store shal multiplye
And syrs, also it healeth ielousye
For though a man be fal in ielous rage
Let make with this water his potage
And neuer shal he more his wyfe mistryst
Though he in sothe the defaute by her wyst
Al had she take preestes two or thre.
¶ Here is a myttayne eke, that ye may se
He that his honde wol put in thys mittayne
He shal haue multiplyeng of his grayne
whan he hath sowen, be it whete or otes
So that he offer good pens or grotes
And men & women, o thyng I warne you
If any wight ben in this churche nowe
That hath done synne horrible, that he
Dare not for shame of it shriuen be
Or any woman, be she yonge or olde
That hath made her husbonde cokewolde
Suche folke shul haue no powre ne no grace
To offre to my relykes in this place
And who so fyndeth hym out of suche blame
Commeth vp and offre in goddes name
And I assoyle hym by the auctorite
Suche as by bulle was graunted to me.
¶ By this gaude haue I wonne euery yere
An hundred marke, sythen I was pardonere
I stonde lyke a clerke in my pulpet
And the leude people byn downe yset
I preche so as ye haue lered here before
And tel an hundred iapes more
Than payn I me to stretche forth my necke
And este and west, vpon the people I becke
As dothe a doue, syttyng vpon a berne
My hondes and my tonge gon ful yerne
That it is ioy to se my besynesse
Of auarice, and of suche cursydnesse
Al my prechyng is for to maken hem fre
To yeuen her pens, and namely vnto me
For myne entent is not but for to wynne
And nothyng for correction of synne
I recke neuer, whan that they ben beryed
Thoughe her soules gon a blacburyed
For certes many a predycation
Cometh oft tyme of yuel entencion.
¶ Some for pleasaunce of folke, & for flatery
To ben auaunced by hipocrysy
And some for beyne glorie, and some for hate
For whan I dare not other wayes debate
Than wol I sting hem with my tõge smerte
In prechyng, so that he shal not asterte
To ben diffamed falsly, yf that he
Hath trespased to my bretherne or to me

For though I tel not his propre name
Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
By signes, or by other circumstaunces
Thus quyte I folke, ỳ dothe vs displesaũces
Thus put I out my venym vnder hewe
Of holynesse, to semen holy and trewe
But shortly myne entent I wol deuyse
I preche of nothyng but of couetyse
Therfore my teme is yet, and euer was
Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas.
¶ Thus can I preache ayenst the same vyce
Whiche that I vse, and that is auarice
But though my selfe be gilty in that synne
Yet can I maken other folke to twynne
From auarice, and sore hem to repent
But that is not my principal entent
I preche nothyng but for couetyse
Of this matere, it ought ynough suffyse.
Than tel I hem ensamples many one
Of olde stories, longe tyme agone
For lewde people louen tales olde
Which thynges they can wel reporte & holde
What trow ye, whiles that I may preche
And wynne golde and syluer for to teche
That I wol lyue in pouert wilfully.
Nay nay, I thought it neuer trewly
For I wol preche and begge in sodrie londes
I wol not do no labour with myn hondes
Ne make baskettes, and lyue therby
Bycause I wol not begge idelly
I wol none of the apostels counterfete
I wol haue money, mault, chese, & whete
Al were it yeuen of the poorest page
Or of the poorest wydowe in a village
Though her children shuld sterue for famyē
Nay, I wol drinke the lycoure of the wyne
And haue a ioly wenche in euery toun
But herkeneth lordynges my conclusyoun
Your lykyng is that I shulde tel a tale
Nowe I haue drōken a draught of corny ale
By god I hope I shal tel you a thynge
That shal by reson ben at your lykynge
For though my selfe be a ful vycious man
A moral tale yet I you tel can
Whiche I am wonte to preche, for to wynne
Nowe holdeth your peace, my tale I woll begyn.

Here endeth the Pardoners prologue, and here foloweth his tale.

In Flan

N Flaunders whilō ther
was a company
Of yonge folke, that haũ-
ted foly
As hasarde, ryotte, Ste-
wes, & tauernes
Where as wyth harpes
Lutes, and Geternes
They dauncen & playen at dyce nyght & day
And eeten also, ouer that her might may
Through which they don the dyuel sacrifyce
within the dyuels temple, in cursed wyse
By superfluite abhominable
Her othes ben so great and so damnable
That it is grisly for to here hem swere
Our blissed lordes body they al to tere
Hem thought iewes rent him not ynough
And eche of hem at others synne lough.
And right anon comen in tomblesteres
Fetys and smale and yonge fruytereres
Syngers wilh harpes, baudes, & wafrerers
whiche that ben verely the dyuels offycers
To kyndlen and blowe the fyre of lechery
That is anexed vnto glotony
The holy writte take I to my wytnesse
That lechery is in wyne and dronkenesse.
¶ Lo howe that dronken Lothe vnkyndly
Lay by his doughters two onwetyngly
So dronke he was, he nist what he wrought
And therfore sore repent hym ought
Herodes, who so wol the stories seche
There may ye lerne, & by ensample teche
whan he of wyne was replete at his feste
Right at his owne table, yaue his heste
To sleen Johan the Baptiste ful giltlesse
Seneke saythe eke good wordes doutlesse
He saythe he can no difference fynde
Betwixt a man that is out of his mynde
And a man that is dronklewe
But woodnesse that is fallen in a shrewe
Perseuereth lenger than dothe dronknesse
O gloteny, ful of cursydnesse
O cause first of our confusyon
O original of our dampnacion
Tyl Christ had bought vs wō his blode agayn
Lo howe dere, shortly for to sayn
Bought was first this cursed vilanye
Corrupt was al this world through glotony
Adam our forn father, and his wyke also
Fro Paradyce, to labour and to wo
Were driuen for that dyce, it is no drede
For whyles that Adam fasted, as I rede
He was in paradyce, and whan that he
Ete of the frute, defended on the tre
Anon he was out caste to wo and payne
O gloteny, on the wel ought vs to playne.
¶ Oh, wyste a man howe many maladyes
Foloweth of excesse and of glotenyes
He wolde ben the more mesurable
Of his dyete, syttyng at his table
Alas the shorte throte, the tender mouthe
Maketh that este, & west, northe, and southe,
In erthe, in eyre, in water, man to swynke
To getten a gloton dayntye mete and drinke
Of this mater, o Poule wel canste thou trete
Mete vnto wombe, & wombe eke vnto mete
Shal god distroy bothe as Poule saythe
Alas, a foule thyng it is by my faythe
To say this worde, and fouler is the dede
whan men so drinketh of the whyte & rede
That of his trothe he maketh his priue
Through thilke cursed superfluite.
¶ The apostle sayth, wepyng ful pitously
There walken many, of which tolde haue I
I say it nowe wepyng with pitous voyce
There ben enemyes Of Christes croyse
Of which ȳ ende is deth, wombe is her god
O bely, O wombe, O stynkyng cod
Fulfylled of donge and of corrupcioun
At eyther ende of the foule is the soun
Howe great coste and laboure is to fynde
These cokes how they stāpe, strain, & grinde
And turne substaunce in to accident
To fulfyl al thy lykerous talent
Out of the harde bones knocken they
The mary, for they caste it not awey
That may go through the gullet sake & sote
Of spycerie, of leues, barke, and rote
Shal ben his sauce ymade by delyte
To maken hym haue a newer apetyte
But certes he that haunteth suche delytes
Is deed, whiles that he lyueth in the vyces
¶ A lecherouse thyng is wyne and drōknesse
It is ful of stryuyng and of wretchydnesse
Oh dronken man, disfygured in thy face
Sower is thy breth, foul art thou to enbrace
And through thy drōkē nose sowneth ȳ soun
As tho thou saydest aye, Sampson Sāpson
And yet god wote Sāpson drōk neuer wyne
Thou fallest, as it were a stycked swyne
Thy tonge is lost, and al thyne honest cure
For drynkennesse is very sepulture
Of mannes wytte, and his discretion
In whom that drinke hath domynacion.

He can

He can no counsayle kepe, it is no drede
Nowe kepe you fro the whyte and fro ý rede
Namely fro the white wyne of Lepe
That is to sel in Fishe strete and in Chepe
This wyne of Spayne crepeth subtelly
In other wynes growyng fast by
Of whiche riseth suche fumosyte
That whan a mã hath drõck draughtes thre
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe
He is in Spayne, right at the towne of Lepe
Nought at Rochel, ne at Burdeaux toun
And than wol he say, Sampsoun Sãpsoun
But herkeneth lordiges o word, I you pray
That al the souerayne actes, dare I say
Of victories in the olde Testament
That thorowe very god, that is omnipotent
Were don in abstinence and in prayere
Loketh the Byble, and there ye mow it lere.
Loketh Attyla, the great conquerour
Deyd in his slepe, with shame and dishonour
Bledyng aye at his nose in dronknesse
A capitayne shulde lyue in sobernesse.
And ouer al this, auyse you right wel
what was cõmaunded vnto Lamuel:
Nat Samuel: but Lamuel saye I
Redeth the Byble, and fyndeth it expresly
Of wyne yeuyng to hem that haue iustyce
No more of this, for it may ynoughe suffyce.

And nowe that I haue spoke of glotenye
Nowe wol I defende you hasardrie
Hasarde is very mother of lesynges
And of disceyte, and cursed for swerynges
Blaspheme of christ, mãslauyter, & wast also
Of batayle ofte tyme, and of other mo
It is repreue, and contrarye to honour
For to be holden a cõmen hasardour
And euer the hyer that he is of estate
The more he is holden desolate
If that a prince vse hasardrie
In al gouernaunce and policie
He is as by comen opinyon
Holde the lesse in reputacion. (sadour
¶ Styll: bon, that was holde a wyse ambas:
was sent in to Corinthe w̃ ful great honour
Fro Calydone, to maken hem alyaunce
And whan he came, happed this chaunce
That al the greatest that were of that londe
Playeng at hasarde he hem fonde
For whiche, as sone as it might be
He stale hym home ayen to his countre
And sayd, there wol I not lese my name
I nyl not take on me so great defame
For to alye you to none hasardours
Sendeth other wyser enbassadours
For by my trouthe, me were leuer dye
Than I shulde you to hasardours alye
For ye that ben so gloriouse in honours
Shal not alye you with hasardours
As by my wyl, ne by my tretie
This wyse philosopher, thus sayd he.
¶ Loke eke howe to kyng Demetrius
The kyng of Parthes, as the boke saythe vs
Sent hym a payre of dyce of golde in scorne
For he had vsed hasardrie there byforne
For which he helde his glorie & his renoun
At no value or reputacioun
Lordes might fynde other maner play
Honest ynough to driue the day away.

Nowe wol I speke of othes false & great
A worde or two, as other bokes entreat
Great sweryng is thyng abhomynable
And false sweryng is yet more reprouable
The hye god forbade sweryng at all
wytnesse of Mathew, but in specyall
Of sweryng, saythe the holy Jeromye
Thou shalte swere soth thyn othes, & not lye
And swere in dome and eke in rightwysuesse
But ydle sweryng is a cursydnesse.
¶ Beholde and se that in the first table
Of hye goddes hestes honorable
Howe that the seconde heste of hym is this
Take not my name in ydelnesse amys
Lo, he rather forbyddeth such sweryng
Than homicide, or any other cursed thyng
I say as thus, by order it stondeth (deth
This knoweth they ý his hestes vnderston:
Howe that the seconde heste of god is that
And further more, I wol the tel al plat
That vengeaũce shal not parte fro his hous
That of hys othes is to outragyous
By goddes preciouse herte, and his bones
And by the blode of Christ, shed for vs ones
Seuen is my chaunce, and thyn fyue & thre
By goddes armes, yf thou falsly play me
This daggar shal thorowe thyn herte go
This frute cometh of thylke bones two
For swering, ire, falsnesse, and homicyde
Now for ý loue of Christ, that for vs dyde
Leaueth your othes, bothe great and smale
For I shal tel you a meruaylous tale.
¶ These ryottours thre, of which I tel
Longe erste or prime ronge any bel

were

were set hem in a tauerne to drinke
And as they sate, they herde a bel clynke
Byforne a cors, ý was caryed to his graue
That one of hem gan cal to his knaue
Go bette (q he) and aske redely
what cors is this, that passeth forthe by
And loke that thou reporte his name wele.
¶ Syr (q he) it nedeth neuer a dele
It was me told er ye came here two houres
He was parde an olde felowe of yours
Al sodaynly was he slayne to nyght
For dronke as he sate on his benche vpright
There came a priuy thefe, men clepen dethe
That in this countrey al the people slethe
And with his speare he smote his hert a two
And went his way, withouten wordes mo
He hath a thousande slayne, this pestilence
And mayster, er ye come in his presence
Me thynketh that it were necessarye
For to beware of suche an aduersarye
Bethe redy for to meten hym euer more
Thus taught me my dame, I say no more.
¶ By saynt Mary, sayd this tauernere
the chylde sayth sothe, for he hath this yere
Hence ouer a myle, slayne in a great village
Bothe man and woman, chylde and page
I trowe his habytacioun be there
To ben auysed, great wysedome it were
Er that he dyd a man dishonour.
¶ Yea goddes armes (q this ryottour)
Is it suche peril with him for to mete?
I shal hym seche by style & eke by strete
I make a vowe, by goddes digne bones
Herkeneth felowes, we thre ben al ones
Let eche of vs holde vp his honde to other
And eche of vs become others brother
And we wol slee this false traytour dethe
He shal be slayne, that so many slethe
By goddes dignite, er that it be nyght
¶ To gider hã these thre her trouthes plight
To lyue and dye eche of hym with other
As though he were his owne brother
And vp they sterten al dronken in this rage
And forthe they gone, towarde that village
Of which the tauerner hath spoke before
And many a grisly othe han they swore
And Christes blessed body they to rent
Dethe shal be deed, and we may hym hent.
¶ whan they han gone not fully a myle
Right as they wold haue troden ouer a style
An olde poore man with hem mette
This olde man ful mekely hem grette
And sayd, nowe lordynges god you se.
¶ The proudest of these ryottours thre
Answerde ayen, what chorle w̃ harde grace
why art thou al forwrapped saue thy face?
why lyuest thou so longe in so great age?
¶ This olde man gan loken in hys visage
And sayd thus: for I can not fynde
A man, though I walked into Inde
Neyther in cyte, ne in no village
That wol chaunge his youthe for myne age
And therfore mote I haue myn age styl
As longe tyme as it is goddes wyl.
Ne dethe alas, nyl not haue my lyfe
Thus walke I lyke a restlesse caityfe
And on ý ground, which is my mothersgate
I knocke with my staffe erlyche and late
And say, leue mother let me in
Lo howe I vanyshe, flesche, bloode, & skyn
Alas, whan shal my bones ben at reste
Mother with you wolde I chaũge my cheste
That in my chamber longe tyme hath be
ye for an heren cloute to wrappe in me
But yet to me she wol not done that grace
For whiche ful welked is my face
But syrs, to you it is no curtesye
To speken vnto an olde man villanye
But he trespace in worde eyther in dede
In holy writte, ye may your selfe wel rede
Ayenst an olde man, hoore vpon his heede
ye shulde aryse, therfore I you rede
Ne doth vnto an old man no harme as now
No more than ye wolde a man dyd you
In age, yf that I may so longe abyde
And god be with you, whether ye go or ryde
I mote go thyder as I haue to go
¶ Nay olde chorle, by god thou shalt not so
Sayd these other hasardours anon
Thou partest not so lightly by saynt John
Thou spakest right now of thilk trayter deth
That in this countre al our frendes slethe
Haue here my trouthe thou arte his espye
Tel where he is, or els thou shalt dye
By god and by the holy sacrament
For sothely thou arte of hys assent
To slee vs yonge folke, thou false thefe.
¶ Nowe syrs, yf it be to you sy lefe
To fynde dethe, turne vp this croked way
For in that groue I lefte hym by my fay
Under a tree, and there he wol abyde
Ne for your boste he nyl hym nothyng hyde
Se ye yõder oke, right there ye shal hi fynde
God saue you, that bought ayen mankynde

And you

And you amende, thus sayd thus olde man
¶ Than euerych of these ryottours ran
Tyl they came to the tree, & there they foūde
Floreynes of golde fyne, ycoyned rounde
Wel nye a seuen bushels, as hem thought
No lenger than after dethe they sought
But eche of hem so glad was of that syght
For that the floreyns so fayre ben & bright
That downe they sytte, by the precious hord
The worst of hem spake the first word.
¶ Brethern (qꝯ he) take kepe what I say
My wytte is great, though I borde & play
This tresure hath fortune to vs yeuen
In myrthe and iolyte our lyfe to lyuen
And lightly as it cōmeth, so wol we spende
Hey, goddes precious herte: who wende
To day, that we shulde haue so fayr a grace:
But might thus gold be caryed fro thi3 place
Home to my house, or els to yours
(For wel I wote that al this golde is ours)
Than were we in hye felycite
But trewly by day it may not be
Men wolde say, that we were theues stroūge
And for our owne tresoure than vs honge
This tresour muste ycaried be by night
As wisely and as slily as it might
Wherfore I rede, let loke amonge vs al
To drawe, & let se where the cutte wol fal
He that hath ꝑ shortest cutte, with hert blyth
Shal renne to towne, and that ful swythe
To bring vs breed & drinke ful priuely
And two of vs shal kepe ful subtelly
This tresour wel, and yf he wol not tarye
Whan it is night, we wol this tresour carye
By one assent, where as vs lyste best
That one of hem brought grasse in his fest
And bad hē draw, & loke on whō it wold fal
And it fel on the yongest of hem al
And forth towarde the towne he went anon
And al so sone as he was gone
That one of hem spake vnto that other
Thou wost wel, thou art my sworn brother
Thy profyte wol I tel the right anone
Thou woste wel that our felowe is gone
And here is golde, and that ful great plente
That shal departed be amonge vs thre
But natheleſſe, yf that I can shape it so
That it departed were amonge vs two
Had I not done a frendly turne to the
That other answerd, I not how ꝑ might be
I wol wel that the golde were ours two
What shulde we do, that it might be so-
¶ Shal it be coūsayle (said the first shrewe)
And I shal tel the in wordes fewe
What we wol done, and bryng it wel aboute.
I graunt (qꝯ that other) out of doute
That by my trouth, I wol ꝑ not bewrayne
¶ Now (qꝯ he) thou wost wel we ben twayn
And twayne of vs shal stronger be than one
Loke whan he is sette, and than anone
Arise, as though thou woldest w̄ hym play
And I shal ryuen him through ꝑ sydes tway
Whyles ꝑ thou struggleſt w̄ hym as in game
And with thy dagger, loke thou do the same
And than shal al the golde departed be
My dere frende, betwixt the and me
Than may we bothe our lustes fulfyl
And play at dyce, right at our owne wyl
And thus accorded ben these shrewes tway
To slee the thyrde, as ye herde me say
This yongest, which ꝑ went to the towne
Ful often in his herte he rolled vp and down
The beautie of these floreyns fayre & bright
O lorde (qꝯ he) yf so were that I might
Haue al this tresour to my selfe alone
There nys no man, that lyueth vnder trone
Of god, that shulde lyue so mery as I
And at the laste the fende our enemy
Put in his thought, that he shuld poyson bey
With which he might sleen his felowes twey
For why, the fende fonde hym in such lyuing
That he had leue to sorowe hym to bryng
For this was vtterly hys entente
To sleen hem bothe, and neuer to repente.
¶ And forth he goth, no lenger wold he tary
In to the towne, vnto a potecary
And prayde hym that he wol hym sel
Some poyson, that he might his rattes quel
And eke there was a polkat in his hawe
That as he sayd, his capons had yslawe
And sayd, he wold wreken hym if ꝑ he might
Of vermyn, that distroyed hem by night.
¶ The potecary answerde, thou shalt haue
A thyng, as wisely god my soule saue
In al this worlde there nys no creature
That eateth or drinketh of this confecture
Not but the moūtenaūce of a corne of whete
That he ne shal hys lyfe anon forlete
Yea sterue he shal, and that in lesse whyle
Thā thou woldest gon a pace, not but a myle
This poyson is so harde and so violent
¶ This cursed man hath in his honde hent
This poyson in a boxe, and sythe he ran
In to the next strete vnto a man

And borowed

And borowed hym large botels thre
And in the two, the poyson poured he
The thyrde he kept clene for his drinke
For al the night he shope hym for to swynke
In caryeng of the golde out of that place
And whan this riottour, with sorie grace
Had fylde with hym hys great botels thre
To his felowes ayen repayred he.
¶What nedeth it therof to sermon more:
For right as they had caste his dethe before
Right so they han hym slayne, & that anone
And whan this was done, than spake ý one
Nowe let vs syt and drinke, & make vs mery
And afterwarde we wolne his body bury
And after that it happed hem per caas
The one toke the botel, therin ý poyson was
And dronke, and yaue his felowe drinke also
Through which anon they steruē both two.
¶But certes I suppose that Auicenne
wrote neuer in no cannon, ne in no fenne
More wonder sorowes of enpoysonnyng
Than had these wretches two in her ending
Thus ended ben these homicides two
And eke the false enpoysonner also.
O cursed synne, ful of al cursydnesse
O traytours homicide, O wickydnesse
O glotenye, luxure, and hasardye
Thou blasphemour of Christ wyth vilanye
And othes great, of vsage and of pryde
Alas mankynde, howe may it betyde
That to thy creatoure, which ý the wrought
And with his precious bloode the bought
Thou arte so false and so vnkynde, alas:
Now good mē, godforyeue youyour trespas
And ware you fro the synne of auaryce
Myne holy pardon, may you al waryche
So that ye offre nobles or starlynges
Other els syluer spones, broches, or rynges
Boweth your heed vnder this bulle
Cometh vp ye wyues, & offreth of your wol
Your names here I entre in my rolle anon
In to the blisse of heuen shul ye al gon
I you assoyle by myne high powere
Ye that offren, as clene and eke clere
As ye were borne. Lo syrs, thus I preche
And Iesu Christ, that is our soules leche
So graunt you hys pardon to receyue
For that is beste, I wol you not disceyue
But sirs, one worde forgate I in my tale
I haue reiykes, and pardon in my male
As fayre as any man in Englonde
Whiche were yeuen me by the popes honde
If any of you wol of deuocion
Offren, and haue myne absolucion
Cometh forthe anon, and kneleth here adown
That ye may haue parte of my pardoun
Or els taketh pardon as ye wende
Al newe and freshe, at euery townes ende
So that ye offren alway newe and newe
Nobles or pens, whiche ben good and trewe
It is great honour to euerych that is here
That ye may haue a sufficient pardonere
To assoyle you, in countre there ye ryde.
For auentures, whiche that may betyde
For perauenture there may fal one or two
Downe of her horse, & breke her necke a two
Loke whiche suertie it is to you al
That I am in your felowshyp yfal
That maye assoyle you bothe more and lasse
whan that the soule shal fro the body passe
I rede that oure hoste shal begynne
For he is moste enuelopte of synne
Cometh forthe sir hoste, and offre fyrst anon
And thou shalte kysse the relykes euerychon
Yea for a grote, vnbokyl anon thy purse.
¶Nay nay (q̃ he) than haue I christes curse
Let be (q̃ he) it shal not be so theiche
Thou woldest make me kisse thyn old breche
And swere it were a relyke of a seynt
Though it were w̄ thy foundemēt depeynt
But by the crosse, which seynt Helayne fonde
I wolde I had thy coylons in myne honde
In stede of relykes, or of sanctuarye
Let cutte hem of, I wol helpe ý hem to cary
They shul be shrined in an hogges torde
This pardoner answerde not a worde
So wrothe he was, he wolde no worde say.
¶Now (q̃ oure hoste) I wol no lenger play
with the, ne with non other angry man.
¶But right anon the worthy knight began
whan that he sawe that al the people loughe
Nomore of this, for it is right ynoughe
Sir pardoner, be mery and glad of chere
And ye sir hoste, that ben to me so dere
I praye you that ye kysse the pardoner
And pardoner, I pray the drawe the ner
And as we dyd, let vs laughe and play
Anon they kysseed, and ryden forthe her way.

¶Here endeth the pardoners tale, & here begynneth the Shipmans Prologue

NOwe frendes sayd oure hoste so dere
How lyketh you by John the Pardonere.
He hathe vnbokeled wel the male
He hath vs tolde right a thrifty tale
As touchyng of hys mysgouernaunce
I pray to god yeue hym good chaunce
As ye han herde, of these ryottours thre
Nowe gentyl mariner, hertely I pray the
Tel vs a good tale, and that right anon
It shal be done, by god & by saynt John
Sayd this maryner, as wel as euer I can
And right anon his tale he thus began

Here endeth the Shypmans Prologue, and here followeth hys tale.

AMarchaunt, whilom dwelled at sait Denise
That ryche was, for which mē held hi wise
A wyfe he had, of excellent beaute
And cōpynable, & reuelous was she
Whyche is a thynge that causeth more dispence
Than worthe is al the chere and reuerence
That men hem done, at feestes & at daunces
Suche salutations and countynaunces
Passeth, as dothe the shadowe on a wal
But wo is hym that paye mote for al
The sely husbonde algate he mote paye
He mote vs bothe cloth and eke array
Al for his owne worshippe, richely
In whiche array we dauncen iolyly
And yf that he may nat, parauenture
Or els lust no suche spence endure
But thynketh, that it is wast and yloss
Than mote another paye for our coste
And lende vs golde, and that is perilous
This noble Marchant held a noble hous
For whiche he had al day great repayre
For his largesse, and for hys wyfe was fayre
That wonder is: but herkeneth to my tale
Amonge al his gestes great and smale.
There was a monke, a fayre man & a bolde
I trowe thurty wynter he was olde

That

That euer in one, was drawing to that place
This yonge monke, ý so fayre was of face
Aquaynted was with this good man
Sythens that he fyrst knowlege began
That in his house, as familier was he
As it is possyble any frende to be
And for as moche, as this good man
And eke this monke, of which I began
Were bothe two borne in one village
The monke hym claymed, as for cosynage
And he agayne sayd not ones nay
But was as glad therof, as foule of day
For to his herte it was a great pleasaunce
Thus ben they knytte w̄ eterne aliaunce
And eche of hem gan other for to ensure
Of brotherheed, whyles her lyfe may dure.
¶ Fre was Dan Johan, & namely of dispēce
As in that house, and ful of diligence
To do pleasaunce, and eke great costage
He forgate not to yeue the leste page
In al that house, but after her degre
He yaue the lorde, and sythen hys meyne
whan ý he came, some maner honest thyng
For whiche they were as glad of his cōming
As foule is fayne, whan the sonne vp ryseth
No more herof as nowe, for it suffyseth.
¶ But so bykel, this marchaunt on a day
Shope hym to make redy hys aray
Towarde the towne of Bruges for to fare
To bye there a porcion of ware
For whiche he hath sent to parys anon
A messanger, and prayde hath dan John
That he shuld come to saint Denys to playn
with him, and with his wife, a day or twayn
Or he to Bruges went, in al wyse.
¶ This noble monke, of which I you deuyse
Hath of his abbot, as hym lyst lycence
Bycause he was a man of hye prudence
And eke an officer, out for to ryde
To seen her graunges, and her bernes wyde
And vnto saynt Denys he cometh anon.
who was so welcome, as my lord dan John
Our dere cosyn, ful of curtesye
with him he brought a iubbe of malueſye
And eke another ful of fyne vernage
And volatily, as was aye his vsage
And thus I let hem both eate, drinke, & play
This marchant & this monke, a day or tway
¶ The thyrde day this marchaunt vp ryseth
And on his nede sadly hym auyseth
And vp in to his countyng house gothe he
To reken with hym selfe, as wel may be
Of thilke yere, howe it with hym stoode
And howe he spended had his goode
And yf that he encresed were or none
His bokes and his bagges many one
He laythe afore hym, on his counter borde
Ful rythe was hys tresour and his horde
For whiche ful faste his counter dore he shet
And eke he nolde no man shulde hym let
Of hys accomptes, for the mene tyme
And thus he sate tyl it was passed prime.
Dan Johan was rysen in the morow also
And in the garden walked two and fro
And hath hys thynges sayd ful curtesly.
¶ This good wyfe come walkyng priuely
In to the garden, there he walked softe
And hym saluyeth, as she hath done ful ofte
A mayden chylde came in her companye
which as her luste, she may gouerne & gye
For yet vnder the yerde was the mayde.
¶ O dere cosyn dan Johan, she sayde
what eyleth you so rathe to a ryse.
¶ Nece (q̄ he) it ought ynough suffyse
Fyue houres for to slepen on a night
But it were for an olde palied wight
As ben these old wedded men, that lye & dare
As in a forme sytteth a wery hare
All forstraught, with houndes gret & smale
But dere nece, why loke ye so pale.
I trowe certes, that our good man
Hath you laboured, sythe this night began
That you were nede to resten hastely
And with that worde, he lough ful merily
And with his owne thought he wore al reed
This fayre wyfe, gan to shake her heed
And sayd thus, yea god wote al (q̄ she)
Nay cosyn myne, it stondeth not so with me
For by that god that yaue me soule and lyfe
In al the realme of Fraunce, is there no wife
That lesse luste hath to that fory play
For I may syngen alas, and welawaye
That I was borne, but to no wight (q̄ she)
Dare I not tel, howe it stonte with me
Wherfore I think out of this world to wed
Or els of my selfe sone to make an ende
So ful I am of drede and eke of care.
¶ This mōke began vpon this wyfe to stare
And sayd alas, nay nece god forbede
That ye for any sorowe, or for any drede
For do your selfe, but telleth me your grefe
Peraventure I may in your mischefe
Counsayle or helpe, & therfore telleth me
All your anoye, for it shal secret be

For on my portouse I make an othe
That neuer in my lyfe, for lefe ne lothe
Ne shal I not of no counsayle you bewray.
The same ayen to you (q̃ she) I say
By god and by this portouse, I you swere
Thoug men wolde me al in to peces tere
Ne shal I neuer, for to go to hel
Bewray o worde, of thyng that ye me tel
Not for no cosynage, ne for alyaunce
But verily for loue and affyaunce
Thus ben they sworne, and here vpon kyste
And ylke of hem tolde other what hem lyste
¶ Cosyn (q̃ she) yf I had a space
As I haue none, and namely in this place
Than wolde I tel a legende of my lyfe
That I suffred haue, sythe I was a wyfe
with myn husbonde, though he be your cosyn
Nay (q̃ this mõke) by god & seynt Martyn
He nis no more cosyn vnto me
Than is this lefe, that hongeth on the tre
I clepe him so, by saynte Denys of Fraunce
To haue the more cause of aquayntaunce
Of you, whom I haue loued specially
Aboven al other women sykerly
This swere I you on my professyoun
Telleth your grefe, leste he come adoun
And hasteth you, and goth your way anon.
My dere loue (q̃ she) O my dan John.
Ful lefe me were this counsayle to hyde
But out it mote, it may no lenger abyde
My husbonde is to me the worste man
That euer was, sythe the worlde began
But sythen I am a wyfe, it sytte not to me
To tellen no wight of our priuyte
Neyther in bedde, ne in none other place
God chylde I shulde tel it for his grace
A wyfe ne shulde not say of her husbonde
But al honoure, as I can vnderstonde
Saue vnto you, thus moche tel I shal
As helpe me god, he is nought worthe at al
In no degre, the value of a flye
But yet me greueth moste his nygardye
And wel ye wote, that woman naturally
Desyren thynges syre, as wel as I
They wolden that her husbondes shulde be
Hardy, and wyse, riche, and therto fre
And burom to his wyfe, and fresche a bedde
But by that ylke lorde that for vs bledde
For hys honoure, my selfe to arraye
A sonday nert, I mote nedes paye
An hundred frankes, or els am I lorne
Yet were me leuer that I were vnborne
Than me were done a slaunder or a vilanye
And yf myn husbonde eke might it aspye
I nere but loste, and therfore I you prey
Lene me this somme, or els mote I dey
Dan John I say, lene me this hũdred frãkes
Parde I wol not fayle you my thankes
If that ye lyste to do that I you pray
For at a certayne day I wol you pay
And to done you what plesaunce & seruyce
That I may don, right as ye lyste deuyse
And but I do, god take on me vengeaunce
As foule as euer had genilion of Fraunce.
¶ This gẽtil mõke answerd in this manere
Nowe truly myne owne lady dere
I haue (q̃ he) on you so great routhe
That I you swere, and plight my trouthe
That whã your husbõd is to Flaũders ifare
I wol delyuer you out of al this care
I wol brynge you an hundred frankes
And with that he caught her by the flankes
And her enbraced herde, and kysled her ofte
Gothe nowe your way (q̃ he) al styl & softe
And let vs dyne as sone as euer ye may
For by my kalender it is prime of the day
Gothe nowe, & beth as true as I shal be.
Nowe els god forbyd syr sayd she
And forthe she gothe, as ioly as a pye
And bade the cokes that they shulde hem hye
So that men might dyne, and that anone
Up to her husbonde is this wyfe gone
And knocked at his counter dore boldely.
Qui est la (q̃ he) Peter it am I
(Quod she) howe longe wol ye fast:
Howe longe tyme wol ye recken and caste
Your sommes, your bokes, & your thynges:
The dyuel haue parte of al such reckeninges
Ye haue ynough (q̃ she) of goddes sonde
Come down to day, & let your bagges stonde
Ne be ye not a shamed, that dan John
Shal fastyng al this longe day gon:
what let vs go here masse and go dyne.
¶ Wyfe (q̃ this mã) lytel canst thou diuyne
The curyous belynesse that we haue
For of chapmen, so god me saue
And by that lorde that called is seynt Iue
Scarsly amonge twenty, twelue shal thriue
Contynuelly, lastyng vnto their age
We may wel make chere & good vylage
And driue forthe the worlde, as it may be
And kepe our estate in priuyte
Tyl we be deed, or els that we play
A pylgrimage, or gone out of the way

And

And therfore haue I great necessyte
Upon this queynte worlde to auyse me
For euermore we mote stonde in drede
Of happe and fortune, in our chapmanhede.
To Flaūders wol I gone to morow at day
And come ayene as sone as euer I may
For whiche my dere wyfe, I the beseke
As be to euery wight buxom and meke
And for to kepe our good be curyouse
And honestly gouerne wel our house
Thou haste ynough, in euery maner wyse
That to a thrifty hulwyfe may suffyse
The lacketh none array, ne no vitayle
Of syluer in thy purse thou mayst not fayle
And with ý worde, his counter dore he shette
And down he gothe, no lenger wold he lette
And hastely a masse was there isayde
And spedely the tables were ilayde
And to dyner faste they hem spedde
And richly the chapman this monke fedde.
And after dyner, dan Johan soberly
This chapman toke a parte al priuely
And sayd hym thus, cosyn it stondeth so
That wel I se, to Bruges ye wol go
God and saynt Austen spede you and gyde
I pray you cosyn, wysely that ye ryde
Gouerneth you also wel of your dyete
Al temperatly, and namely in this hete
Betwixt vs two nedeth no straunge fare
Farwel cosyn, god shylde you fro care
If any thyng there be by day or by night
And it lye in my power or in my might
That ye me wol cōmaunde in any wyse
It shal be done, right as ye wol deuyse
O thyng or that ye go, yf that it may be
I wolde pray you for to lene me
An hundred frankes, for a weke or twey
For certayne beestes, that I mote nedes bey
To store with a place that is ours
God helpe me so, I wolde it were yours
I shal not fayle surely at my day
Not for a thousande frankes, a myle way
But let this thyng be secret, I you pray
For yet this night these beestes mote I bey
And fare nowe wele, myne owne cosyn dere
Graunt mercy of your coste and your chere.
¶ This noble marchaunt, gentilly anon
Answerde and sayd, O cosyn dan John
Nowe sikerly, this is a smal request
My golde is yours, whan that you leste
And not only my golde, but my chaffare
Take what ye lyste, god shilde that ye spare
But one thyng is, ye knowe it wel ynough
Of chapmen, that her money is her plough
We may creaunce, whyle we haue a name
But goldlesse for to be it is a shame
Paye it ayen, whan it lythe at your ese
After my might, fayne wolde I you plese
¶ These hundred frankes, set he forthe anon
And priuely he toke hem to dan John
No wight of this worlde, wyst of thys lone
Sauyng this marchaūt, & dan Johan alone
They drinken & speke, & rome a while and pley
Tyl that dan Johan rydeth to his abbey.
The morow came, & forth ryd this marchāt
To Flaūders warde, his prētes brought him
Tyl he came to Bruges, wel & merily (auāt
Nowe gothe this marchaunt, wel and besily
About his nedes, & byeth, and creaunseth
He neyther playeth at the dyce ne daunseth
But as a marchaunt, shortly to tel
He ledde his lyfe, and there I let him dwel
¶ The sonday next, ý this marchāt was gon
To saynt Denys is comen dan John
With crowne & berde al freshe & newe ishaue
In al this house, there nas so lytel a knaue
Ne no wight els, but he was ful fayne
For ý my lorde dan John was comen agayn
And shortly to the poynte for to gon
This fayre wyfe acordeth with dan John
That for these hundred frankes he shulde al
Haue her in his armes, bolte vpright (night
And this acorde parformed was in dede
In myrthe al nyght a besy lyfe they lede
Tyl it was day, ý dan John yede his way
And bade the meyne farwel & haue good day
For none of hem, ne no wyght in the toun
Had of Dan Johan any suspection
And forthe he rydeth, home to his abbey
Or where hym lyste, no more of hym I sey.
¶ This marchaunt, whan ended was ý faire
To saynte Denys he gan for to repaire
And with his wyfe he maketh feest & chere
And telleth her that the chaffare is so dere
That nedes muste he make a cheuesaunce
For he was bounden in a reconisaunce
To pay twenty thousande shildes anon
For whiche this marchaunt is to Paris gon
To borowe of certayne frendes that he had
A certayne frankes, & some with hym he lad
And whan he was comen in to the toun
For chierte and great affection
Unto dan John he fyrst gothe hym to pley
Nought for to borowe of hym no money

But for to wete and se of his welfare
And for to tellen him of his chaffare
As frendes done, whã they ben mette in fere
Dan Johan him maketh feest & mery chere
And he him tolde ayen ful specially
Howe he had bought, ful wel and graciously
Thonked be god, al hole hys marchaundyse
Saue that he muste, in al maner wyse
Maken a cheuesaunce, as for his beste
And than shulde he be in ioye and reste
Dã John answerd, certes I am right fayn
That ye in heale be comen home agayne
And yf I were riche, as haue I blisse
Of twẽty thousand shildes shuld ye not misse
For ye so kyndely, this other day
Lent me golde, and as I can and may
I thonke you, by god and by saynt Jame
But nathelesse, I toke it vnto our dame
Your wyfe at home, the same golde agayne
Upon your benche, she wote it wel certayne
By certayne tokens, that I can her tel
Nowe by your leue, I may no lenger dwel
Our abbot wol out of this towne anon
And in hys companye I mote gon
Grete wel our dame, myne owne nece swete
And farwele dere cosyn, tyl we mete.
¶ This marchant that was ful ware & wyse
Creaunced hath, and eke payde in Parys
To certayne lombardes, redy in her hondes
This somme of gold, & gate of hem ỳ bondes
And home he gothe, as mery as a popyngay
For wel he knewe he stode in suche aray
That nedes muste he wyn by that viage
A thousande frankes, aboue al his costage.
¶ His wyfe ful redy met hym at the yate
As she was wonte, of olde vsage algate
And al that night in myrthe they be sette
For he was ryche, and clerely out of dette
whã it was day, this marchãt gan enbrace
His wyfe al newe, & kyssed her in her face
And vp he gothe, & made it wonder tough
No more (q̃ she) by god ye haue ynough
And wantonly ayen with hym she playde
Tyl at the laste this marchant thus sayde.
By god (q̃ he) I am a lytel wrothe
With you my wyfe, al though it be me lothe
And wot ye why: by god as I gesse
For ye haue made a maner of straungenesse
Betwixt me and my cosyn dan John
Ye shulde haue warned me, or I had gon
That he had you an hundred frankes payde
By redy token, & helde hym yuel apayde
For that I to hym spake of cheuesaunce
Ye semed so, as by his countenaunce
But nathelesse, by god our heuen kyng
I thought not to aske of hym nothyng
I pray the wyfe, ne do no more so
Tel me alway er that I fro the go
If any dettour, hath in myne absence
Ypayde the, leste through thy neglygence
I might hym aske a thyng that he hath payd
¶ This wyfe was not a ferde ne affrayde
But boldely she sayd, and that anon
Wary I dekye that false monke dan John
I kepe not of hys tokens neuer a dele
He toke me certayne golde, I wot it wele
what yuel thedom on his monkes snoute
For god it wotte, I wende without doute
That he had yeue it me, bycause of you
To don therwith myne honoure & my prow
For cosynage, and eke for bellye chere
That he hath had ful often tymes here
But sythe I se it stonte in suche disioynte
I wol answere you shortly to the poynte.
Ye haue mo slacker dettours than am I
For I wol pay you wel and redily
Fro day to day, and yf so be I fayle
I am your wyfe, score it on my tayle
Or els I shal pay it as sone as euer I may
For by my trouth, I haue on myne aray
And not in waste, bestowed it euery dele
And for I haue bestowed it so wele
To your honour, for goddes sake I say
As be not wrothe, but let vs laughe & play
Ye shal my ioly body haue to wedde
By god I nyl not pay you but a bedde
Foryeue it me, myne owne spouse dere
Turneth hitherwarde, & make better chere.
¶ This marchant sawe ther was no remedy
And for to chyde, it was but a folye
Sythen that the thyng may not amended be
Nowe wyfe he sayd, and I forgeue it the
But in thy lyfe, be no more so large
Kepe bet my good, this yeue I the in charge
Thus endeth nowe my tale, & god vs sende
Talynge ynough, vnto our lyues ende.

Here endeth the Shypmans tale, and here foloweth the wordes of our host.

Wel

Wel sayd by corpus domini (q̃ our hoste)
Nowe longe mote thou sayle by the coste
Thou gentyl mayster, gentel marinere
God gyue ỳ mõke a thousand last quad yere
A ha felowes, beware of suche a iape
The mõke put in the marchãtes hode an ape
And in hys wyues eke, by saynt Austyn
Draweth no mõkes more in to your Inne
But nowe passe ouer, & let vs seke aboute
who shal tell nowe fyrst of all thys route
An other tale, and wyth that worde he sayde
As curteously, as it had bene a mayde.
My lady priorelle, by your leue
So that I wyste that I shuld you not greue
I wol deme, that ye tellen shoide
A tale nexte, yf so be that ye wolde
Nowe wol ye vouchsafe my lady dere
Gladly (q̃ she) and sayd in thys manere.

Here ende the wordes of oure hoste, & here begynneth the Priorelle prologue.

DOmine dominus noster: quam admirabile est nomen tuum in vniuersa terra,

Orde our Lorde, thy name how maruaylous
Is in thys wyde worlde yspread (q̃ she)
For not only thy laude precious
Parfourmed is, by men of dygnite
But by the mouth of chyldren thy bounte
Parfourmed is, for on the brest soukynge
Sometyme shewen they thyne heryenge
wherfore in laude, as I can best and may
Of the and of the whyte lylly floure
whych that the bare, & is a mayde alway
To tellen a storye, I wol do my laboure
Nought that I may encrese her honoure
For she her selfe is honoure and rote
Of bountye, nexte her sonne of soules bote

Mother mayden, O mayden & mother fre
O bushe vnbrent, brennyng in Moses syght
That rauyshedest downe fro the deyte
Through thyn hũblesse, ỳ gost ỳ in the light
Of whose vertue, whẽ he in thine hert pight
Conceyued was the fathers sapience
Helpe me to tel it in thy presence

Lady thy bounte, and thy magnifycence
Thy vertue and thy great humilite
There may no tonge expresse, in no science
For somtyme lady, er men pray to the
Thou goest before, of thy benignyte
And gettest vs ỳ lyght, through thy prayere
To gyden vs vnto thy sonne so dere

My connyng is to weake, O blyssful quene
For to declare thy hygh worthynesse
That I ne may the weyght sustene
But as a child of twelue moneth olde or lesse
That can vnnethes any worde expresse
Ryght so fare I, and therfore I you praye
Gydeth my songe, that I shal of you say.

Here endeth the Priorelles prologue, and here folo= weth her tale.

THere was in Asye, in a great cytie
Amonges Christen folkes a iewrye
Sustayned by a lorde of that countre
For foule vsure, and lucre of villany
Hateful to Christ, and to hys company
And through ý strete mē myght ryde & wēde
For it was free, and open at euery ende

A lytel schole of christen folke there stode
Downe at ý farther end, in which ther were
Chyldren an hepe, comen of christen blode
That lerned in that schole, yere by yere
Suche manere doctrine, as men vsen here
Thys is to saye, to synge and to rede
As smale chyldren done in her chyldhede

Amōges these childrē was a wedowes son
A lytel clergion, that. vij. yere was of age
That daye by daye to schole was hys won
And also eke, where he sey the ymage
Of Christes mother, had he in vsage
As hym was taught, to knele adowne & say
An Aue maria, as he goeth by the way

Thus hath this wedow, her litel child itaught
Our blyssed lady, Christes mother dere
To worshyp aye, and he forgate it naught
For the seiy chylde, wolde al day soone lere
But aye, whē I remēbre me on thys matere
Saint Nicholas stādeth euer in my presence
For he so yonge to Christ dyd reuerence

Thys lytel chylde hys lytel boke lernyng
As he sate in the schole at hys prymere
He (Alma redemptoris mater) herde synge
As chyldren lered her antiphonere
And as he durst, he drewe aye nere and nere
And herkened to the wordes and the note
Tyl he the fyrst verse couth al by rote

Nought wyst he what this latin was to say
For he so yonge and tender was of age
But on a daye hys felowe gan he pray
To expoune hym the songe, in his langage
Or tellen him why thys songe was in vsage
Thys prayde he hym to construe and declare
Ful ofte tyme, vpon hys knees bare

Hys felowe, whych that elder was thē he
Answerd hym thus, thys song I haue herde say
was made of our blessed lady free
Her to salewe, and eke her for to prey
To ben our helpe & socoure when we dey
I can no more expowne in thys mater
I lerne songe, I can but smal grammer

And is thys songe ymade in reuerence
Of Christes mother, sayd thys innocent
Nowe certes I wol done my diligence

To

To conne it al er Christmasse be went
Though that I for my primer shalbe shent
And shulde be beten thryse in an houre
I wol it conne, our lady to honoure

Hys felowe taught him homewarde priuely
Fro daye to daye, tyl he couth it by rote
And then he songe it wel and boldely
Fro worde to worde, accordynge to the note
Twyse a day it passeth through hys throte
To scholewarde, & homeward whē he went
On Christes mother set was al hys entent

As I haue sayd through out the iewrie
Thys lytel chylde as he came to and fro
Ful merely then wolde he synge and crye
O Alma redemptoris mater, euer mo
The swetnesse hath hys herte perced so
Of Christes mother, that to her to praye
He can not stynte of syngynge by the waye

Our fyrst foe, the serpent Sathanas
That in Jewes herte hys waspes nest
Up swale and sayd, O ebrake people alas
Is thys a thynge to you that is honest
That such a boy shal walke as hym lest
In your dyspyte, & syngen of such sentence
whych is ayenst your lawes reuerence

¶ From thence forth, ÿ iewes han conspyred
Thys innocent out of thys worlde to chase
An homicide therto han they hyred
That in an aley, had a priuy place
And as the chylde gan forby to pace
Thys cursed iewe hym hent, and helde fast
And cutte hys throte, & in a pytte hym caste

I say that in a wardrope they him threwe
where that the iewes purged her intrayle
O cursed folke, of heraudes al newe
what may your yuel entent you auayle
Murther wol out, certes it wol not fayle
And namely ther ÿ honour of god shal sprede
The bloode out cryeth on your cursed dede

¶ O Mater, sowned vnto virginite
Now mayst thou synge folowyng euer in on
The whyte lambe celestial (q̃ he)
Of whiche the great euangelyst sayut John
In Pathmos wrot, whiche sayth ÿ they gon
Before this lambe, & synge alonge all newe
That neuer flesshly women they ne knewe.

¶ This poore wydowe, awayteh al ÿ nyght
After her lytel childe, and he came nought
For whiche as sone as it was day lyght
with face pale, for drede and besy thought
She hath at schole, & els where hym sought
Tyl fynally, she gan so farre aspye
That he was laste seyne in the iurye

wyth mothers pyte, in her breste enclosed
She goth as she were halfe out of her mynd
To euery place, where she hath supposed
By lyklyhede her childe for to fynde
And euer on Christes mother, meke & kynde
She cryed, and at the last thus she wrought
Amonge the cursed iewes she hym sought

She freyneth and she prayeth pytously
To euery iewe that dwelleth in thylke place
To tellen her, yf her chylde went there by
They sayd nay, but Jesu of hys grace
Yaue in her thought, wythin a lytel space
That in that place, after her sonne she cryde
There he was cast, in a pyt besyde

O great god, that perfourmest thy laude
By mouth of innocence, lo here thy myght
Thys iemme of chastite, thys Emeraude
And eke of martyrdome the rubye bryght
There he wyth throte ycorue lay vpryght
He (Alma redemptoris) gan to synge
So loude that al the place gan to ryngе

The christen folke, ÿ through ÿ strete wēt
In comen, for to wonder on thys thynge
And hastely they for the prouoste sent
He came anone, wythout taryenge
And heryeth Christ, that is of heuen kynge
And eke hys mother, honour of mankynde
And after that, the iewes let he bynde

Thys chylde wyth pytous lamentacion
was vptaken, syngyng his songe alway
And wyth honoure, and great processyon
They caryen hym to the next abbey
Hys mother swownyng by the bere lay
Unneth myght the people that were there
Thys newe Rachel bringe fro his bere

with turmēt & with shamful deth ilke one
Thys prouost doth these iewes for to sterue
That of thys murder wyste, & that anone
He nolde no suche cursednesse obserue

yuel

yuel shal he haue, that yuel wol deserue
Therfore wo wylde horse he dyd hem drawe
And afterwarde he honge hem by the lawe

Upon hys bere aye lyeth thys innocent
Before the cheke aulter, whyles ỳ masse last
And after that, the abbot wyth hys couent
Hem spedde, for to burye hym als fast
And when they holy water on hym cast
yet spake ỳ child, whē spreit was holy water
And songe, O Alma redemptoris mater.

Thys abbot, whych that was an holy man
As monkes ben, or els ought to be
This yonge chylde to couer he began
And sayd: O dere chylde, I haylse the
By vertue of the holy Trinite
Tel me what is thy cause for to synge
Sythens thy throte is cutte to my semynge.

My throte is cutte, vnto my necke bone
Sayd thys chylde, as by waye of kynde
I shulde haue deyde, ye longe tyme agone
But Jesu Christ, as ye in bokes fynde
wol that hys glorye laste and be in mynde
And for the worshyp of hys mother dere
Yet may I synge (O Alma) loude and clere

This wel of mercy, Christes mother swete
I loued alway, as after my connynge
And when that I my lyfe shulde forlete
To me she came, and bad me for to synge
Thys antem verely in my dyenge
As ye han herde, & when that I had songe
Me thought she layde a grayne vpō my tōge

wherfore I synge, and synge mote certayne
In honoure of the blysfull mayden fre
Tyl fro my tonge, of taken is the grayne
And after that, thus she sayd to me
My lytell chylde, nowe wol I fetche the
when that the grayne is fro thy tonge ytake
Be not agaste, I wol the not forsake.

Thys holy monke, thys abbot him mene I
Hys tonge out caught, & toke away ỳ graine
And he yaue vp the goste ful softly
And when thys abbot had thys wōder seyne
Hys salt teeres trykled downe as rayne
And grofe he fell al platte to the grounde
And styll he laye, as he had ben ybounde

The couent lay eke vpon the pament
Weepyng and heryeng Christes mother dere
And after that they rysen, & forthe ben went
And toke away this martyr fro the bere
And in a tombe of marble stones clere
Enclosen they his lytel body swete
There he is nowe, god lene vs for to mete.

O yonge Hewe of Lyncoln slayne also
With cursed iewes, as it is notable
For it is but a lytel whyle ago
Pray eke for vs, we synful folke vnstable
That of hys mercy, god be merciable
On vs, hys great mercy multiply
For the reuerence of his mother Mary.

Here endeth the Prioresse tale, and here folowe the wordes of the Host to Chaucer.

Han sayde was thys myracle, euery man
As sobre was, as wōder was to se
Tyll that oure hoste to iapen began
And than at erste, he loked vpon me
And sayd thus: what man arte thou (q̃ he)
Thou lokest, as thou woldest fynde an hare
For euer vpon the grounde I se the stare

Aproche nere, and loke vp merily
Now ware you syrs, & let this mā haue place
He in the wast is shapen as wel as I
This were a popet in armes to enbrace
For any woman, smal and fayre of face
He semeth elvyshe by his countenaunce
For vnto no wight dothe he dalyaunce

Say now sōwhat, sithēs other folke hā sayd
Tel vs a tale of mythe, and that anon
Hoste (q̃ he) ne be not yuel apayde
For other tale certes can I none
But of a ryme, I lerned yore agone
Yea that is good (q̃ he) we shullen it here
Som daynte thing, me thinketh by thy chere

Here endeth the wordes of the host, and here folowethe the ryme of syr Thopas.

Lysteneth

Lystenethlordinges in good intēt
And I wol tel verament
Of myrth and of solas
All of a knight was fayre & gent
In batayle and in turnament
Hys name was syr Thopas
Iborne he was in farre countre
In Flaundres, al beyonde the see
At Poperynge in the place.
Hys father was a man ful fre
And a lorde he was of that countre
As it was goddes grace.
Syr Thopas was a doughty swayne
whyte was hys face as payne mayne
Hys lyppes reed as rose
Hys rudde is lyke scarlet in grayne
And I you tell in good certayne
He had a semely nose.
Hys heer, hys berde was lyke safroun
That to hys gyrdel raught adoun
Hys shone of cordewane
Of Bruges were hys hosen broun
Hys robe was of chekelatoun
That coste many a iane.
He couth hunte at the wylde dere
And ryde an haukynge forby the ryuere
wyth gray goshauke on hande
Therto he was a good archere
Of wrastlynge was there none hys pere
There any Ram shulde stande.
Full many a mayde bryght in boure
They mourne for hym paramoure
when hem were bet to slepe.
But he was chaste and no lechoure
And swete as is the bramble floure
That beareth the reed hype
And so bykel vpon a daye
Forsoth, as I you tel maye
Syr Thopas wolde out ryde.
He worth vpon hys stede graye
And in hys honde a launce gaye
A longe sworde by hys syde
He prycketh thorowe a fayre forestc
Therin was many a wylde beest
Yea both bucke and hare.
And as he prycketh north and este
I tell you, hym had almeste
Betydde a sorye care.
There spryngen herbes great and smale
The lycores and the setuale
And many a clowe gelofer
And nutmygges to put in ale
whether it be newe or stale
Or for to lye in cofer.
The bydes syngen, it is no naye
The sperhauke and the popyngaye
That ioye it was to here.
The throstell eke made hys lay
The wodcocke vpon the spray
She songe full loude and clere.
¶Syr Thopas fyl in loue longynge
And when he herde the throstel synge
He prycked as he were wode
Hys fayre stede in hys pryckynge
So swette, that men myght hym wrynge
Hys sydes were all blode.
¶Syr Thopas eke so wery was
For prickynge on the softe gras
So fyers was hys corage
That downe he layde hym in that place
To maken hys stede some solace
And gaue him good forage.
¶Oh, saynt Mary, benedicite
what ayleth thys loue at me
To blynde me so sore:
Me dremed al thys nyght parde
An elfe quene shal my lemman be
And slepe vnder my gore.
¶An Elfe quene wol I loue ywys
For in thys worlde no woman is
worthy to be my make in towne
All other women I forsake
And to an Elfe quene I me betake
By dale and eke by downe.
¶Into hys sadell he clombe anone
And pricketh ouer style and stone
An Elfe quene for to espye
Tyll he so longe hath rydden and gone
That he fonde in a pryue wone
The countre of Fayrie. So wylde
For in that countre nas there none
Neyther wyfe ne chylde
Tyl hym there came a great Giaunt
Hys name was called syr Oliphaunt
A peryllous man of dede
He sayd chylde, by Termagaunt
But yf thou prycke out of my haunt
Anone I slee thy steed wyth mace
Or euer I go out of thys place
¶Here is the quene of Fayry
wyth harpe and pype, and symphony
Dwellynge in thys place.
The chylde sayd, als so mote I the
To morowe wol I meten the

when

Whan I haue myne armure.
And yet I hope par ma faye
That thou shalte with this launce gay
Abyen it ful sore: Through thy ma we
Shal I perce, yf I maye
Or it be fully prime of the daye
For here thou shalt be slawe.
Sir Thopas drowe abacke ful faste
This gyaunt at hym stones caste
Out of a fel staffe slynge
But fayre escaped sir Thopace
And al was through goddes grace
And thorowe hys fayre beryng
Cyet lysteneth lordynges to my tale
Meryer than the nyghtyngale
For nowe I wol ye rowne
Howe sir Thopas, with sydes smale
Prickyng ouer downe and dale
Is comen ayen to towne.
Hys mery man commaunded he
To maken hym bothe game and gle
For nedes muste he fyght
with a gyaunt, with heedes thre
For paramoures and iolyte
Of one that shone ful bright.
Do come he sayd my mynstrales
And iestours, for to tellen vs tales
Anon in myne armyng
Of romaunces that ben royals
Of popes and of cardynals
And eke of loue longyng.
They fette hym fyrst the swete wyne
And meede eke in a mazelyne
And royal spycerye
Of gynger breed that was ful fyne
Of lycores and eke comyne
wyth sugre that is trye.
He dyd nexte hys whyte lere
Of clothe of lake fyne and clere
A breche and eke a sherte.
And next his sherte an haketon
And ouer that an haberion
For percyng of hys herte.
And ouer that a fyne hauberke
was al ywrought of iewes werke
Ful stronge it was of plate
And ouer that hys cote armoure
As whyte as is the lylly floure
In whiche he wolde debate.
His shylde was al of golde so reed
And therin was a bores heed
A carbocle by his syde.
And there he swore on ale and breed
Howe that the gyaunt shulde be deed
Betyde what betyde.
His iambeux were of cure buly
His swordes shethe of yuorie
His helme of laton bright
His sadel was of ruel bone
His bridel as the sunne shone
Or as the moone light
His spere was of fyne syprès
That byddeth warre, & nothyng pees
The heed ful sharpe ygrounde
His stede was al dappel gray
He gothe an aumble by the way
Ful softely and rounde in londe.
Lo lordes myne, here is a fyt
If ye wol any more of it
To tellen it wol I fonde.


Owe holde your mouthe for charite
Bothe knight and lady fre
And herkeneth to my spel
Of batayle and of cheualrye
And of ladyes loue diery
Anon I wol you tel.
Men speken of Romaunces of pris
Of Hornechilde, and of Ipotys
Of Beuys, and of syr Gye
Of syr Lybeaux, and Blayndamoure
But sir Thopas, he bereth the floure
Of royal cheualrye.
His good stede he bestrode
And forthe vpon his way glode
As sparke out of the bronde.
Upon his creste he bare a toure
And therin stycked a lilly floure
God shylde his cors fro shonde
And for he was a knyght auentrouse
He nolde slepen in none house
But lygge in his hood.
His bright helme was hys wanger
And by hym fedde hys destrer
Of herbes fyne and good
Hym selfe dronke water of the well
As dyd the knight sir Persyuel
So worthy vnder wede.

Here endeth the ryme of syr Thopas, and beginneth the wordes of oure Hoste.

No more of thys for goddes dignite
(q our hoost) for thou makest me
So wery of thy very leudenesse
That also wysly god my soule blesse
Myne eares aken of thy drafty speche
Nowe suche a ryme, the dyuell I beteche
Thys may wel be cleped ryme dogrel (q he)
why so (q I) why wolt thou let me
More of my tale, then any other man
Sens that it is the best ryme I can.
By God (q he) playnly at o worde
Thy drafty rymynge is not worth a torde
Thou doest nought els but spendest tyme
Syr at one worde, thou shalt no lēger ryme
Let se whether thou canst tell ought in geste
Or tel in prose somwhat at the leste
In which ther may be som myth or doctrine
Gladly (q I) by goddes swete pyne
I woll you tell a lytell thynge in prose
That ought lyke you, as I suppose
Or els ye be certes to daungerous
It is a morall tale vertuous
Al be it tolde somtyme in sondry wyse
Of sondrye folke, as I shall you deuyse
As thus, ye wote that euery euangelyste
That telleth vs the payne of Jesu Christe
Ne sayth not al thynge as hys felowe doth
But natheleſſe her sentente is al soth
And al accorden in her sentence
Al be there in her tellynge dyfference
For some of hem sayne more, and some lesse
when they hys pytouse passion expresse
I meane of Marke, Matheu, Luke, & John
But doutlesse her sentence is al one
Therfore lordynges, I you beseche
yf that ye thynke I vary in my speche
As thus, though I tell somwhat more
Of prouerbes, then ye han herde byfore
Comprehended in thys lytel treatyse here
To enforcen wyth the effecte of my matere
And though I not the same wordes saye
As ye han herde, yet to all you I praye
Blameth me not, for in my sentence
Sul ye not fynde mochel dyfference
Fro the sentence of thys treatyse lyte
After the whych, thys mery tale I wryte
And therfore herkeneth, what I shall saye
And let me tell my tale I you praye.

Here ende the wordes of our hoost and here begynneth Chaucers tale of Melibeus.

Yonge mā called Melibeus, myghtye and ryche, begat vpon hys wyfe that called was Prudence, a doughter which that called was Sophye.

Upon a daye bykell that he for his dysport is wente into the feldes hym to playe: Hys wyfe and eke hys doughter hath he left with in hys house, of whyche the dores were faste yshette. Foure of hys olde foes han it aspyde, and settē ladders to the walles of hys house, and by the wyndowes ben entred, & bete his wyfe, and wounded hys doughter with fyue mortall woundes, in fyue sondrye places: That is to saye, in her fete, in her handes, in her eeres, in her nose, & in her mouth, & leften her for deed, and wente her waye.

When Melibeus retourned was into hys house, and se all thys myscheſe, he lyke a madde mā rentyng hys clothes, gan to wepe and crye.

Prudence hys wyfe, as ferforth as she durste besought hym of hys weppynge for to stynte: But not for thy he gan to wepe & crye euer lenger the more.

Thys noble wyfe Prudence remembred her vpon the sentence of Ouyde, in hys boke that cleped is the remedye of loue, where as he sayeth, he is a foole that dystourbeth the mother to wepe in the death of her chylde tyl she haue wept her fyll, as for a certayne tyme and then shall a man done diligence wyth amiable wordes to recomforte and praye her of her weppynge for to stynte. For whych reason thys noble wyfe Prudence, suffred her husbonde to wepe and crye, as for a certayne space: and when she sawe her tyme, she sayd hym in thys wyse. Alas my lorde (quoth she) why make ye your selfe for to be like a foole. forsoth it apperteyneth not vnto a wyse man to maken suche a sorowe. Youre doughter wyth the grace of God, shall waryshe and escape. And all were it so that she ryght now were deed, ye ne oughte not as for her death

your selfe distroye. Seneke saythe, the wyse man shal not take to gret discomforte for the dethe of hys children, but certes he shuld suffre it in paciēce, as wel as he abydeth ÿ deth of hys owne proper person.

¶ Thys Mellebeus answerde anon and sayd: what man (q̃ he) shuld of hys weppynge stynt, that hath so great a cause for to wepe. Jesus hym selfe our lorde, wepte for ÿ dethe of Lazarus hys frende. Prudence answerd, certes wel I wote a temperate weppynge is nothyng defended to hym that sorowful is, amonge folke in sorowe, but it is rather graūted hym to wepe. The apostel Poule vnto ÿ Romans writeth, men shuld reioyce with hē that maketh ioye, and wepe with suche folke as wepen. But though a temperate weppyng be graunted, certes outragyous weppynge is defended. Mesure of weppyng shulde be cōsydred after the lore that techeth vs Seneke. Whan that thy frende is deed (q̃ he) let not thyne eyen to moist ben of teeres, ne to moch drie: although teeres comen to thyn eyen, let hem not fal. And whan thou hast forgon thy frende, do diligence to gette a nother frende: and this is more wisdom thā for to wepe for thy frende which thou hast lorne, for therin is no bote. And therfor yf ye gouerne you by sapience, put away sorowe out of your herte. Remembreth you that Jesus Sirake sayth, a man that is ioyus and glad in herte, it him conserueth florishyng in hys age: but sothely a sorowful hert maketh hys bones drie. He sayth eke thus, that sorowe in herte sleeth ful manye a man. Salomon sayth, that right as moughthes in the shepes fleyse anoyeth the clothes, and the smale wormes ÿ tree, right so anoyeth sorowe the hert of man, wherfore vs ought as wel in the dethe of our children, as in the losse of our temporal goodes, haue pacience.

Remembre you vpon pacient Jobe, whā he had loste hys children and hys temporal substaunce, and in hys body endured and receyued ful many a greuous trybulacion, yet sayde he thus: Oure lorde it sent to me, oure lorde hath byrafte it me, right so as our lorde wold, right so it be done, iblessed be the name of our lorde.

To these forsayd thinges Melibeus vnto hys wyfe Prudence answerd: Al thy wordes (q̃ he) ben true, and therto profytable, but truely myn herte is troubled with this sorowe so greuously, that I not what to do. Let cal (q̃ Prudence) youre true frendes al and thy lynage, which that ben wyse, & telleth to hem your case, & herkeneth what they say in counsaylyng, and gouerne you after her sentence. Salomon saythe, werke all thy thynges by counsayle, & thou shalte neuer rue. Than by coūsayle of his wife Prudēce, this Melibeus let caule a great congrygacion of people, as surgyens, physicions, olde folke and yong, & some of hys olde enemyes reconciled (as by her semblant) to hys loue and to hys grace: And therwithal ther came some of his neighbours, that dyd hym reuerēce more for drede thā for loue, as it happeth oft. There comen also ful many subtyl flaterers, & wyse aduocates lerned in the law. And whā these folke togyders assembled were, this Melibeus in sorowfull wyse shewed hem his case, and by the maner of his speche, it semed that in herte he bare a cruel yre, redy to don vengeaunce vpon hys foos, & sodainly he desyred ÿ werre shulde begyn, but nathelesse yet asked he counsayle vpon this mater. A surgyen by lycence and assent of suche as were wyse vp rose, and vnto Melibeus sayd as ye shal here.

¶ Sir (q̃ he) as to vs surgiens apertayneth that we do to euery wight the best that we can, where as we ben withholdē, & to our pacient that we don no damage: wherfore it happeth many tyme & ofte, that whan two men haue euerichе wounded other, one surgyen healeth hem both, wherfore vnto oure arte it is not pertinēt to norisshe werre, ne parties to suppore. But certes as to the warysshyng of your doughter, al be it so that perilously she be wounded, we shal do so tentyke besynesse fro day to night that with ÿ grace of god she shal ben hole and sounde, as sone as is possible. Almost right in the same wyse the physiciens answerd, saue that they saydē a fewe wordes more: That right as maladies ben by her contraries cured, right so shal man warisshe werre by peace. Hys neyghbours full of enuye, hys fayned frendes that semed reconciled, and his flatterers, maden semblaūce of weppyng, & enpayred and agrutched moche of this mater, in praysinge greatly Melibe of might, of power, of richesse and of frendes, dispysing the power of his aduersaries: and sayd vtterly, that he anon shulde

wreken

wreken hym on hys foos, and begyn warre.

Up rose then an aduocat that was wyse byleue and by counsayle of other that were wyse, and sayd: The nede for the whych we bene assembled in thys place, is a full heuye thynge, & a great mater bycause of ý wronge and of the wyckednesse that hath be done, & eke by reason of great damages that in tyme comynynge ben possyble to fallen for ý same, and eke by reason of the great rychesse and power of the partyes both, for the whyche reasons it were a full greate peryll to erren in thys matter. Wherfore Melibeus thys is oure sentence, we counsayle you abouen all thynge, that ryghte anone thou do thy delygence in kepynge of thy proper persone, in suche a wyse that thou ne wante none espye ne watche, thy bodye for to saue: And after that we counsayle that in thyne house thou set suffyciēt garryson, so as they may as well thy bodye as thy house defende: but certes to mouen warre, or to done sodeynly vengeaūce we maye not deme in so lytel tyme ý it were profytable, wherfore we aske leyser & space to haue delyberacion in thys case to deme, for the commen prouerbe sayeth thus: He that sone demeth sone shall repente. And eke men sayne, thylke iudge is wyse that sone vnderstandeth a matter, and iugeth by leyser: For all be it taryenge be noyfull, algate it is not to be reproued in yeuynge of iudgemente, ne in vengeaunce takynge, when it is sufficyent and resonable. And that shewed oure Lorde Jesu Christe by ensample, for when the woman was takē in auoutry and was brought in hys presens to knowen what shulde be done of her persone, al be it that he wyst wel hym self what he wold answere, yet ne wold he not answere sodeynly, but he wolde haue delyberacion, and in the grounde he wrote twyse, and by thys cause we asken delyberacion: and we shall then by the grace of God coūsayle you ý thynge that shalbe profytable

Up sterte then the yonge folke at ones, & ý moste parte of that company haue scorned thys olde wyse man, and begā to make noyse and sayde. Ryght so as whyles that yron is hote men shulde smyte, ryghte so men shulde wreken her wronges whyle that they bene freche and newe, and wyth loude voyce they cryed warre warre. Up rose tho one of ý old wyse, & wyth hys hande made coūtenaunce that they shulde holdē hem styl & yeuen hym audience. Lordynges (q̃ he) ther is ful many a man that cryeth warre warre, ý wote full lyte what warre amounteth. Warre at hys begynnynge hath so great an entryng and so large, that euery wyght may entre whē hym liketh, & lightly fynd warre: but certes what ende therof shal fal, it is not lightly to know. When ý warre is ones bygon, there is full many a chylde vnborne of hys mother, ý shal sterue yōge bycause of thilke warre, other els lyue in sorowe, or dye in wretchednesse: And therfore or ý any warre be bygon, men muste haue great counsayle & good delyberation. And when thys olde man wende to enforcen hys tale by reson, well nye all at ones bygon for to ryse for to breken hys tale, & byddē him ful ofte hys wordes for to abrege: For certes he ý precheth to hem that lyst not to here his wordes, his sermō hem anoyeth. For Jesus Syrake sayth, ý weping in musyke is a noyous thynge. This is as moch to say, as moch auayleth it to speake byforne folke to which his speche anoyeth, as it is for to syngen byforne hem that wepe. And when thys wyse man sawe ý him wāted audiēce, al shamfaste he set him adowne ayen. For Salomō sayth. There as thou mayst not haue audience, enforce the not to speake. I se wel (q̃ thys wyse man) that the cōmen prouerbe is soth, ý good counsayle wanteth, when it is moste nede.

Yet had thys Melibeus in hys counsayle many folke, that priuely in hys eere counsayled hym certayne thynges, and counsayled hym the contrary in general audience. when Melibeus had herde that the greatest parte of hys counsayle were accorded that he shuld make warre, anone he consented to her coūsaylynge, and fully affyrmed her sentence. Then dame Prudence, when that she sawe her husbonde shope hym for to awreke hym on hys enemyes, & to begyn warre: she in ful hūble wyse, when she sawe her tyme sayd to hym these wordes. My lord (q̃ she) I you beseche as hertely as I dare or can, ne hast you not to fast, and for all guerdons yeue me audiēce. For Peter Alphōs sayth. Who so doth to the good or harme, hast the not to quyte it for in thys wyse thy frende woll abyde, and thyne enemye shall the lenger lyue in drede. The prouerbe sayth, he hasteth wel ý wisely can abyde: And in wycked hast is no profyte.

Thys Melibe answered to hys wyke prudence: I purpose not (quoth he) to werke by thy counsayle, for many causes and reasons, for certes euery wyght wolde holde me then a foole. Thys is to saye, yf I for thy counsaylynge wolde chaunge thynges that bene ordayned and affyrmed by so many wyse. Secondly, I saye that all women bene wycked, and none good of hem all. For of a thousande men sayeth Salomon, I founde one good man: but certes of all women foūde I neuer none. And also certes, yf I gouerned me by thy counsayle, it shulde seme that I had yeue the ouer me the maystrye: and God forbyd ꝑ it so were. For Jesus Syracke sayeth, that yf the wyke haue maystrye, she is contrarious to her husbande. And Salomon sayeth. Neuer in thy lyke to thy wyke, ne to thy chylde, ne to thy frende, ne yeue no power ouer thy selfe, for better it were that thy chyldren aske of thy thinges that hem nedeth, then thy selfe to be in the handes of thy chyldren. And also yf I woll werche by thy coūsayle, certes my counsayle must be somtyme secret til it were tyme that it muste be knowen: and thys ne maye not be, yf I shulde be counsayled by the. When dame Prudence full debonairly and with great pacīce, had herde al that her husbonde lyked for to saye, then asked she of hym lycence for to speake, and sayd in thys wyse. My lorde (quoth she) as to youre fyrste reason, it maye lyghtly ben answered. For I saye that it is no folye to chauuge counsayle, when the thynge is chaunged, or els when ꝑ thynge semeth otherwyse thē it semed afore. And more ouer I saye, thoughe that ye haue sworne and behyght to performe youre emprynse, & by iuste cause ye do it not: men shulde not saye therfore ye were a lyer & forsworne For the boke sayeth, that the wyse man maketh no lesynge, when he turneth hys corage for the better. And albeit that your emprynse be establyshed and ordeyned by great multytude of folke, yet dare you not accomplyshe thylke ordynaunce but you lyketh: for the trouth of thynges and the profyte ben rather founden in fewe folke that ben wyse and full of reason, then by greate multytude of folke, there euery man cryeth and clattereth what hym lyketh: sothly suche multytude is not honest. And as to the seconde reason, where as ye saye, that all womē ben wycked: saue your grace. Certes ye dyspyse all women in thys wyse, and he that all despyseth, as sayeth the boke, all dyspleaseth. And Senecke sayeth, that who so woll haue sapience, shal no man dysprayse, but he shall gladlye teache the science that he can, wythout presumption or pryde: and suche thynges as he nought ne can, he shall not ben ashamed to lerne hem, & to enquyre of lesse folke then hym selfe. And that there hath bene many a good woman, maye lyghtly be proued: For certes syr our Lorde Jesu Christ nolde neuer haue descended to be borne of a woman, yf al womē had be wycked. And after that, for ꝑ great bounte that is in womē, our lorde Jesu Christ, whē he was rysen fro death to lyke, apered rather to a womā then to his apostles. And though that Salomon sayde, he founde neuer women good, it foloweth not therfore that all women be wycked: for thoughe that he ne founde no good woman, certes many an other man hathe founde many a woman full good and trewe. Or els parauenture the entente of Salomon was thys, that in souerayne bountye he founde no woman, thys is to saye: that there is no wyght that hath parfyte bountye saue God alone, as he hym selfe recordeth in hys euangelye. For there nys no creature so good that hym ne wanteth somwhat of the perfection of God that is hys maker. Youre thyrde reason is thys, ye saye that yf that ye gouerne you by my counsayle it shulde seme that ye had yeue me the maystrye and the lordshyppe of youre persone. Syr saue youre grace it is not so, for yf so were that no man shulde be counsayled but onely of hem that han lordshyppe aud maystrye of hys persone, men nolde not be counsayled so ofte. For sothly thylke man that asketh counsayle of a purpose, yet hathe he free wyl whether he woll do after that counsayle or none. And as to your fourth reason, there as ye sayne that the iangleryе of women can hyde thinges that they wote not, as who sayeth, that a woman can not hide that she wote Syr, these wordes ben vnderstande of women that ben ianglers and wycked, of which women men sayne that thre thynges dryuen a mā out of hys house, that is to saye, smoke droppynge of rayne, and wycked wyues. And of suche women Salomon sayeth, that a man were better dwell in deserte, then

wyth

wyth a woman that is riottous. And syr by your leaue it am not I, for ye haue ful oft assayde my great sylence and my greate pacience, and eke howe well that I can hyde and heale thynges that men oughten secretly to hyden. And sothly as to youre fyfth reason, where as ye saye that in wycked counsayle women venquyshe men: God wote that thylke reason stante here in no stede: for understandeth, nowe ye asken counsayle for to do wyckednesse: And yf ye wolde werken wyckednesse, & your wyfe restrayneth thylke wycked purpose, and ouercome you by reason and by good counsayle, certes your wyfe oughte rather to be prayseb then blamed. Thus shuld ye understande the philosopher that sayeth, in wycked counsayle women venquyshe her husbandes. And there as ye blame all women and her reasons, I shall shewe you by many ensamples that manye women haue be full good, and yet bene, and her counsayle holsome and profytable. Eke some men haue sayde that the counsayle of women is eyther to dere, or to lytell worthe But all be it so that full many women bene badde, and her counsayle vyle and noughte worthe, yet han men foude full many a good woman, and full dyscrete and wyse in counsaylynge. Lo Jacob through the counsayle of hys mother Rebecke, wanne the benyson of hys father, and ý lordshyp of all hys bretheren. Judith through her good counsayle, delyuered the cyte of Bethule, in whyche she dwelt, out of the hãde of Holoferne that had it al beseged, and wolde haue dystroyed it. Abigayle delyuered Naball her husbande fro Dauid the kynge, that wold haue slayne him and apeased the yre of the kynge by her wyte and by her good counsayle. Hester by her coũsell enhaunsed greatly ý people of god in the raygne of Assuerus the kynge. And the same bountye in good coũsaylyng of many a good woman may men rede and tell. And furthermore when that our lorde had created Adam oure former father, he sayd in thys wyse: It is not good a man to be alone: make we an helper to hym selfe semblable. Here maye ye se that yf that women were not good, and her counsayle good and profytable, our lorde god of heuen ne wolde neither han wrought hem, ne called hem the helper of man, but rather confusyon to man.

And there sayde a clerke ones in two verses. What is better the gold? Jasper. What is better then Jasper? wysedome. And what is better then wysedome? womã. And what is better then a good woman? that is a good man. And what is better then a good man? nothynge. And syr, by many other reasons maye ye sene, that many women bene good, and eke her counsayle good and profytable. And therfore syr, yf that ye woll truste to my counsayle, I shall restore you your doughter hole and sounde, and eke that I woll do you so moche, that ye shall haue honoure in thys case.

When Melibe had herde the wordes of hys wyfe prudence, he sayd thus. I se well that wordes of Salomon be soth. For he sayeth, the wordes that be spoken dyscretlye by ordynaunce bene honycombes, for they yuen swetnesse to the soule, and holsomnesse to the bodye. And wyfe bycause of thy swete wordes, and eke for I haue proued and assayed thy greate sapience and thy greate trouthe: I woll gouerne me by thy counsayle in all thynge.

Nowe syr (quoth dame Prudence) and sythens that ye vouchsafe to be gouerned by my counsayle, I woll enfourme you howe that ye shall gouerne youre selfe in chosynge of your counsaylours. Ye shall fyrste in all youre werke mekelye besechynge to the hye God that he wolde be your counsaylour, and shapeth you to suche entent that he yeue you counsayle and comforte, as taught Thobye hys sonne. At all tymes thou shalte blysse God, and praye hym to dresse thy wayes, and loke eke that thy counsayles ben in hym euer more. Saynt James sayeth, yf anye man of you haue nede of sapience, aske it of God. And afterwarde, then shullen ye take counsayle in youre selfe, and examyne well youre owne thoughtes, of suche thynges as you thynketh that ben best for youre profyte. And then shall ye dryue fro your herte thynges that be cõtrarious to good coũsayle: that is to saye, yre, couetous, and hastynesse.

Fyrste he that asketh counsayle of hym selfe, certes he muste be wythouten yre and wrath in hym self for many causes. The fyrst is thys: He that hath greate yre and wrathe in him selfe, he weneth alwaye that he maye do the thynge ý he may not do. And secõdly,

het hat is yrous and wrothfull, he maye not wel deme: And he that maye not wel deme, maye not well counsell. The thyrde is thys, he that is yrous & wroth, as sayeth Seneke, maye not speake but blamefull thynges, and wyth thylke vycious wordes he styrreth other folke to anger and to yre. And eke syr ye muste dryue couetyse out of your herte. For the Apostle sayeth, that couetyse is the roote of all harmes. And trusteth ryght wel that a couetous man ne can not deme ne thynke but only to fulfyll the ende of hys couetyse: & certes that ne maye neuer be accomplyshed, for euermore, the more aboūdaunce that he hath of rychesses, the more he desyreth. And syr, ye muste also dryue out of your herte hastynes: For certes ye maye not deme for the best a sodayne thought that falleth in your herte, but ye muste auyse you on it full ofte: For as ye haue herde here byfore, the comē prouerbe is thys. He that sone demeth, sone repenteth.

Syr, ye ne be not alwaye in lyke dysposicion, for certes some thynge that semeth som tyme to you ý is good for to do, an other time it semeth to you the contrarye.

And when ye han taken counsaile in your selfe, and han demed by good delyberacion suche thynge as you semeth beste, then rede I you that ye kepe it secrete. Bewraye ye not your counsayl to no persone, but yf so be that ye wene sekerly that through youre bewrayeng, your cōdicion shalbe to you the more profytable. For Jesus Syrack sayeth: neyther to thy foe ne to thy frende dyscouer not thy secrete, ne thy folye: for they wol yeue you audience and lokynge, & supportacion in youre presence, and scorne you in your absence. An other clerke sayth, that scarsly shal you fynde any persone that maye kepe coūsayle secretly The boke sayeth, whyle that thou kepest thy counsayle in thyne herte, thou kepest it in thy pryson: and when thou bewrayest thy counsayl to any wyght, he holdeth ý in hys snare And therfore you is better to hyde your coūsayle in your herte, then to pray hym to whō ye haue bewrayed your counsayle, ý he woll kepe it close styl. For Seneca sayth: yf so be ý thou mayst not thyne owne counsayle hyde, howe darste thou praye any other wight thy counsayle secrete to kepe. But nathelesse yf thou wene sykerly that the bewrayeng of thy counsayle to a persone woll make thy condycion stonde in ý better plyght, then shalt thou tell hym thy counsayle in thys wyse. Fyrst thou shalte make no semblaunt whether the were leuer peace or warre, or thys or that, ne shewe hym not thy wyll ne thyne entent: for trust well that comenly these coūsaylers ben flatterers, namely the counsaylers of greate lordes, for they enforce hem alway rather to speake pleasaunt wordes, enclynynge to the lordes luste, then wordes that bene trewe or profytable, and therfore men saye ý the rych man hath selde good coūsayle, but yf he haue it of hym selfe. And after that thou shalt consyder thy frendes and thyne enemyes. And as touchynge thy frendes, thou shalte consyder whych of hem ben moste faythful & most wyse, and eldest, and moste approued in coūsaylynge: and of hem shalt thou aske thy coūsayle, as the case requyreth.

I saye, that fyrst ye shal call to your counsayle your frendes that ben trewe. For Salomon sayeth: that ryght as the herte of a man delyteth in sauoure that is sote, ryght so the counsayle of trewe frendes yeueth swetnesse to the soule. And he sayeth also, there may no thynge be lykened to the trewe frēde: For certes golde ne syluer be not so moche worth as the good wyll of a trewe frende. And also he sayeth that a trewe frende is a stronge defēce who so that it fyndeth hath a great treasure. Then shall ye also consyder yf that your true frendes be dyscrete and wyse: for the boke sayeth, aske alwaye thy counsayle of them that ben wyse. And by thys same reason shall ye call to your counsayle your frendes that ben of age, suche as seme and ben experte in many thynges, and ben approued in coūsaylyng For the boke sayeth, that in olde men is sapience, and in longe tyme the prudence. And Tullius sayeth, that great thynges bene not aye accomplyshed by strength ne by delyuernesse of body, but by coūsayle, by auctorite of persones, and by science: the whych thre thinges ne ben not feeble by age, but certes they enforce, and encrease daye by daye, and then shall ye kepe thys for a generall rule. Fyrste shall ye call to your counsayle a fewe of your frendes that ben especial. For Salomon sayeth, many frendes haue thou, but amonge a thousande chose the one to be thy coūsaylour for al be it so that thou fyrst ne tell thy counsayle but to a fewe, thou mayste afterwarde

tel it

tel it to mo folke yf it be nede. But loke al-way that thy counsaylers haue those condi-cions that I haue sayd before, that is to saye, that they be trewe, wyse, and of olde experi-ence. And werke not alway in euery nede by one counsayler alone: for somtyme behoueth it to be counsayled by many. For Salomon saythe, saluaciō of thynges is where as there be many counsaylers.

¶ Nowe haue I tolde you of which folke ye shall be counsayled: Nowe wol I tel you whiche counsayle ye ought to eschue. Fyrste ye shall eschue the counsaylynge of fooles. Salomon sayth, take no counsayle of a foole for he wol counsayle but after his owne lust and hys affection. The boke saythe, that the propertie of a foole is this: He troweth light ly harme of euery man, and lightly troweth al bountie in him selfe. Thou shalt eschue the counsaylyng of al flatterers, which as enforcē hem rather to prayse your persone by flat-terye, than for to tell you the sothfastnesse of thynges. Wherfore, Tullius saith, amonge al the pestelencie that ben in frendshyp, the greatest is flaterye. And therfore it is more nede that thou eschue and drede flaterers, thā any other people. The boke sayth, thou shalt rather flee fro the swete wordes of flatering and praysynge, than fro the eygre wordes of thy frendes that sayth the sothes. Salomon sayth, that the wordes of a flaterer is a snare to catche innocence. He sayth also, he that spe-keth to his frende wordes of flatery & of ple-saunce, he setteth a nette before hys fete to catche hym. And therfore Tullius sayth. En-clyne not thyne eares to flatterers. And Ca-ton saythe. Auyse the wel, and eschue ý word-des of swetnesse and of pleasaunce. And eke thou shalt eschue the counsaylynge of thyne olde enemyes that ben reconciled. The boke saythe, that no wight retourneth safely in to the grace of his olde enemy. And Esope saith ne trust not to hem, to whiche thou hast som-tyme had werre or enemyte, ne tell hem not thy counsayle. And Seneke telleth the cause why it may not be, for he saith, there as great fyre hath longe tyme endured, ý there dwel-leth some vapoure of hete. And therfore saith Salomon, in thyn olde foe trust thou neuer. For sikerly though thy enemy be reconciled and make the sygne of humilite, and lout to the with hys heed, truste hym neuer: for cer-tes he maketh thilke fayned humylite more for hys profyte than for any humilite, or for any loue of thy person, bycause ý he demeth to haue victorie ouer thy persone, by suche fayned countynaunce, the whych vyctorie he myght not haue by stryke or werre. And Pe-trus Alphons saith, make no felowship with thyne olde enemyes, for yf thou do hem boun tye, they wollen peruerte it to wyckednesse. And eke thou must eschue the counsaylynge of hem that ben thy seruauntes, and beren ý gret reuerence: for parauenture they sayen it more for drede than for loue. And therfore saythe a philosopher in this wyse. There is no wyght parfetly true to hym ý he dredeth And Tullius saith, there is no might so great of any emperour that longe may endure, but he haue loue of the people and drede. Ye shall eschue also the counsaylyng of folke that ben dronklewe, for they ne can no coūsayle hyde. For Salomon saythe, there nys no priuyte ther as reygneth dronknesse, ye shal haue also in suspecte the counsaylyng of suche folke as counsayle you one thynge priuely, and coun-sayle you the contrary openly. For Cassidorie saith, that it is a maner sleight to hynder his enemye whan he sheweth to done a thynge openly, and werketh priuely the contrarye. Thou shalte haue also in suspecte the coun-saylyng of wycked folke, that be alway ful of fraude. And Dauid saythe, that blissful is the man that hath not folowed the counsaylyng of shrewes.

Thou shalte also eschue the counsaylynge of yonge folke, for her counsaylynge is not rype, as Salomon saythe.

¶ Nowe sir, sytheus I haue shewed you of suche folke as ye shal be counsayled of, and folowe it: nowe woll I teche you howe ye shal examyne your counsayle. After the doc-tryne of Tullius, in examenynge of youre counsayloures, ye shall consydere manye thynges.

Fyrst thou shalt cōsyder thylke thyng that thou purposest, and vpon that thynge ý thou wolt haue counsayle, that very trouth be said and cōserued, this is to say, tel truely thy tale for he that sayth false, may not well be coun-sayled in that case, of whiche he lyeth. After this thou shalte consyder the thynges that a-corden to that thou purposest for to do by thy coūsayloures, if reason accorde therto, and eke

yf thy might maye attayne therto, and if the more parte and the better parte of your counsaylours accorden therto or no. Than shalte Thou consyder what thynge shal folowe of her coũsaylinge: As hate, peace, werre, grace profyte, or damage, and many other thinges: and in al thynges thou shalte chose the beste, and weyue al other thynges. Thã shalt thou consyder of what rote is engendred the mater of thy counsayle, and what fruite it maye conceyue and engender. Thou shalt eke consyder al thy causes, frome whence they be sprongen. And whan thou hast examyned thy counsayle, as I haue sayd, and whiche party is the better and more profytable, and haste approued it by many wyse folke & olde, than thou shalt consyder, yf thou mayste performe it, & make of it a good ende. For certes reson wol not that any mã shal begyn a thyng, but yf he myght performe it as hym ought, ne no wight shuld take vpon hym so heuy a charge but that he might beare it. For the prouerbe sayth, he that to moch embraceth distrayneth lytel. And Caton saythe, assay to do such thinges as thou haste power to done, leste the charge oppresse the to sore, that the behoueth weyue the thyng that thou haste begon. And yf so be that thou be in dout, whether thou mayst perfourme a thynge or none, chose rather for to suffre than to begynne. And Peter Alphons saythe, yf thou haste myght to do a thynge, of whiche thou muste repente, it is better holde thy tonge styl than for to speke. Than mayst thou understonde by stronger resons, that yf thou haste power to perfourme a werke, of which thou shalt repente the, than is it better thou suffre than begyn. Wel sayne they that defenden euery wyght to assaye a thyng of which he is in doute whether he may performe it or none. And after whan ye haue examined your counsayle (as I haue sayde before) and know wel, that ye maye performe your emprise: conferme it thã sadly tyl it be at an ende.

¶ Nowe it is reason & tyme that I shewe you, whan & wherfore that ye maye chaunge your counsayle, wythouten reproke. Sothly a man may chaunge hys purpose and hys counsayle, yf the cause ceaseth, or whan a newe case betydeth. For the lawe sayth, that vpon thinges that newly betyden, behoueth newe counsayle. And Seneke saythe, yf thy counsayle is come to the eeres of thyne enemyes, chaunge thy counsayle. Thou mayste also chaunge thy coũsayle, yf so be thou fynde that by errour or by anye other cause, harme or damage may betyde. Also yf thy counsayle be dyshonest, other els come of dyshonest cause, chaunge thy counsayle. For the lawe saythe, that al behestes that be dishonest, ne ben of no value: And eke, yf so be that it be vnpossyble or may not gladly be performed or kepte.

And take thys for a general rule, that euery counsayle that is enfourmed so strongly, that it may not be chaunged for no condycion that may betyde, I say that ilke counsayle is wycked.

Melibeus, whan he hadde herde the doctryne of hys wife dame Prudẽce answerde in thys wyse. Dame (q̃ he) as yet vnto this tyme ye han well taught me, as in gouernayle howe I shall gouerne me in the chosynge and in the wytholdynge of my counsayle: but nowe wolde I fayne ꝑ ye wolde condiscende in especial, howe that ye semeth by our counsaylours that we haue chose in this present nede.

¶ My lorde (q̃ she) I beseche you in all humblesse, that ye wol not wylfully replye ayenst my reasons, ne distemper youre herte though I speke the thynge ꝑ you displese, for god wote as in myne entent, I speke it as for your beste and for your honoure and profyte eke, and sothly I hope that your benygnyte wol take it in pacience. And trusteth me wel that your counsayle in this case ne shuld not (as to speke properly) be called a counsaylyng, but a mocion or a mouynge of folye, in which counsayle ye haue erred in many a sondrie wyse.

First ye haue erred in the assemblynge of your counsaylours: For fyrst ye shulde haue cleped a fewe folke to your counsayle, and after ye might haue shewed it to mo, yf it had be nede. But ye haue cleped to your counsayl a great multytude of people, ful chargeous and ful noyous for to here. Also ye haue erred, for there as ye shulde haue onely cleped to your counsayle your trewe frendes, olde and wyse, ye haue cleped straunge folke, yonge folke, false flatterers, and enemyes reconcyled, and folke that done you reuerẽce

withouten

withouten loue. And eke ye haue erred, for ye haue brought with you to your counsayle ire couetyse, and hastynesse, the which thre thynges ben contrary to euerye good counsayle, honest and profytable, the whiche thre thynges ye haue not distroyed neyther in youre selfe ne in your counsaylours, as ye ought. Ye haue erred also for ye haue shewed to your counsaylours your talent and your affectiōs to make werre anon, & for to do vengeaunce, & they haue espyde by your wordes, to what thyng ye ben enclyned: & therfore haue they rather counsayled you to your talente, than to your profite. Ye han erred eke, for it semeth that you suffyseth to haue be counsayled by these counsailours onely, and with lytel auysement, where as in so hye and in so great a nede, it had ben necessary mo counsaylours, and more delyberacion to performe your empryse. Ye hā erred also, for ye haue not examyned your counsayle in the forsayd maters, ne in dewe maner as the case requireth. Ye haue erred also, for ye made no diuision bytwene your true frendes & your fayned coūsaylours ne ye haue not knowē ȳ wil of yourtrew coū saylours, & frendes, olde, & wyse, but ye haue caste al her wordes in an hochepot & encyned your herte to the more parte and to the gretter nombre of fooles than of wyse men. And therfore the counsaylynges that ben at congregacions and multitudes of folke, there as men take more regarde to the nomber than to the sapiēce of persons, ye sene wel, that in such counsaylinges, fooles han the maistrye. Melibe answerde and sayd ayen: I graunt wel that I haue erred, but there as thou hast tolde me here byforne, ȳ he nys not to blame that chaungeth his coūsayle in certayne case and for certayne and iuste cause, I am al redy to chaunge my counsaylours ryght as thou woldest deuyse. The prouerbe saythe, for to done synne is mannysche, but certes for to perceuer longe in synne, is a werke of the dyuell.

To thys sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and sayd: Examyneth (q̄ she) wel your counsayle, and let vs se whyche of hem hath spoke moste resonably, and taught you beste counsayle. And for as moche as the examinacion is necessarye, lette vs begyn at surgens and physiciens, that fyrst spake of thys mater. I saye that physiciens and surgiens haue sayd you in your counsayle discretly, as hem ought: and in her speche sayd ful wisely, that to the office of hem apertayneth to done to euery wight honoure and profyte, and no wyght to anoye, and after her craste to don great dyligence vnto the cure of hem, whych they haue in her gouernaunce. And sir, right as they haue answerde wysely and discretly, right so rede I that they ben hyely and souerayny guerdoned for her noble speche, & eke for they shul more done theyr ententyse besynesse in the curacion of your doughter: for al be it so they ben your frendes, therfore shullē ye not suffre, that they serue you for naught, but ye ought therafter guerdō hem, and pay hem her largesse. And as touchyng the propo sicion, whyche the physiciens entreteden in in this case, this is to sayne, that in maladies is, that contrarie is warished by an other cōtrarie: I wolde fayne knowe howe ye vnder stonde thylke texte, & what is your sentence. Certes (q̄ Melibeus) I vnderstonde it in thys wyse. Right as they han do me a contrarye, so shulde I done hem an other, for ryght as they han venged hem vpon me, and done me wronge, ryght so woll I venge me vpon hem, and don hem wronge, and than haue I cured one contrarie by an other.

Lo, lo (q̄ dame Prudence) how lightly is euery man enclyned to hys owne desyre and hys owne plesaunce. Certes (q̄ she) the wordes of the physiciens ne shuld not ben vnderstonde in that wyse, for certes wyckednesse is not contrarie to wickednesse, ne vengeaunce is not contrarie to vengeaunce, ne wronge to wronge, but euery of hem encreseth & engendreth other. But certes ȳ wordes of the phisiciens shulde be vnderstonde in thys wyse, for good and wyckydnesse ben two contraries: and peace and werre, vengeaunce and suffraunce, discorde and acorde, and many other thynges: But certes wyckidnesse shalbe warished with goodnes, discorde by acorde, werre by peace, and so forthe in other thynges. And therto acordeth saynt Poule the Apostel in many places: He saith, ne yeld not harme for harme, ne wicked speche for wycked speche, but do wel to hem that don to the harme, and blesse them that sayd the harme. And in manye other places he amonischeth peace and acorde.

But nowe wol I speke of the counsayle, whych

whiche was yeue vnto you by men of law, and the wyse folke and olde folke, that sayde al by one accorde as ye herde byforne, that ouer al thynges ye shal done your besynesse and dyligence to kepe youre person, and to warnstore your house: And they sayd also, ý in thys case ye ought to werchen full wysely and with great delyberacion. And syr, as to the fyrste poynte, that toucheth the kepynge of your person: ye shall vnderstonde that he that hath werre, shal euer deuoutely and mekely prayen, byforne all thynges, that Jesu Christ of his mercy wol haue him in his protection, and to be his souerayne helper at his nede: For certes in this worlde there nys no wight that maye be counsayled and ykepte suffyciently without the kepynge of our lord Jesu Christ. To thys sentence acordeth the prophete Dauid that sayth: If god ne kept the cyte, in ydel waketh he that it kepeth. Nowe sir, than shulde he commytte the kepynge of your person to youre true frendes, that ben approued and yknowe, and of hem shul ye aske helpe, your person to kepe. For Caton saith: If thou haue nede of helpe, aske it of thy frendes, for there nys none so good a physicien as thy true frende. And after this than shal ye kepe you fro al straunge folke, & fro lyers, and haue alway in suspecte her cõpanye. For Peter Alphons saythe. Ne take no company by the way of no straunge man, but yf so be that thou haste knowen hym of lenger tyme: And yf so be that he fal in to thy companye, parauenture withouten thyn assent and good wyl, enquire than as subtelly as thou canst of his conuersacion, and of hys lyke byforne, and fayne thy way, sayeng thou woldest go thyder as thou wolte not go, and yf he beare a spere, hold the on the right syde of hym, and yf he beare a swerde, hold the on the lefte syde of hym. And than shal ye kepe you wysely from all maner of such people as I haue said you here byfore, and hem and her counsayle eschue. And after this than shal ye kepe you, in suche maner, that for anye presumpsion of your bodely strength, that yedispyse not ne acounte not the might of your aduersary so lyte, that ye lete the keping of your person for your presumpcion, for euery wyse mã dredeth his enemy. And Salomon saith: A very foole is he that of al hath drede: But certes he ý thorowe hardynesse of his herte, and through the hardynesse of him self, hath to great presumpcion, hym shall yuel betyde. Than shal ye euermore encountrewayte embushementes, and all espyaile. For Seneke saythe: The wyse man that dredeth harmes, escheweth harmes: He ne falleth in to no perylles, that peryll escheweth. And al be it so that thou seme, ý thou be in secret place, yet shalt thou alway don dyligence in kepyng of thy person, this is to say, ne be not neglygent to kepe thyne owne person, not onely for thy greatest enemy, but also for thy leste enemy. Seneke sayth, a man that is wel aduysed, he dredeth his leste enemye. Ouyde saythe, that the lytel wesel wol slee the great bulle & the wylde herte. And the prouerbe saythe, that a lytel thorne wol greue a kyng ful sore, and a lytel hounde wol holde the wylde bore. But natheleſſe I say not thou shalt be so cowarde that thou doute where as is no drede. The boke saythe, that some men haue great luste to disceyue, but yet they drede to be disceyued. And kepe the fro the companye of skorners: for the boke sayth, with skorners ne make no companye, but flye her wordes as venym

Nowe as to the seconde poynte, where as your wyse counsaylours counsayled you to warnestore youre house with greate dilygence, I wolde fayne knowe howe ye vnderstõde thylke wordes, & what is your sentẽce.

Melibeus answerd and sayd, certes I vnderstonde it in this wyse, that I shal warnestore myn house wyth toures, suche as haue castels & other maner edyfices, and armurye & archeries, bitwene which thynges I maye my person and my house so kepe and defende that myne enemyes shullen be in drede myne house to aproch. To this sentence answerde anon Prudence. Warnisshyng (q̃ she) of hye toures & of hye edyfices, is with great costages and with great trauayle, and whan that they ben accõplished, yet ben they not worth a strawe, but yf they ben defended with trewe frendes, that ben olde and wyse. And vnderstondeth wel, that ý greatest and the strõgest garnyson that ryche men maye haue, as wel to kepen her parsone as her goodes is, ý they be byloued with her subiectes, and with her neyghbours. For thus saythe Tullius, that there is a maner garryson, that no man may venquisshe ne discomfyte, and that is a lorde to be byloued of his cytezyns, & of his people.

Nowe

Nowe sir, as to the thyrde poynte, where as your olde and wyse counsaylours sayde, that ye ought not sodainly ne hastely procede in this nede, but that ye oughten purvayen and aparayle you in this case, with great dylygence and delyberacion. Verily I trowe ý they sayde right trewly and ryght sothe. For Tullius sayth: In euery dede or thou begyn it, apparayle the with great dyligence. Than say I, in vengeaunce takyng, in werre, in batayle, and in warnestoryng, or thou begyn I rede that thou apparayle the therto, and do it with great delyberaciō. For Tullius saith: The longe apparelynge to fore the batayle, maketh shorte victorie. And Callidorus saith The garryson is stronger, whan it is longe tyme auysed. But nowe let vs speke of the counsayle that was acorded by your neyghbours, suche as don you reuerence withoutē loue, your olde enemyes reconciled, your flatterers, that counsayled you certayne thynges priuely, and openly counsayled you the contrarye. The yong folke also, that counsayled you to venge you, & to make werre anon. Certes syr, as I haue sayde byfore, ye haue greatly erred to clepe suche maner of folke to youre counsayle, whiche counsaylours ben ynoughe reproued by the resons a forsayd. But nathelesse let vs nowe discende to the special. Ye shul fyrste procede after the doctryne of Tullius. Certes the trouthe of thys mater or of thys counsayle, nedeth not dyligently to enquire, for it is wel wyste, which they ben that han done you this trespas and vilanye, and howe many trespasours, and in what maner they haue done al thys wronge to you, and al this vilanye. And after thys, than shul ye examyne the seconde condicion, whiche Tullius addeth in thys mater. For Tullius putteth a thyng, whiche that he clepeth consentyng: this is to say, who ben they and whiche ben they, and howe manye, that cōsenten to thy counsayle in thy wylfulnesse, to done hasty vengeaunce. And let vs consyder also who ben they, and howe manye they ben that consented to youre aduersaries. As to the fyrst poynt, it is wel knowen whiche folke they be, that cōsented to your hasty wylfulnesse. For trewly al tho that counsayl you to maken sodayne werre, ne be not your frendes. Let se nowe whiche ben they that ye holden so greatly your frēdes, as to your person For al be it so that ye be mighty & rich certes ye ben but alone: for trewly ye ne haue no chyld but a doughter, ne ye haue no brethern ne cosyns germayns, ne none other nye kynrede, wherfore your enemyes shuld stynte to plede with you, ne to distroye your person.

Ye knowe also that youre rychesse mot be dispended in dyuers parties. And whā that euery wight hath hisparte, they wollen take but lytell regarde to venge your dethe. But thyne enemyes ben thre, & they haue manye brethern, children, cosyns, & other nye kynred & though so were, that thou haddest slayne of hem two or thre, yet dwelleth ther ynowe to auenge her dethe, and to slee thy person. And though so be that your kynrede be more stedfaste and syker than the kyn of your aduersaryes, yet neuer the lesse your kynrede is but after kynrede, for they ben but lytel sybbe to you, and the kynne of your enemyes ben nye sybbe to hem. And certes as in that, her condicion is better than is yours. Than let vs consyder also of the counsaylynge of hem that counsayled you to take sodayne vengeaunce, whether it acorde to reson or non: And certes ye know wel nay for as by ryght and reson, there maye no man take vengeaunce of no wight, but the iuge that hath iurisdiction of it, whan it is graunted hym to take vengeaunce hastely or attemperatly, as the lawe requireth. And yet more ouer of thylke worde that Tullius clepeth cōsentynge, thou shalte cōsent, yf that thy might and thy power may consente and suffyse to thy wilfulnesse, and to thy counsaylours: And certes thou mayste wel saye naye, for sykerly as for to speke properly, we may do nothyng but suche thynge as we may done ryghtfully: and certes righfully ye may take no vengeaunce, as of your own propre auctorite. Than maye ye se that youre power ne consenteth not ne accordeth not with your wylfulnesse. Nowe let vs examyne the thyrde poynt, that Tullius clepeth consequence. Thou shalte vnderstonde that the vengeaunce ý thou purposest for to take is consequent, and therof followeth an other vengeaunce, peryl, and werre, and other damages withouten nombre, of whiche we be not ware, as at this tyme. And as touchynge the fourth poynte, ý Tullius clepeth engendring, thou shalte consyder, that this wrong, whiche that is done to the, is engendred of ý

hate of

hate of thyne enemyes, and of ꝑ vengeaunce takyng vpon hem, that wolde engender a nother vengeaunce, and mochel sorowe & wastyng of rychesse, as I sayde ere. Nowe sir, as touchyng the fykte poynte, that Tully clepeth causes, whiche is the laste poynte, thou shalte vnderstonde, that the wronge that thou haste receyued, hathe certayne causes, whiche that clerkes callen orien, and efficien, and causa longinqua, and causa propinqua, that is to saye, the ferre cause, and the nyghe cause. The ferre cause is almyghty God, that is cause of al thynges. The nere cause is the thre enemyes. The cause accidental was hate. The cause material, ben the fyue wounddes of thy doughter. The cause formal, is the maner of theyr werkynge that brought ladders, and clambe in at thy wyndowes. The cause fynal was for to sle thy doughter, it letted not in as moche as in them was. But for to speke of ꝑ ferre cause, as to what ende they shulde come, or fynally what shal betyde of them in thys case, ne canne I not deme, but by coniectynge and supposynge: for we shall suppose that they shall come to a wycked ende, bycause that the boke of decrees saythe. Selde or wyth greate payne, ben causes brought to a good ende, whan they ben badly begonne.

Now sir, yf men wolde aske me why that god suffred men to do you this villanye, truly I can not wel answere, as for no sothfastnesse. For the Apostel saythe, that the scyences and the iugementes of our lorde God almighty ben ful depe, there may no man comprehende ne serche hem. Natheleſſe by certayne presumpcyons and coniectynges, I holde and byleue, that God whyche that is ful of iustyce and of rightwisnesse, hathe suffred thys betyde, by iuste cause resonable.

¶ Thy name is Melibee, this is to saye, a man that drinketh hony. Thou haste dronke so moche hony of swete temporel rychesses, and delyces of honours of this worlde, that thou arte dronke, and haste forgoten Jesu Christ thy creatour: Thou ne haste not done to hym suche honoure and reuerence as the ought, ne thou ne haste not taken kepe to the wordes of Ouide, that sayth. Under ꝑ hony of the goodes of thy body, is hyd the venym that sleeth thy soule.

And Salomon sayth: If it so be that thou haſt founde hony, eete of the same hony, that that suffyseth: For yf so be that thou eete of ꝑ same hony out of mesure, thou shalte spewe, and also be nedy and poore. And paraventure almyghty God Jesu Christ, hath the in dispyte, and hathe turned awaye fro the hys face, and his eeres of myserycorde & mercye. And also he hath suffred & gyue lycence, that thou thus shuldest be punished & chastised, in ꝑ maner that thou haste trespased and offended. Thou haſt done synne agaynst our lorde Christ, for certes the thre enemyes of mankynde, that is to say: the flesshe, the fende, and the worlde, thou haste suffred hem entre into thyne herte wylfully, by the wyndowes of thy body, and haſt not defended thy selfe sufficiently agaynst their assautes & their temptacions, so that they haue wounded thy soule in fyue places, this is to say: The deedly synnes, that ben entred in to thy hert by thy fyue wyttes. And in the same maner oure lorde Christ hathe wolde and suffred that thy thre enemyes bē entred in to thy house by ꝑ wyndowes, and haue wounded thy doughter in the forsayd maner.

Truely (q̃ Melibee) I se well that ye enforce you moche by wordes to ouercome me, in suche maner that I shall not venge me on myn enemyes, shewynge me the perilles and the yuels that myght fal of this vengeaunce but who so wolde consyder in al vengeaunces, the perils and yuels that myght sue of vengeaunce takyng, a man wolde neuer take vengeaunce, and that were harme: For by ꝑ vengeaunce takynge, ben the wycked men discouered from the good men. And they that haue wyll to do wickednesse, restrayn theyr wycked purpose, whan they se the ponishyng and chastysyng of ꝑ trespasours: And yet say I more, that ryght as a synguler person synneth in takynge vengeaunce of a nother mā, ryght so synneth the iuge, yf he do no vengeaūce of hem that haue deserued. For Seneke saythe thus: That mayster he saythe is good that preueth shrewes. And as Cassyodor saythe: A man dredeth to do outrages, whan he wote and knoweth, that it dysplaseth to the iuges & souerayne. And an other saythe: The iuge that dredeth to do ryght maketh men shrewes. And saynt Poule the Apostle saythe in hys Epystle, whan he wryteth vnto the Romayns, that the iuges beare not

the speere

the speere wythout cause, but they beare it to punyche the shrewes & mysdoers, & for to defende the good men. Yf ye woll then take vengeaunce of your enemies, ye shul returne and haue your recourse to the iuge that hath the iurisdyction vpon hem, and he shall punyche hem, as the lawe asketh and requyreth

A ha, sayd Melibee, thys vēgeaūce lyketh me nothynge. I bethynke me nowe, and take hede howe that fortune hathe nourysched me fro my childhode, and hath holpe me to passe many a stronge paas: Nowe I woll assaye her, trowynge wyth goddes helpe, that she shall helpe me my shame for to auenge.

TRuely said Prudēce, yf ye wol werke by my counsayle, ye shal not assay fortune by no waye: ne ye shall not lene or bowe vnto her, after the worde of Seneke For thynges that bene foolyshlye done, and that bene done in hope of fortune, shal neuer come to good ende. And as the same Seneke sayeth: The more clere & the more shynynge that fortune is, the more brytel and the soner broke she is. Trusteth not in her, for she is not stedfast ne stable. For when thou trowest to be moste sure and stedfaste of her helpe, she woll fayle and dysceyue the. And where as ye saye, that fortune hath nourysched you fro youre chyldhode, I saye that in so moche ye shall the lesse truste in her, and in her wytte. For Seneke sayeth: what man that is norysched by fortune, she maketh him a great foole Nowe then syth ye desyre and aske vēgeaūce and the vengeaunce that is done after the lawe, and before the iuge, ne lyketh you not and the vengeaunce that is done in hope of fortune is peryllous & vncertaine, then haue ye none other remedye, but for to haue your recourse vnto the soueraine iuge, that vēgeth all vylanyes and wronges. And he shal vēge you, after that hym selfe wytnesseth, where as he sayeth: Leaue the vengeaunce to me, and I shall do it.

Melibee answered, yf I ne venge me of the villany that men haue done to me, I som mō or warne hem, that haue done to me that vyllanye, and al other, to do me an other vyllanye. For it is wrytten: Yf thou take no vengeaūce of an olde vyllany, thou cōmonest thyne aduersaryes to do the a newe vyllany: And also for my suffraūce men wolde do me so moche vyllany, that I myght neither bere it ne sustayne it, and so shulde I be put & holden ouer lowe. For men sayne, in mykel suffe ryng shal many thynges fal vnto the, which thou shalt not mowe suffre.

Certes (ꝑ Prudence) I graunt you, that ouer moch suffraunce is not good, but yet ne foloweth it not therof, that euery persone, to whome men do vyllanye, shulde take of it vēgeaunce: for that appertayneth and longeth all only to iuges, for they shulde venge ꝑ vyllanyes and iniuryes: And therfore those two authorities that ye haue sayd afore, bene only vnderstande in the iuges: For when they suffre ouer moche the wrōges and vyllanyes to be done, wythout punyshment, they sommon not a man all only for to do newe wronges, but they cōmaunde it. Also a wyse man sayeth, that the iuge that correcteth not ꝑ synner, cōmaundeth and byddeth hym do synne. And ꝑ iuges and souerayns, myght in theyr lande so moch suffre of the shrewes & mysdoers, that they shulde by such suffraūce, by processe of tyme, were of such power and myght that they shulde put out the iuges and the soueraynes frō theyr places, and at laste, make hem lese her lordshyppes.

But let vs now suppose, that ye haue leue to venge you: I saye ye be not of myght and power as nowe to venge you, for yf ye woll make comparyson vnto the myghte of youre aduersaryes, ye shulde fynde in many thynges that I haue shewed you er thys, ꝑ their condicyon is better then yours, and therfore saye I, that it is good as nowe, that ye suffre and be pacient.

Furthermore, ye knowe well that after the cōmen sawe, it is a woodnesse, a man to stryue wyth a stronger or a more mighty mā then he is hym selfe, and for to stryue wyth a man of euen strength, that is to saye, wyth as stronge a man as he is, it is peryl: and for to stryue wyth a weaker man, it is folye, and therfore shulde a man flye stryuynge as mykel as he myght. For Salomon sayeth: It is a great worshyppe to a man to kepe hym fro noyse & stryke: and yf it so befal & happe that a man of greater myght & strength then thou arte, do the greuaūce: study and besye the rather to styll the same greuaunce, then for to venge the. For Seneke sayeth, that he putteth hym in great peryll, that stryueth wyth

a greater man than he is hem selfe. And Caton sayth, yf a man of hygher astate or degre or more mighty than thou, do the anoye or greuaunce, suffre hym: for he that ones hath greued the, maye an other tyme releue the and helpe the. Yet sette I case ye haue lycence for to venge you. I saye that there ben ful many thynges, that shal restrayne you of vengeaunce takyng, and make you for to enclyne to suffre, and for to haue pacience in the wronges that haue ben done to you. First and formest yf ye wol consyder the fautes that ben in your owne person, for whyche fautes god hath suffred you to haue this trybulacion, as I haue sayd to you here before. For the poete saythe, that we ought paciently take the trybulacions that come to vs, whan that we thynke and consyder that we haue deserued to haue them. And saynt Gregorie saythe, that whan a man consydereth wel the nombre of hys defautes and of hys synnes, the paynes and the trybulacions that he suffreth seme the lesse vnto hym. And in as moche as him thynketh his synnes more heuy and greuous, in so moche semeth his payne the lighter and the eyer vnto him. Also ye owe to enclyne and bowe your herte to take the pacience of our lorde Jesu Christ, as sayth saynt Peter in his epystles. Jesu Christ he saythe hath suffred for vs, and yeuen ensample to euerye man to folowe and sewe hym, for he dyd neuer synne, ne neuer came there a villaynous worde out of hys mouthe. Whan men cursed hym, he cursed hem not. And whan men bete hym, he manaced hem not. Also the great pacience, whyche sayntes that ben in paradyse haue had in tribulacyon that they haue suffred, wythout her deserte or gylte, ought moche styre you to pacience. Fertherme, ye shul enforce you to haue pacience, cõsydryng that the trybulacions of thys world but lytel whyle endure, and sone passed ben and gon, and ỳ ioy that a man seketh to haue by pacience in tribulacions is perdurable, after that the Apostle saythe in his Epystle. The ioye of god he sayth, is perdurable, that is to saye, euerlastyng. Also troweth and byleueth stedfastly that he is not wel nourished and wel taught, that can not haue pacience, or wol not receyue pacyence. For Salomon saythe, that the doctryne and the wytte of a man is knowen by pacience. And in an other place he sayth, that he that is pacient, gouerneth hym by great prudence.

And the same Salomon saythe. The angry and wrathful man maketh noyses, and the pacient mã attempreth and stylleth hem. He saythe also, it is more worth to be pacient than to be ryght stronge. And he that maye haue the lordeship of his owne herte is more to prayse, thã he that by his force or strength taketh great cyties. And therfore sayth saynt Jame in hys epystle that pacyence is a great vertue of perfectyon.

Certes (q Melibee) I graunt you dame Prudence, that pacience is a great vertue of perfection, but euerye man maye not haue the perfection that ye seke, ne I am not of the nõbre of ryght perfyte men. For myn herte may neuer be in peace, vnto the tyme it be auenged. And al be it so that it was great peryl to myne enemyes to do me a villanye, in taking vengeaunce vpon me, yet toke they no hede of the peryl, but fulfylled her wycked wyll ⁊ her corage: And therfore me thynketh men ought not repreue me, though I put me in a lytel peryl, for to auenge me, ⁊ though I do a great excesse, that is to saye: that I venge one outrage by an other.

Ah (q dame) Prudence, ye say your wyl as you lyketh: But in no case of the worlde a man shulde not do outrage ne excesse for to venge him. For Cassiodor sayth, that as yuel dothe he that vengeth him by outrage, as he that dothe the outrage. And therfore ye shal venge you after the order of right, that is to saye, by the lawe, and not by excesse ne by outrage. And also yf you wol venge you of the outrage of your aduersaries in other maner than right commaundeth, ye synne. And therfore saythe Seneke: that a man shal neuer venge shreudnesse by shreudnesse. And yf ye saye that right asketh to defende violence by violence, and fightyng by fighting: certes ye saye soth, whan the defence is done without interual, or without taryeng or delay, for to defende hym, and not for to venge hym. And it behoueth that a man put suche attemperaũce in his defence, that mẽ haue no cause ne mater to repreue him ỳ defendeth hym of

outrage

outrage and excesse, for els were it agayne reson. Parde ye knowe wel, that ye make no defence as nowe, for to defende you, but for to venge you: and so sheweth it that ye haue no wyll to do your dede attemperatly, and therfore me thynketh that pacience is good. For Salomon sayeth, that he that is not pacient shall haue great harme.

Certes sayd Melibee I graũt you, that when a mã is impacient & wroth of that that touchethhim not, and that appertaineth not vnto hym, though it harme hym it is no wonder For the lawe sayth, that he is culpable, that entremetleth or meteth wyth suche thynges as apertayneth not vnto hym. And Salomõ sayeth, that he that entremetleth of the noyse or stryke of another man, is lyke to hym that taketh a straunge hounde by the eeres: For ryght as he, that taketh a straũge houde by ẏ eeres, is other whyle byttẽ by ẏ honde, right so in the same wyse it is reason that he haue harme that by hys impacience medleth hym of the noyse of an other man, where as it appertayneth not vnto hym. But ye knowe wel that thys dede, that is to saye my grefe & my dysease, toucheth me ryght nyghe. And therfore though I be wrothe and impacient, it is no maruayle: and sauynge youre grace I can not se ẏ it myght greatly harme me thoughe I toke vengeaunce, for I am rycher & more myghtye then myne enemyes be: And well knowe ye that by money & by hauynge great possessyons, ben all thynges of thys worlde gouerned. And Salomõ sayeth, al these thynges obey to money.

When Prudence had herde her husbande auaunt hym of hys rychesse and hys money, dysprayslynge ẏ power of hys aduersaryes, she spake and sayd in thys wyse. Certes dere syr, I graunt you that ye be ryche & myghty, and that ẏ rychesse is good to hem that haue well gotten hem, and that well can vse hem. For ryght as the body of a man may not lyue wythout the soule, no more may it lyue without the temporel goodes, and by ryches may a man get hym great frendes. And therfore sayeth Pamphillus: yf a nerthes doughter he sayth be riche, she may chese of a thousand men, wheche she woll take to her husbande: for of a thousande, one woll not forsake her ne refuse her. And thys Pamphillus sayeth also: yf thou be ryght happy, that is to say, yf thou be ryche, thou shalte fynde a greate nombre of felowes & frendes. And yf thy fortune chaũge, farewel frendshyp, & felowshyp for thou shalte be alone wythout any cõpany but yf it be the companye of poore folke. And yet sayeth thys Pamphillus more ouer that they that bene bonde and thrall of lynage, shall be made worthye and noble by the rychesses. And ryghte so as by the rychesses there come many goodnesses, ryghte so by pouertie come there many harmes and yuels, for greate pouertie cõstrayneth a man to do many yuels. And therfore calleth Cassiodor pouertye the mother of ruyne, that is to saye, the mother of ouerthrowynge or of fallynge downe. And therfore sayeth Petre Alfonce: One of the greatest aduersytyes of thys worlde is when a free man by kynde or of byrth, is constrayned by pouerty to eat the almesse of hys enemye. And the same sayeth Innocent, in one of hys bokes: He sayeth, that sorowfull and myshappy is the condicion of a poore begger, for yf he aske not hys meate, he dyeth for honger, and yf he aske, he dyeth for shame: and algates necessite constrayneth hym to aske: And therfore sayeth Salomon, that better is to dye, then for to haue suche pouerte. And as the same Salomon sayeth: Better it is to dye of bytter deth, then for to lyue in suche wyse. By these reasons that I haue said vnto you, & by many other reasons that I coulde say, I graunt you that rychesses ben good, to hem ẏ getten hem well, and to hem that wel vsen tho rychesses And therfore wol I shewe you howe ye shal behaue you in gatherynge of rychesses, and in what maner ye shullen vse hem.

First ye shall get hem wythout great desyre, by good leyser, sokynglye and not ouerhastelye, for a man that in to desyrynge to get rychesse, habandoneth hym fyrste to theftes and to all other yuels. And therfore sayeth Salomon: He that hasteth hym to besely to ware ryche, he shall be none innocent. He sayeth also, that the rychesse that hastely cometh to a man, sone and lyghtly goeth and passeth from a man, but that rychesse that cometh lytel & lytel, wexeth alwaye and multiplyeth. And syr, ye shall gette rychesse by your wyte

and by your trauayle, vnto your profyte, and that wythout wronge or harme doynge to any other persone. For the lawe sayeth, there maketh no mã him selfe riche, yf he do harme to an other wyght, thys is to say: that nature defendeth and forbyddeth by ryghte, that no man make hym selfe ryche vnto the harme of an other person. And Tullius sayeth, that no sorowe ne no drede of death, ne nothing that maye fall vnto a man, is so moche ayenst nature, as a man to encreace hys owne profyte, to the harme of an other mã. And though the great & myghty mẽ get rychesses more lyghtly then thou, yet shalte thou not be ydell ne slowe to do thy profyte, for thou shalte in all wyse flye ydelnesse. For Salomon sayeth, ꝑ ydelnesse teacheth a man to do many yuels. And the same Salomon sayeth, that he that trauayleth and besyeth hym to tylth his lãde shall eate breed: but he that is ydell & casteth hym to no besynesse ne occupacion, shal fal in to pouerte and dye for honger. And he that is ydell and slowe, can neuer fynde couenable tyme for to do hys profyte. For there is a ver sykyer sayeth, that the ydel man excuseth him in wynter, bycause of the greate colde, and in sommer bycause of the heete. For these causes sayeth Caton, waketh and enclyne you net ouer moche for to slepe, for ouer moche reste nourysheth and causeth many vyces. And therfore sayeth saynt Jerom, do some good dedes, that the deuell wbyche is our enemye, ne fynde you not vnoccupyed, for the dyuel ne taketh not lyghtly vnto his werkynge suche as he fyndeth occupyed in good werkes.

Then thus, in gettynge rychesses ye must flye ydelnesse. And afterward ye shul vse the rychesses, wbyche ye haue gote by your wyte and by youre trauayle, in suche maner, that men holde you not to scarce ne to sparyng, ne foole large, that is to say, ouer large a spẽder For ryghte as men blame an auaricious mã bycause of hys scarcite and chynchery, in the same wyse is he to blame that spendeth ouer largelye. And therfore sayeth Caton: Vse (sayeth he) the rychesses that thou haste gotten in suche maner, that men maye haue no mater ne cause to call the nother wretche ne chynche: For it is greate shame to a man to haue a poore herte and a ryche pursue. He sayeth also, the goodes that thou haste gote, vse them by measure, that is to saye, spende mesurably, for they that foolyshly waste and dyspende the goodes that they haue, when they haue no more profre of her owne, then they shape hem to take ꝑ goodes of an other man. I saye then that ye shall flye auaryce, vsynge youre rychesse in suche maner, that men saye not that youre rychesses bene buryed, but that ye haue hem in your myghte and in youre weldynge. For a wyse man repreueth the auaricyous man, and sayeth thus in thys verses two. Wherto and why buryeth a man hys goodes by hys great auaryce, and knoweth well that nedes he muste dye, for death is the ende of euerye man, as in thys presente lyfe? And for what cause or encheson ioyneth he hym, or knytteth he hym so faste vnto hys goodes, that all hys wyttes mowe not dysceuer hym, ne departe hym fro hys goodes, and knoweth well, or ought to knowe, that when he is deade, he shall nothynge beare wyth hym out of thys worlde. And therfore sayeth saynt Augustyne, that the auaricyous mã is lykened vnto hell, that the more it swaloweth, the more desyre it hathe to swalowe and deuoure. And as well as ye wolde eschewe to be called an auaricyous man or chynche, as well shulde ye kepe and gouerne you in such a wyse, that men call you not foole large. Therfore sayeth Tullius. The goodes of thyne house ne shulde not be hydde ne kepte so close, but that they myghte be opened by pyte and debonayrte, that is to saye, to yeue hem parte that haue greate nede. Ne thy goodes shulde not be so open, to be euerye mans goodes. Afterwarde in gettynge of youre rychesses and in vsynge hem, ye shall alwaye haue thre thynges in youre herte, that is to say, our Lorde God, conscience, and good name. Fyrst ye shall haue god in your herte, and for no ryches ye shuld do any thyng, wbych may in any maner dysplease god your creatour & maker. For after the worde of Salomon, it is better to haue a lytell good with ꝑ loue of god, then to haue moche good and treasoure, and lese the loue of his Lorde God. And the prophete sayeth, that better it is to be a good man, and haue lytel good & treasour, then to be holden a shrewe, and haue great rychesse. And yet I say furthermore, that ye shulde al waye do your busynesse to get you rychesses,

so that

so that ye get hem with good conscience. And the Apostle sayeth, that there nys thynge in thys worlde, of whyche we shulde haue so great ioye, as when oure conscience beareth vs good wytnesse. And the wyse man sayeth: that the substaunce of a man is full good, when synne is not in mans conscience. Afterwarde in gettyng of your rychesses and in vsynge of hem, ye muste haue great besynesse and great diligence, that your good name be alwaye kept and conserued. For Salomon sayeth, that better it is, and more it auayleth a man to haue a good name, then for to haue many rychesses: And therfore he sayth in an other place. Do great diligence sayeth Salomon, in keppynge of thy frendes & of thy good name, for it shall lenger abyde wyth the thē any treasure, be it neuer so precious. And certes he shuld not be called a great gentylman, that after God and good conscience, all thynges lefte, ne doth hys deligence & besynesse to kepe hys good name. And Cassyodor sayeth, that it is a sygne of a gentyll herte, when a mā loueth and desyreth to haue a good name And therfore sayeth saynte Augustyne, that there ben two thynges that ben ryght necessarye and also nedefull: and that is good conscience, and good lose, that is to saye: good cōscience to thyne owne persone inwarde, and good lose for thy neyghbour outwarde. And he that trusteth hym so moch in hys good cōscience, that he dyspyseth & setteth at nought his good name or loose, & recketh not though he kepe not hys good name, nys but a cruell churle. Syr, nowe haue I shewed you howe ye shulde do in gettynge rychesses, and howe ye shulde vse hem: and I se well for the trust that ye haue in your rychesses, ye woll moue warre and batayle. I counsayle you that ye begyn no warre in truste of youre rychesses, for they ne suffyse not warres to maynteyne. And therfore sayeth a philosopher: That mā that desyreth and wolde algates haue warre shall neuer haue suffysaunce: for the rycher that he is, the greater dyspēces must he make yf he woll haue worshyppe and vyctorye.

And Salomon sayeth, that the greater rychesses ỳ a man hath, the more dyspendours he hath. And therfore syr, all be it so that for youre ryches ye maye haue moche folke, yet behoueth it not, ne it is not good to begynne warre, where as ye maye in other maner haue peace, vnto youre worshyppe and profyte: For the vyctorye of batayls that bene in thys worlde, lyeth not in great nombre or multytude of people, ne in the vertue of mā, but it lyeth in the wyll and in the hande of oure Lorde God almyghtye. And therfore Judas Machabeus, whyche was godes knyght, when he shulde fyght ayenst hys aduersarye, that hadde a greater nombre and a greater multytude of folke, and strōger then was hys people of Machabee, yet he recomforted hys lytell company, and sayd ryght in thys wyse: Also lyghtly sayd he, maye our Lorde God yeue vyctorye to a fewe folke, as to many folke, for the vyctorye of a batayle cometh not by the greate nombre of people, but it cōmeth from oure Lorde God of heauen. And dere syr, for as moche as there is no man certayne, yf it be worthye that God yeue hym vyctorye or not, after that Salomon sayeth, therfore euery man shuld greatlye drede warres to begyn: and bycause that in batayles fall many peryls, and happeth other whyle, that as sone is the greate man slayne as the lytel man. And as it is wrytten in the seconde boke of kynges: The dedes of batayles ben aduenturous and nothyng certayne, for as lyghtlye is one hurte wyth a speere as an other: And for ther is great peryll in warre, therfore shulde a man flye and eschue warre in as moch as a man may goodly. For Salomō sayeth, he that loueth peryl, shall fall in peryll.

After that dame Prudence had spoken in thys maner, Melibe answered and sayd. I se well dame Prudence, that by your fayre wordes and your resons that ye haue shewed me that the warre lyketh you nothynge, but I haue not yet herde youre counsayle howe I shall do in thys nede.

Certes (said she) I cōsayle you that ye accorde wyth your aduersaries, & that ye haue peace wyth hem. For saynt James sayeth in hys Epystle: that by concorde and peace small ryches waxe great: and by debate and dyscorde ryches decaye. And ye knowe well, that one of the greatest and moste souerayne thyng that is in this worlde, is vnite & peace And therfore sayeth oure lorde Jesu Christe to hys apostles, in thys wyse: wel happy ben they, that loue & purchace peace, for they be called the chyldren of god. Ah, sayd Melibee,

now se I wel, that ye loue not myne honour ne my worshyp. Ye knowe wel that myne aduersaryes haue begon this debate & bryge by theyr outrage. And ye se well that they ne requyre ne praye me of peace, ne they aske not to be reconsiled. Wol ye then that I go meke me, and obey me to them, & crye hem mercye? Forsoth ȳ were not my worshyp. For ryghte as men saye, ouer great humblenesse engendreth dysprayslynge, so fareth it by to greate humilite or mekenesse.

Then began dame Prudence to make semblant of wrath, & sayd: Certes syr, saue your grace. I loue your honour and prokyte as I do myne owne, and euer haue do: ye ne none other neuer se the cōtrary. And yet, yf I had said, that ye shulde haue purchased peace and reconsiliation, I ne had moche mystake me, ne sayd amysse. For the wyse man sayeth: the dyscention begynneth by an other man, and the reconsylynge begynneth by thy selfe. And the prophete sayeth: flye shreudnesse, and do goodnesse, seke peace & folowe it, in as moch as in the is. Yet saye I not, that ye shulde rather pursue to youre aduersaries for peace, then they shulde to you: For I knowe well that ye bene so harde herted, that ye woll do nothynge for me. And Salomon sayeth: He that hath ouer harde an herte, he at laste shal myshappe or mysbetyde.

When Melibee had herde dame Prudence make semblaunt of wrathe, he sayde in thys wyse. Dame I praye you, that ye be not dyspleased of ȳ thynge that I saye, for ye knowe well that I am angrye and wroth, & that is no wonder: and they that be wrothe wote not well what they do, ne what they saye. Therfore the prophete sayeth: that troubled eyen haue no clere syght. But saye & coū sayle me as you lyketh, for I am ready to do ryght as ye wol desyre: And yf ye reprefe me of my folye, I am the more holden to loue & prayse you. For Salomō sayeth, that he that repreueth hym that doth foly, he shall fynde greater grace then he that dysceyueth him by swete wordes.

Then sayde dame Prudence, I make no semblaunt of wrath ne of anger, but for your great prokyte. For Salomon sayeth: He is more worth, that repreueth or chydeth a fole for hys folye, shewynge hym semblaunt of wrath, then he that supporteth him and prayseth hym in hys mysdoynge, and laugheth at hys folye. And thys same Salomon sayeth afterwarde: That by the sorowfull vysage of a man, that is to saye, by the sorye and heuy countenaunce of a man, the foole correcteth and amendeth hym selfe.

Then sayde Melibee, I shall not con answere vnto so many fayre reasons as ye put to me and shewe: saye shortly your wyl and youre counsayle, and I am all readye to performe and fulfyll it. ¶ Then dame prudence dyscouered all her wyll vnto hym and sayde. I counsayle you (sayd she) aboue al thynges, that ye make peace bytwene God and you, and be reconsyled vnto hym and to hys grace for as I haue sayd you here before, god hath suffred you to haue thys tribulation and dysease for your synnes: and yf ye do as I saye you, God wyl sende youre aduersaryes vnto you, and make hem fall at your fete, ready to do youre wyll and your commaundement. For Salomon sayeth, when the condicion of man is pleasaūt and lykynge to god, he chaūgeth the hertes of the mans aduersaries, and constrayneth hem to beseche hym of peace & of grace. And I praye you let me speke with your aduersaryes priuelye, for they shal not knowe that it be of your wyll or your assent. And then when I knowe theyr wyll and theyr entente, I maye counsayle you the more surely.

Dame sayde Melibee, dothe youre wyll and your lykynge, for I put me holy in your dysposicion and ordynaunce.

Then dame Prudence, when she sawe the good wyll of her husbonde, delybered & toke aduyse in her selfe, thynkyng how she myght brynge thys nede vnto a good conclusion and to a good ende: And when she sawe her tyme, she sente for these aduersaries to come vnto her in a priue place. And shewed wisely vnto hem ȳ great goodes that come of peace and the greate harmes and peryls that bene in warre, and sayd to hem in a goodly maner howe that hem ought haue great repentaūce of the iniury and wronge, that they had done to Melibeus her lorde, and vnto her and to her doughter.

And when they herde ȳ goodly wordes of dame Prudence, they were so supprysed and rauysched, and had so great ioye of her, that wonder was to tel. ¶ Ah, ladye (sayde they) ye haue

ye haue shewed vnto vs the blessyng of swetnesse after the sayeng of Dauid the prophete, For the reconsyling which we be nat worthy to haue in no manere. But we ought require it with great cõtrycion and humilite, that ye of your goodnesse haue presented vnto vs. Now se we wel, that the science and cõnyng of Salomon is ful trewe, for he saith: That swete wordes multiply and encreace frendes, and maketh shrewes to be debonaire and meke.

Certes (sayd they) we put our dede and al our mater & cause, al holy in your goodwyl, and been redy to obey at the cõmaundement of oure lorde Melibeus. And therfore dere and benygne lady: we praye and beseche you as mekely as we can and maye, that it lyke vnto your great goodnesse, to fulfyll in dede, your goodly wordes. For we consyder and knowe, that we haue offended and greued oure lorde Melibeus out of measure: so forforth, that we be nat of power to make hym amendes. And therfore we oblige and bynde vs and our frendes, for to do all at hys wyll and commaundement: but parauenture he hath suche heuynesse, and suche wrathe to vs warde, bycause of our offence, that he woll enioyn vs suche a payne, as we mowe nat beare ne sustayne. And therfore noble lady, we besech your womanly pyte, to take suche aduysement in thys nede, that we ne our frẽdes be nat disherited ne distroyed, through our foly.

Certes (sayd Prudence) It is an harde thynge and ryght perilous, that a man put him al vtterly in arbytration and iugement, and in the might and power of hys enemye: For Salomon saythe: leueth me, and yeueth credence to that I shal saye: Ne yeueth neuer the power ne gouernaunce of thy goodes, to thy son, to thy wyfe, to thy frende, ne to thy brother: ne yeue thou neuer might ne mastry ouer thy body while thou liuest. Nowe, syth he defendeth that a man shulde nat yeue to his brother ne to his frende, the might of his body. By a stronger reason he defendeth and forbedeth a man to yeue hym selfe to his enemy. And natheleſſe I counsaile you that ye mystrust nat my lorde: for I wot wel and know verily, that he is debonair & meke, large, curteys, and nothynge desirous ne couitous of goodes ne ryches. For there is nothynge in this worlde that he desyreth, saue onely worshyp and honoure. Furthermore I knowe, and am ryght sure, that he shal nothyng do in thys nede, without my coũsayle: and I shall so worke in thys case, that by the grace of our lorde god, ye shalbe reconsyled vnto vs.

Than sayd they with one voyce, worshypful lady we put vs and oure goodes all fully in your wyl and disposycion, and ben redy to come, what day that it lyketh vnto your noblesse to lymyte vs or assyne vs for to make our oblygacion & bonde as stronge as it lyketh vnto your goodnes, that we mowe fulfyl the wyl of you and of my lorde Melibe.

Whan dame Prudence had herde the answere of these men, she bad hem go ayen priuely, and she returned to her lorde Melibe, & tolde hym howe she founde hys aduersaries ful repentaunt, knowlegynge ful lowly her synnes and trespas, and how they were redy to suffre al payne, requiryng and prayẽg him of mercy and pyte.

Than sayde Melibe, he is wel worthy to haue pardon and forgeueuenesse of hys synne, that excuseth not hys synne, but knowlegeth and repenteth hym, askyng indulgynce. For Seneke sayth, there is the remission and forgeuenesse, where as the confessyon is: for confessyon is neyghbour to innocence. And therfore I assent and conkyrme me to haue peace, but it is good that we do nought wout the assente and wyl of our frendes.

Than was Prudence ryght gladde and ioyful, and sayde: Certes sir, ye haue wel and goodly answered: for ryght as by the counsayle, assent, and helpe of your frendes, ye haue be steered to venge you and make werre: Right so, without her counsayle shall ye not accorde you, ne haue peace with your aduersaries. For the lawe sayth: There is nothyng so good, by waye of kynde, as a thyng to be vnbounde by him that it was ybounde.

Than dame Prudence, wythout delay or taryenge, sent anone her messanger for her kynsfolke and her olde frendes, wyche that were trewe and wise: and told hem by order, in the presence of Melibe, al the mater, as it is aboue expressed and declared. And prayed hem that they wolde saye their aduyse and counsayle what best were to do in this nede. And whan Melibeus frendes had taken her

aduyse and delyberacion of the forsayd mater, and had examyned it by great busynesse and dilygence. They yaue ful counsaile for to haue peace and rest, and that Melibee shulde receyue wyth good hert hys aduersaris, to forgeuenesse and mercy.

And whan dame Prudence had herd thassent of her lorde Melibee, and the counsayle of hys frendes accorde with her wyl and her entencion, she was wondersly gladde in her hert, and sayde. There is an olde prouerbe (sayd she) That ý goodnesse that thou maist do this day, do it, and abyde it nat, ne delay it nat tyl the next daye. And therfore I counsayle, that ye sende your messengers, suche as be discrete and wyse, vnto your aduersaries: tellyng hem on your behalf, that yf they wol treat of peace and accorde, that they shape hē wyth out delay or taryeng, to come vnto vs: whyche thyng performed was in dede. And whan these trespasours, and repentyng folke of her folies, that is to say, the aduersaries of Melibeus, had herde what these messangers sayd vnto hem, they were ryght gladde and ioyful, and answered ful mekely and benygnely, yeldyng grace and thankes to her lorde Melibee, and to al hys companye: and shope hem without delaye to go wyth the messangers, and obeyed to the commaundement of her lorde Melibeus. And ryght anone they toke her way to the courte of Melibe, & toke with hem some of their true frēdes, to make faythe for hem, & for to be her borowes: And whā they were comen to the presence of Melibee, he sayd to hem these wordes. It stondeth thus, sayde Melibee, and soth it is, that causelesse & without skyl and reson, ye haue done great iniuries and wronges to me and my wyfe Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye haue entred in to my house by violence and haue done suche outrage, that all men knowe wel that ye haue deserued dethe. And therfore woll I knowe and wete of you, whether ye woll put the punishynge and the chastylyng and the vengeaunce of thys outrage, in the wyl of me and of my wyfe, or ye wol not.

Than the wysest of hem thze answerd for hem al, and sayd. Sir (sayd he) we know wel that we ben vnworthy to come to the courte of so great a lorde and so worthy as ye be, for we haue so greely mistaken vs, and haue offended and agylted in such wyse agayn your hygh lordshyp, that truely we haue deserued the dethe, but yet for the great goodnesse and debonairte, that al the worlde wytnesseth of your person, we submytte vs to ý excellēcye and benygnytye of your gracious lordeshyp, and ben redy to obey to al your commaundementes, besechynge you, that of your merciable pyte ye wol consyder oure great repentaunce, and lowe submyssyon, and graunt vs forgeuenesse of our outragyous trespace and offence: For wel we knowe, that your liberal grace and mercye stretcheth ferther in to the goodnesse, than don oure outragious gyltes and trespaces in to the wyckednesse. Al be it that cursedly and damnably we haue agylted agaynst your hygh lordshyp.

Than Melibee tooke hem vp fro the grounde ful benygnely, and receyued her oblygacions and her bondes by her othes vpon her pledges and borowes, and assyned hem a certayne day to retourne vnto hys courte, for to receyue and accept the sentence and iugement that Melibeus woldē cōmaunde to be don on hem, by the causes aforsayd, which thynges ordayned, euery man returned to hys house.

And whan dame Prudēce sawe her tyme, she fayned and asked her lorde Melibe, what vengeaunce he thought to take on hys aduersaries.

To whyche Melibe answerde, and sayde: Certes (sayde he.) I thynke and purpose me fully to dispherit thē of al that euer they haue, and for to putte them in exile for euer.

Certes sayd dame Prudence, thys were a cruel sentence, and moche ayenst reason. For ye be rich ynough, and haue no nede of other mennes riches. And ye might lyghtly in this wyse gete you a couetous name, whiche is a vicious thyng, and ought be eschewed of euery good man. For after the sayeng of the apostel: Couetise is rote of al harmes. And therfore it wer better to you to lese so moch good of your owne, than for to take of theyr good in thys maner. For better it is to lese good with worship, than to wyn good with vilanye and shame. And euerye man ought to do his dilygence and his busynesse, to gette him a good name. And yet shal he not onely busy-

hym

him in kepyng hys good name, but he shal so enforce hym alwaye to do some thynge, by whiche he may renewe hys good name. For it is writtē, that the old good lose of a mā or good name, is soone gone and past, whan it is not renewed. And as touchynge, that ye say that ye wol exile your aduersaries: that thynketh me moche ayenst reason, and out of measure, consydringe the power that they haue yeue you vpon them selfe. And it is wrytten: that he is worthy to lese hys priuilege, that mysuseth ẏ might and power that is gyuen hym. And I sette case, ye might enioyne hem ẏ payne by right & lawe, whiche I trowe ye maye nat do: I saye, ye myghte not put it to execution, for parauenture than it were lyke to tourne to ẏ werre, as it was before. And therfore yf ye woll that men do you obeysaunce, ye muste demean you more curteisly, that is to saye: ye muste yeue more easy sentences and iugement. For it is wrytten: he that most curteisly commaundeth, to hym men moost obey. And therfore I praye you, that in thys necessyte and in thys nede, ye caste you to ouercome youre hert. For as Senec sayth: he that ouercometh hys herte, ouercometh twise. And Tully sayth: there is nothyng so commendable in a great lorde, as whan he is debonaire and meke, and apeseth hym lyghtly. And I praye you that ye woll nowe forbere to do vengeaunce, in suche a maner, that youre good name maye be kepte and conserued, and that men may haue cause and mater to prayse you of pyte and mercye: and that ye haue no cause to repent you of thynge that is done. For Senecke saythe: he ouercometh in an yuel manere, that repenteth hym of hys victorie. Wherfore I praye you, let mercy be in your hert, to theffecte and entent, that god almyghtye haue mercy vpō you in hys last iugement. For saynt James sayth in hys Epistel: iugement without mercye shal be do to hym, that hath no mercy of another wight.

When Melibee had herde the great skylles and reasons of dame Prudence, and her wyse informations and techynges, hys herte gan enclyne to the wyl of hys wyfe: consydryng her trew entent, confirmed hym anon and assented fully to worke after her counsayle: & than ked god, of whome procedeth all goodnesse & vertue, that hym had sent a wyfe of so great discretion. And whan the day came that his aduersaries shulde appere in his prensence, he spake to hem goodly, and sayde in thys wyse.

All be it so, that of your pryde and high presumption and foly, and of your negligence & vnconnyng, ye haue misborne you, and trespaced vnto me, yet for as mikel as I se and beholde your great humilyte, and that ye be sory and repentaūt of your gyltes, it cōstrayneth me to do you grace and mercy: wherfore I receyue you to my grace, and forgyue you holy al the offences, iniuries, and wronges, that ye haue don agaynst me and myne, to theffecte & ende, that god of his endlesse mercy wol at the tyme of oure dyeng forgyue vs our gyltes, that we haue trespaced to him in thys wreched worlde. For doutlesse yf we be sory and and repentaunt for the synnes and gyltes, whyche we hane trespaced in ẏ syght of oure lord god: he is so kre and so merciable, that he woll forgyue vs oure gyltes, and bryngе vs to the blysse that neuer shall haue ende. A M E N.

Here endeth the tale of Chaucer and here foloweth the Monkes Prologue.

When ended was the tale of Melibee
And of Prudence, and her benygnyte
Our Host sayd, as I am faythfull man
And by the precious corps Madrian
I had leuer than a barel of ale
That Goodlefe my wyfe had herd thys tale
For she nothyng is of suche pacience
As was thys Melibeus wyfe Prudence
By goddes bones, whā I bete my knaues
She bringeth me the great clubbed staues
And crieth, slee the dogges euerichone
And breke bothe backe and euery bone
And yf that any neyghbour of myne
Wol not in churche to my wyfe enclyne
Or be so hardy, to her to trespace
whan she cometh hom, she rāpeth in my face
And cryeth false cowarde wreke thy wyfe

By

By corpus domini, I wol haue thy knyfe
And thou shalt haue my distaffe, & go spynne
Fro day tyl nyght, she wol thus begynne.
Alas she saith, that euer she was shape
To wedde a mylksop, a cowarde ape
That wol be ouerleyde with euery wight
Thou darst not stonde by thy wyues right
This is my lyfe, but yf that I wold fight
And out at dore, anon I mote me dight
And els I am lost, but yf that I
Belyke a wylde lyon, fole hardy
I wote wel she wol do me slee some day
Some neyghbour, and than go my way
For I am perlous with knyfe in honde
Al be it that I dare not her withstonde
For she is bygge in armes be my faithe
That shal he fynd, that her mysdoth or saith
But lette vs passe away from this matere.
Why lord he sayd, sir mōke: be mery of chere
For ye shal tel vs a tale trewly
Lo Rochester stondeth here fast by (game
Ride forth myne owne lorde, breke not oure
But by my trouthe I knowe not your name
whether I shal cal you my lorde dan John
Or dan Thomas, dan Robert, or dan Albon
Or of what house be ye, by your farther kyn
I vowe to god, thou hast a ful fayre chyn
It is a gentyl pasture there thou gost
Thou arte not lyke a pynaunt or a ghost
Upon my faythe thou arte some officere
Some worthy Sexten, or some Celerere
For by my fathers soule, as to my dome
Thou art a mayster, whan thou art at home
No poore cloysterer, ne no poore nouyse
But a gouernoure ware and wyse
And therwith of brawne and of bones
A wel faryng person for the nones
I pray to god yeue him confusyon
That first the brought in to religyon
Thou woldest be a trede foule a right
Haddest thou as gret leue asthou hast might
To perfourme al thy lust in engendrure
Thou haddest begoten many a creature
Alas, why werest thou so wyde a cope
God yeue me sorowe, and I were pope
Not only thou, but euery mighty man
Though he were shore hyghe vpon his pan
Shuld haue a wyfe, for al this world is lorn
Religyon hath take vp al the corne
Of tredynge, and borel men ben shrimpes
Of feble trees there cometh wretched impes
This maketh that our heires be so slender
And feble, that they maye not wel engender
This maketh that our wyues wol assay
Religious folke, for they may better pay
Of Venus paymentes, than mowe we
God wote no lusheburghs paye ye
But be not wroth my lorde, though I playe
Full ofte in game a sothe haue I herde saye.
This worthy monke toke al in pacience
And sayd, I wol do my dilygence
As ferre as sowneth in to honeste
To tel you a tale, ye two or thre
And yf ye lyst to herken hytherwarde
I wol you sayne, the lyfe of saynt Edwarde
Or els tragedyes fyrst I wol tel.
Of whiche I haue an hundred in my cel.
Tragedy is to tel a certayne story
As olde bokes maken memory
Of hem that stode in great prosperyte
And be fallen out of hye degre
In to mysery, and ended wretchedly
And they ben vercifyed comenly
Of syxe fete, whiche men cal exametron
In prose eke ben endyted many on
And in metre, many a sondrye wyse
Lo, this ought ynough to suffyse
Nowe herkeneth, yf you lyste for to here
But fyrst I beseche you in this matere
Though I by order tel nat these thynges
Be it of Popes, Emperours, or Kynges
After her ages, as men written fynde
But tellen hem, some before & some behynde
As it cometh nowe to my remembraunce
Haue me excused of myne ignorauncce.

Here endeth the Monkes Prologue, and here begynneth hys tale.

I wyl

Wyl bewayle, in maner
of tragedy
The harme of hem that
stoden in hye degre
And fyl, so that there nas
no remedy
To bryng hem out of her
aduersyte
For certayn, whan that fortune lyst to flye
There may no mã of her the course withold
Lette no man trust on blynde prosperite
Bethware by this ensample yonge and old

¶ Lucifer.

AT Lucifer, though he an angel were
And nat a mã, at him wyl I begynne
For though fortune maye nat angel
Frõ hye degre, yet fel he for his synne (dere
Doun in to hel, where he is yet inne
O Lucifer, brightest of angels al
Now art thou Sathanas, ý maist nat twyn
Out of mysery, in whiche thou arte fal

¶ Adam.

¶ Lo Adam, in the felde of Damascene
With goddes own fynger wrought was he
And not begotten of mannes sperm vnclene
And welte al paradise sauyng o tree
Neuer worldly man had so hye degre
As Adam, tyl he for mysgouernaunce
Was dryuen out of hys hygh prosperite
To labour and to hel, and to myschaunce.

¶ Sampson.

¶ Lo Samson, which ý was annunciate
By the angel, longe or hys natiuite
And was to god almighty consecrate
And stode in nobles, while he myght se
Was neuer such another, as was he
To speke of strength, and therto hardynesse
But to his wyues tolde he his secre (nesse
Through which he slough him for wretched

Sampson, this noble & mighty champion
without wepen, saue his hondes twey
He slough and al to rent the lyon
Toward hys weddyng, walking by the wey
His false wyfe coulde hym so plese & praye
Tyl she his counsayle knewe, & she vntrewe
Unto his foes, his counsayle gan bewray
And hym forsoke, and toke another newe

An hundred fores toke Sampson for yre
And al her tayles he togyther bonde
And set the fores tayles al on fyre
For he in euery tayle hath put a bronde
And they brent al the cornes in that londe
And her olyues, and her vynes eke
A thousand men eke he slough with his hond
And had no wepen, but an asse cheke

whã they were slayne, so thrisled him ý he
was wel nye lorne, for which he gan to prey
That god wold of his payn, haue some pyte
And sende him drinke, or els mote he dey
And of this asse cheke, that was so drey
Out of a wange tothe, sprange anon a wel
Of whiche he dronke ynough, shortly to sey
Thus holpe him god, as Judicum can tel

By very force, at Gasa on a nyght
Maugre the Philystens of that cyte
The gates of the towne, he hath vp plyght
And on hys backe, ycaried hem hath he
High on an hyl, where as men myght hem se
O noble mighty Sampson, lefe and dere
Had thou nat tolde to women thy secre
In al this worlde ne had be thy pere

This Sãpson neither syder drãke ne wyne
Ne on his heed cam rasour none ne shere
By precepte of the messangere diuyne
For al hys strength, in his heeres were
And fully twenty yere by yere
Of Israel, he had the gouernaunce
But after soon shal he wepe many a tere
For women shal bryng hym to myschaunce.

Unto his lemman Dalyda he tolde
That in his heeres, al his strength lay
And falsely to hys foes she hym solde
And slepyng in her barme vpon a day
She mad to clyppe or shere his heeres away
And made his fomen al his crafte espyen
And whan that they him fonde in suche aray
They bounde him faste, and put out his eyen

But er hys heeres were clypped or ishaue
There was no bonde that might him bynde
But nowe is he put in prison in a caue
where as they made hym at ý querne grynde
O noble Sãpson, strongest of mankynde
O whylom iuge in glorie and rychesse
Now mayst thou wepe w̃ thyn eyen blynde
Sith ý̃ art from wele fal in to wretchidnesse

The ende of this caytife was, as I shal sey
Hys

His komen made a feest vpon a daye
And made him, as their foole byfore hē pley
And this was in a temple of great araye
But at last he made a foule afray
For he two pyllers shoke, & made hem fal
And downe fel the temple al, and there it lay
And sloughe hym selfe, and eke his komen all

This is to say, the princes euerychone
And eke thre thousād bodyes were ther slayn
with fallyng of the great temple of stone
Of Sampson wol I no more sayne
Beth ware by this ensample olde and playne
That no men tel her counsayle to her wyues
Of such thyng as they wold haue secret fayn
If that it touche her lymmes or her lyues.

¶ Hercules.

Of Hercules, the souerayne conqueroure
Syngen hys werkes, laude, & hye renoun
For in hys tyme, of strength he bare the floure
He slough and rafte the skyn of the lyoun
And of the Centaurs, layde the boste adoun
He Harpias slewe, the cruel byrdes fel
He the golden appels rafte fro the dragon
He drewe out Cerberus, the hounde of hel

He slewe the cruel tyrauunt Busirus
And made his horse to frete him flesh & bone
He slough the very serpent venemous
Of Achelous two hornes, brake he that one
And he slewe Cacus, in a caue of stone
He slough the gyaunt Antacus the stronge
He slough the grisly bore, and that anon
And bare his heed vpon his spere longe

was neuer wight, sythe the worlde began
That slough so many monsters, as dyd he
Through the wyde worlde, his name ran
what for his strenght and his bounte
And euery realme went he for to se
He was so stronge, ꝑ no man might him let
And at bothe worldes endes, he Trophe
In stede of boundes, of brasse a pyllour set.

¶ Alemman had this noble champyon
That hight Deianire, as freshe as May
And as clerkes make mencion
She hath him sent a shyrte freshe and gay
Alas this shirte, alas and wel awaye
Enuenomed was subtelly with al
That er he had weared it halfe a daye
It made his flesche al fro hys bones fal.

But natheleſſe, some clerkes her excusen
By one that hight Nessus, that it maked
Be as be may, I wol her not accusen
But on his body, the shyrte he ware al naked
Tyl the flesche was with the venym slaked
And whan he sawe none other remedye
In hote coles, he hath him selfe iraked
For with no venym dayned he to dye

Thus sterfe this worthy mighty Hercules
Lo, who may truste in fortune any throwe
For him that foloweth al this world of prees
Or he be ware, is ofte layde ful lowe
Ful wyse is he, that hym selfe can knowe
Beware, for whan that fortune lyst to glose
Than wayteth she, her mā downe to throwe
By suche a waye, as he wolde leste suppose.

¶ Nabugodonosor.

The mighty trone, the precious tresore
The glorious septre, and royal mayeste
That had the kynge Nabugodonosore
with tonge vnneth may discryued be
He twyse wanne Hierusalem, that cyte
The vessel of the temple he with him lad
At Babilon was his souerayne se
In whiche his glorie and his delyte he had.

The fayrest children of the blode royal
Of Hierusalem, he dyd do gelde anone
And made eche of hem to ben hys thral
Amonge al other Danyel was one
That was the wyseſt of euerychone
For he the dremes of the kyng expowned
where as in Caldee clerkes were there none
That wyst to what fyne his dreme sowned

This proude kyng let make a statu of gold
Sixty cubites longe, and seuen in brede
To whiche ymage, bothe yonge and olde
Commaunded he to loute, and haue in drede
Or in a furneys, ful of flames rede
He shulde be deed, that wolde not obey
But neuer wolde assent to that dede
Danyel, ne his yonge felowes twey

¶ This

¶Thys kynge of kynges, proude and elate
wende god, that sytteth in maieste
Ne myght hym not byreue of hys estate
But sodeynly he lost hys dygnite
And lyke a beest, hym semed for to be
And eate hey as an ore, and laye therout
In rayne, wyth wylde beestes walked he
Tyll a certayne tyme was come aboute

And lyke an Egles fethers were hys heeres
And hys nayles lyke byrdes clawes were
God releued hym at certayne yeres
And yaue him wytte, & thē with many a tere
He thanked God, and all hys lyke in fere
Was he, to do amysse, or more trespace
And er that he layde was on hys bere
He knewe ý god was full of myght & grace

¶Baithaser.

HIs sonne, whyche that hyght Balthasare
That helde the reygne after hys fathers daye
He by hys father coulde not beware
For proude he was of herte, and of aray
And eke an ydolaster was he aye
Hys hygh estate, assured hym in pryde
But fortune cast hym downe, & there he laye
And sodeynly hys raygne gan deuyde

A feest he made, vnto hys lordes al
Upon a tyme, he made hem blyth be
And then hys offycers gan he call
Gothe brynge forth the vessels (q̃ he)
whych that my father in hys prosperite
Out of the temple of Hierusalem byrafte
And to our goddes thanken we
Of honoure, that our elders with vs lafte

Hys wyfe, hys lordes, and hys cōcubynes
Aye dronken, whyles her appetytes lafte
Out of these noble vessels, sondrye wynes
And on a wall, thys kynge hys eyen caste
And saw an hōde armelesse, that wrote fafte
For feare of whych he quoke, & syghed sore
This honde ý Balthasar made sore agafte
wrote (Mane techel phares) and no more

¶In al that lande, magicien was ther none
That coude expowne what thys letter ment
But Daniel expowned it anone
And sayd, kynge, god thy father sent
Glorye and honoure, reygne, treasour, & rent
And he was proude, & nothynge god he drad
And therfore great wrath god vpō him sente
And hym byrafte the raygne that he had

He was out caste of mannes companye,
wyth asses was hys habitacion
And eate hey as a beest, in wete and drye
Tyl that he knewe, by grace and by reson
That god of heauen hath domination
Ouer euery reygne, and euery creature
And then had God of hym compassyon
And hym restored his reygne and his fygure

¶Eke thou ý art hys sonne, arte proude also
And knowest all these thynges priuely
And arte rebell to god, and hys foe
Thou dranke eke of hys vessels boldly
Thy wyfe eke, and thy wenches synfully
Dronke of the same vessels sondrye wynis
And heryed false goddes cursedly
Therfore to the shapen great payne is

This honde was sent fro god, ý on the wall
wrote (Mane techel phares) truste me
Thy reygne is done, thou wotest not al
Deuyded is thy realme, and it shalbe
To Medes and to Perciens (quod he)
And that same nyght the kynge was slawe
And Darius occupyed hys dignite
Though he therto had nether ryght ne lawe

Lordynges, here ensample mowe ye take
Howe that in lordshyp is no sykernesse
For when that fortune wol a man forsake
She bereth away hys raygne, & hys rychesse
And eke hys frendes, both more and lesse
And what man hath fredes, through fortune
Hyshap wol make hym enemyes I gesse
Thys prouerbe is ful soth, and ful comune

¶Zenobia.

ZEnobia of Palmerye quene
(As wryteth perciēs of her noblesse)
So worthy was in armes, & so kene
ý no wight passed her in hardynesse
Ne ī linage, ne ī none other gētilnes
Of kynges blode of Perce she is dyscended
I say that she had not moste fayrnesse
But of her shape she myght not be amended

From her chylhode I fynde that she fledde
Offyce of woman, and to woode she went
And many a wylde hertes bloode she fledde

wyth arowes brode, that she to hem sent
She was so swyfte, that she anone hem hent
And when that she was elder, she wolde kyll
Lyons, lybardes, and beeres al to rent
And in her armes welde hem at her wyll

She durst wylde beestes dennes seke
And renne in the mounteyns al the nyght
And slepe vnder a bushe, & she coulde eke
wrastell by very force, and by very myght
wyth any yõge mã, were he neuer so wyght
There myght no thynge in her armes stonde
She kept her maydenhede frõ euery wyght
To no man dayned she to be bonde

But at last, her frendes hath her maryed
To Odenat, a prince of that countre
Al were it so, that she hem longe taryed
And ye shall vnderstande, howe that he
Had suche fantasyes as had she
But natheleſſe, when they were knyt in fere
They lyued in ioye and in felicite
For eche of hem had other lefe and dere

Saue one thynge, she nolde neuer assent
By no waye, that he shulde by her lye
But ones, for it was her playne entent
To haue a chylde, the worlde to multyplye
And also sone as she myght aspye
That she was not w̃ chylde wyth that dede
Then wolde she suffre hym do hys fantasye
Ete sones, and not but ones out of drede

And yf she were wyth chylde at that caste
Nomore shulde he playe that game
Tyll fully fourty dayes were paste
Then wolde she ones suffre hym the same
All were thys Odenat wylde or tame
He gate nomore of her, for thus she sayd
It was to wyues lechery and shame
In other case, yf men wyth hem playde

¶ Two sonnes by thys Odenat had she
The whych she kept in vertue and lettrure
But nowe vnto our tale turne we
I saye that so worshypfull a creature
And wyse therwyth, and large wyth mesure
So penyble in warre, and curteys eke
Ne more laboure myght in warre endure
was none, though al thys worlde mẽ wolde (seke

Her ryche araye, ne myght not be tolde
As well in vessell as in her clothynge
She was al clad in pierry and in golde
And eke she lefte not for none huntynge
To haue of sondry tonges folke knowynge
when that she leyser had for to entende
To lerne bokes was all her lykynge
Howe she in vertue her lyfe myght dyspende

And shortly of thys storye for to treate
As doughty was her husbonde as she
So that they cõquered many reygnes great
In the Orient, wyth many a fayre cyte
Apperteynaunt vnto the maieste
Of Rome, & wyth strength helde them faste
Ne neuer myght her foe men do her slee
All the whyle that Odenates dayes laste

Her batayles, who so lyste hem for to rede
Agayne Sapor the kynge, and other mo
And howe all thys proces fyll in dede
why she cõquered, & what title shehad therto
And after of her myschefe and of her wo
Howe that she was besieged, and ytake
Let hym to my mayster Petrarke go
That wryteth ynough of thys, I vndertake

¶ when Odenat was deed, she myghtely
The realmes helde, & wyth her owne honde
Agaynst her foes she fought truely (londe
That ther was no prince ne kynge, in al that
But were glad, yf they that grace fonde
That she ne shulde vpon hys lande werrey
wyth her they made alyaunce by bonde
To be in peace, and let hem ryde and pley

The Emperour of Rome Claudius
Ne hym before, the romayne Galyen
Ne durst neuer be so coragius
Ne none Armen, ne none Egypcien
Ne Surrien, ne none Arabien
wythin the felde, that durst wyth her fyght
Lest ẏ she wolde hem wyth her hondes sleen
Or wyth her meyne, put hem to flyght

In kynges habyte wente her sonnes two
As the heyres of her realmes all
And Hermanno and Titamallo
Her names were, as perciens hem call
But aye fortune, hath in her hony gall
This myghty quene, may no whyle endure
Fortune out of her reygne made her to fal
To wretchednesse, and to mysauenture

Aurelian

Aurelian, when that the gouernaunce
Of Rome came in hys hondes twey
He thope vpon thys quene to do vengeaunce
And wyth hys legions, he toke hys wey
Towarde zenobia, and shortly for to say
He made her flye, and at laste her hent
And fettered her, and eke her chyldren tway
And wan the lōde, & home to Rome he went

Amonge other thynges that he wan
Her chare, ý of golde was wrought & pierre
Thys great Romayne, thys Aurelian
Hath wyth hym ladde, that for men shulde se
Before hys tryumphe walked she
wyth golden chaynes on her necke hongyng
Crowned she was, as after her degre
And full of pierre charged her clothynge

Alas fortune, she that whylom was
Dredfull to kynges, and to emperoures
Nowe gaureth all the people on her, alas
And she that helmed was in starke stoures
And wan by force townes stronge, & toures
Shall on her heed nowe were autremyte
And she that bare the septre ful of floures
Shal beare a dystaffe, her coste for to quyte

Nero.

Al though that Nero were as vicious
As any fende, that lyeth full lowe adoun
Yet he, as telleth vs suetoni?
Al this worlde had i subiectiō
Both este, and west, and Septentrion
Of Rubyes, saphers, and of perles whyte
were al hes clothes broudred vp and doun
For he in gemmes greatly gan delyte

More delycate, more pompous of aray
More proude, was neuer Emperour, thē he
That ylke cloth that he had wered o day
After that tyme, he nolde it neuer se
Nettes of golde threde had he great plente
To fyshe in Tyber, when him lyst to play
Hys lustes were as lawe, in hys degre
For fortune as hys frende wolde hym obay

He Rome brent for hys delycacye
The Senatours he slewe vpon a day
To here how her wyues wolde wepe & crye
And slough hys brother, & by his syster laye
Hys mother made he in a pytouse aray
For her wombe let slytte, to beholde
where he conceyued was, so welaway
That he so lytell of hys mother tolde

No teeres out of hys eyen, for that syght
Ne came, but sayd, a fayre womon was she
Great wonder is, that he coude or myght
Be domysman, of her deed beaute
The wyne to brynge hym, commaunded he
And dranke anone, none other wo he made
when myght is ioyned vnto cruelte
Alas, to depe wyl the venyme wade

In youth a maystER had thys Emperoure
To teache hym lettrure, and curtesye
For of moralite he was the floure
As in hys tyme, but yf hys bokes lye
And whyles his maystER had of him mastrye
He made hym so connynge and so souple
That longe tyme it was or tyrannye
Or any vyce, durste in hym vncouple

Senec his maistER was, of which I deuyse
Bycause Nero had of hym suche drede
For he for hys vyces wolde hym chastyse
Dyscretly as by worde, and not by dede
Syr he wolde saye, an emperour mote nede
Be vertuouse, and hate tyrannye
For whych he made hym in a bath to blede
On both hys armes, tyll he muste dye

Thys Nero had eke of a customaunce
In youth, ayenst hys maystER to ryse
which afterward, him though gret greuaūce
Bycause he ofte wolde hym chastyse
Therfore he made hym dye in thys wyse
To chose in a bath to dye in thys manere
Rather then to haue another turmentyse
And thus hath Nero slayne hys master dere

Nowe fell it so, that fortune lyst no longer
The hygh pryde of Nero to cherysche
For tho he were stronge, yet was she strōger
She thought thus, by god I am to nyce
To set a man, that is fulfylled of vyce
In hye degre, and an emperour hym call
By God out of hys sete I woll hym tryce
when he lest weneth, sonest shall he fall

The people rose vpon hym on a nyght
For hys defaute, and when he it aspyed

Out of his dores anon he hath him dyght
Alone, and there he wende haue ben alyed
He knocked faste, & aye the more he cryed
The faster shette they the dores all
Tho wyste he wel, he had him selfe begyled
And went his way, no lenger durste he call

The people cryed & rombled vp and doun
That w̄ his eeres he herde howe they sayde
Where is this false tyraunt, this Neroun
For feare ful nere of his wytte he brayde
And to his goddes, right pitously he prayde
For socoure, but it might not betyde
For drede of this, him thought that he deyde
And ranne in to a gardeyn, him to hyde

And in this gardayne, foūde he chorles twey
Syttyng by a fyre great and reed
And to the chorles two he gan to prey
To slee him, and to gyrde of his heed
That to his bodye, whan he were deed
Were no dispyte done, for his diffame
Him selfe he slough, he coulde no better rede
Of whiche fortune lough and had game.

¶ Holofernes.

As neuer caitayne vnder a kyng
That reignes mo, put in subiectyō
Nestrōger was in feld, of al thing
As i this tyme, ne greater ofrenoū
Ne more pompous in hygh presumpcioun
Than Holopherne, which fortune aye kyste
And so lycorously ladde him vp and doun
Tyl that he deed was er that he wyste

Not only that this world had of him awe
For lesyng of rychesse and lyberte
But he made euery man renye his lawe
Nabugodonosor was lorde, sayd he
None other god shulde honoured be
Ayenst his hest, there dare no wight trespace
Saue in Bethulia, a stronge cyte
where Eliachym was preest of that place

¶ But take kepe of ÿ dethe of Holopherne
Amyd his host, he dronke laye al nyght
within his tent, large as is a berne
And yet for al his pompe, & al his might
Judith, a woman, as he lay vpright
Sleping, his heed of smote, and fro his tente
Ful priuely she stale, from euery wight
And with his heed, vnto her towne she wēte

¶ Antiochus.

What nedeth it of kynge Antiochus
To tell hys hyghe and royall maieste
Hys great pryde, hys werke venemus
For suche an other man nas neuer as he
Redeth what that he was in Machabe
And redeth the proude wordes that he sayde
And why he fyl from his prosperyte
And in an hyl, howe wretchedly he deyde

Fortune him had enhaunsed so in pryde
That verily he wende he might attayne
Unto the sterres, vpon euery syde
And in a balaunce, to wey eche mountayne
And al the floodes of the see restrayne
And goddes people had he moste in hate
Hem wolde he slee, in turment and in payne
wenyng that god ne might his pryde abate

And for that Nychanore and Tymothe
By iewes were venquished mightyly
Unto the iewes suche an hate had he
That he bad greythe his chare full hastely
And swore and sayd, ful dispytously
Unto Hierusalem he wolde ekfsone
To wreke his yre on it ful cruelly
But of his purpose was he let ful sone

God for his manace him sore smote
with inuysible wounde, aye incurable
That in his guttes carke so and bote
That hys paynes were importable
And certaynly the wreche was resonable
For many a mannes guttes dyd he payne
But from his purpose, cursed & dampnable
For al his smerte, he nolde him not restrayne

But bade anon, aparayle his hoste
And sodainly, or he than was ware
God daunted al his pride, & al his boste
For he so sore fel out of his chare
That al his lymmes and his skyn to tare
So that he ne myght go ne ryde
But in a chayre, men aboute him bare
Al forbruised bothe backe and syde

The wreche of god him smote so cruelly
That in his body wicked wormes crept
And therwith al he stanke so horribly

That

That none of hys meyne, that hym kept
whether that he woke or els slept
Ne myght not of hym the stynke endure
And in hys mischeke he wayled & eke wept
And knewe god, lorde of euery creature

To all hys hoste, and to hym selfe also
Ful lothsome was the stynke of hys carayne
No man myght hym beare to ne fro
And in hys stynke, & in hys horrible payne
He sterfe ful wretchedly on a mountayne
Thus hath thys robbour, & thys homicide
That many a man made to wepe and plaine
Suche guerdon, as belongeth to pryde.

¶ Alexander.

The storye of Alexander is so commune
That euery wyght, that hath dyscretion
Hath herde somwhat or al, of hys fortune
Thys wyde worlde, as in conclusyon
He wanne by strength, and for hys renoun
They were glad for peace vnto hym sende
The pryde of man, and bost he layde adoun
where so he came, vnto the worldes ende

Comparison myght yet neuer be maked
Betwyxte hym, and an other conqueroure
For al thys world, for dred of hi hath quaked
He was of knyghthode, & of fredome floure
Fortune hym made ỳ heyre of hygh honoure
Saue wyne & womẽ, nothig might aswage
Hys hygh entent in armes and laboure
So was he full of louynge corage.

what price were it to him, though I you told
Of Darius, & of a hundred thousande mo
Of princes, erles, and knyghtes bolde
whych he conquered, and brought to wo
I saye as ferre as a man may ryde or go
The world was his, what shuld I more de-
For though I wrote & told you euer mo (uise
Of hys knyghthode, it myght not suffyse

Twelue yere he reigned, as I rede i Macha
Philippes sonne of Macedone he was (be
That first was kyng of Greece, that countre
O worthy gentyl Alexander, alas
That euer shulde the fall suche a caas
Enpoysoned of thy folke thou were
Thy syce, fortune hath tourned in to an ace
And yet for the ne wept she neuer a tere

Who shal yeue men teares to complayne
The death of gentylnesse, and of fraunchyse
That all the worlde welded in hys demayne
And yet hym thought it myght not suffyse
So ful was hys corage of hygh empryse
Alas, who shall me helpe to endyte
False fortune, and poyson to dyspyse
The whych of all thys wo I wyte.

¶ Julius Cesar.

By wysdome, manhode, and hyghe laboure
From humble bedde to royal maieste
Up rose he, Julius the conqueroure
That al the occident, by londe and see
wan by strength of honde, or els by trete
And vnto Rome made hem trybutary
And syth of Rome, emperour was he
Tyl that fortune wexte hys aduersary

O myghty Cesar, that in Thessaly
Ayenst Pompei, father thyne in lawe
That of the Orient had the chyualry
As ferre as that the daye begynneth to dawe
Them through knyghthod hast take & slawe
Saue fewe folke, ỳ wyth Pompeius fledde
Through whych ỳ puttest all ỳ oriẽt in awe
Thanke fortune, that so wel the spedde

¶ But nowe a lytel whyle I wol bewayle
This Pompei, thys noble gouernoure
Of Rome, whych that fledde at thys bataylle
I saye one of hys men, a false traytour
Hys heed of smote, to wynne hym fauour
Of Julius, and to hym the heed brought
Alas Pompei, of the orient conqueroure
That fortune vnto suche a fyne the wrought

¶ To Rome agayne repayreth Julius
wyth hys triumphe lauriate ful hye
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
That euer had of hys hye estate enuye
Full priuely had made conspyracye
Ayenst thys Julius, in subtel wyse
And caste the place, in whych he shulde dye
wyth bodkyns, as I shal you deuyse

Thys Julius vnto the capitol went
Upon a daye, as he was wonte to gone

And in the capitol, anone hym hent
Thys false Brutus, and hys other fone
And stycked hym wyth bodkyns anone
wyth many a woūde. & thus they let him lye
But neuer grutched he at no stroke but one
Or els at two, but yf hys storye lye

So manly was thys Julius of herte
And so well loued estately honeste
That tho hys deedly woūdes so sore smerte
Hys mantel ouer hys hyppes caste he
For no man shulde se hys priuety
And as he laye in dyenge on a traunce
And wyste verely that dye shulde he
Of honestye yet had he remembraunce

Lucan to the thys storye I recomende
And to Sueton, and Valery also
That of thys storye wrytten worde & ende
Howe that these conquerours two
Fortune was fyrst a frende, and sythe a foe
No man truste vpon her fauoure longe
But haue her in awayte for euer mo
wytnesse on all the conquerours stronge.

Cresus.

The ryche Cresus, whylom kynge of Lyde
Of whyche Cresus, Cirus sore hym drad
Yet was he caught amydde all hys pryde
And to brenne, men to the fyre hym lad
But such a raine downe frō ꝑ fyrmamēt shad
That queynt the fyre, & made hym to scape
But to beware yet no grace he had
Tyl fortune on the galowes made him gape

When he escaped was, he could not stent
For to begyn a newe araye agayne
He wende wel, for that fortune hym sent
Suche happe, ꝑ he escaped through ꝑ rayne
That of hys foes he myght not be slayne
And eke a sweuen vpon a nyght he mette
Of whych he was so proude, & eke so fayne
That in vengeaunce he all hys herte sette

Vpon a tree he was as hym thought
Ther Jupiter hym wyshe, both backe & syde
And Phebus eke a fayre towel him brought
To drye him with, & therwith wert his prid
And to hys doughter, that stode hym besyde
whych ꝑ he knewe in hye sentence habounde
He bade her tell what it sygnyfyed
And she his dreme ryght thus dyd expounde

The tree (q̃ she) the galous is to mene
And Jupiter betokeneth snowe and rayne
And Phebus, wyth hys towel so clene
Betokeneth the sonne beames, soth to sayne
Thou shalt honged be, father certayne
Rayne shall the wasche, & sonne shall the drye
Thus she warned hym full plat & ful payne
Hys doughter, that called was Phanye

And honged was Cresus the proude kynge
Hys royall trone myght hym not auayle
Tragedye is none other maner thynges
Ne can in syngynge crye ne bewayle
But for that fortune aldaye wol assayle
wyth vnware stroke, ꝑ reygnes ꝑ be proude
For whē men trusteth her, then wol she fayle
And couer her bryght face wyth a cloude.

Peter of Spayne.

O noble, o worthy Petro, glory of Spayne
whome fortune helde so hygh in maieste
wel ought men thy pytous death complayne
Out of thy lande, thy brother made the fle
And after at a siege by subtelte
Thou were betrayed, & ladde vnto hys tente
where as he with hys owne hande slewe the
Succedynge in thy raygne and in thy rente

The felde of snowe, w̃ thegle of black therin
Caught wyth ꝑ lymrod, coloured as ꝑ glede
He brewe thys cursydnesse, and al this synne
The wycked neste was werker of thys dede
Not Charles, Oliuer, that toke aye hede
Of trouth and honoure, but of Armorike
Genilion Oliuer, corrupte for mede
Brought thys worthy kynge in such a bryke.

Petro kynge of Cypre.

Worthy Petro, kinge of Cypre also
That Alexandre wanne by hygh mastrye
Ful many an hethē wroughtest ꝑ wo
Of whych thyne owne lyeges had enuye
And for no thynge, but for thy chyualrye
They in thy bed han slayne ꝑ by ꝑ morowe
Thus can fortune her whele gouerne & gye

And

And out of ioye bryng men to sorowe

¶ Barnabo vicounte.

Of Millan great Barnabo vicounte
God of delyte, and scourge of Lumbardye
Why shulde I not thyn infortune accounte
Seyng in astate thou clomben were so hye.
Thy brothers sonne, ý was thy double alye
For he thy neuewe was, and sonne in lawe
Within his prison made the to dye
But why ne how not I, ý thou were slawe.

¶ Hugelyne of Pyse.

Of the erle Hugelyne of Pyse the langour
There may no tonge tel for pyte
But lytell oute of Pyse stonte a toure
In whyche toure in prison put was he
And with hym ben his lytel children thre
The eldest scarsly fyue yere of age
Alas fortune, it was a great cruelte
Suche bydes for to put in suche a cage

Dampned was he to dye in that prison
For Roger, which that bysshop was of Pyse
Had on hym made a false suggestyon
Through which ý people gan vpon him rise
And put him in prison, in suche a wyse
As ye haue herde, and meate & drinke he had
So smal, that vnnethe it may suffyse
And therwithal it was ful poore and bad

And on a day befel, that in that houre
whã that his meate wont was to be brought
The geylour shette the doores of the toure
He herde it wel, but he spake right nought
And in his herte anon there fyl a thought
That they for hunger wolde do him dyen
Alas (q̃ he) alas that I was wrought
Therwith the teeres fyl fro hys eyen

¶ His yonge sonne, that thre yere was of age
Unto him said, father father why do ye wepe
Whan wyl the geylour bring our potage
Is there no morsel breed that ye do kepe
I am so hungry, that I may not slepe
Nowe wolde god that I might slepe euer
Than shuld not hunger in my wombe crepe
There nys nothig but breed ý me were leuer

¶ Thus day by day, this child began to crye
Tyl in his fathers arme adowne it laye
And sayd, farwel father I mote dye
And kyste his father, and deyde the same day
And whan the woful father dyd it sey
For wo, his armes two he gan to byte
And said alas, fortune and welaway
Thy false whele, my wo al may it wyte

His children wende, that it for hũger was
That he his armes gnewe, and not for wo
And sayd: father, do nat so (alas)
But rather eate the flesche vpon vs two
Our flesh ý yaue vs, take our flesh vs fro
And eate ynough, right thus they to him said
And after that within a day or two
They layde hem in his lappe adown, & deyde

Thus ended is this mighty erle of Pyse
Him selfe dispeyred eke, for hungre starke
From hygh estate fortune away hym carke
Of this Tragedy, it ought ynough suffyse
Who so wol here it in a longer wyse
Redeth the great Poete of Itayle
That hyght Dante, for he can it al deuyse
Fro poynt to point, not a word wol he fayle.

¶ Here endeth the Monkes tale.

(·.) ☞ (·.) ☜ (·.)

¶ Here stynteth the knyght the mõke of his tale, and here foloweth the Prologue of the Nonnes preest.

O (q̃ the knyght) good sir nomore of this
That ye haue said, is right ynough ywys
And mokel more, for lytel heuynesse
Is right ynough to moche folke, I gesse
I saye for me, it is a great disease
where as men haue be in welth and ease
To here of her sodayne fal, alas
And the contrary is ioye and solas
As whan a man hath ben in pore estate

And clymbeth vp, and wexeth fortunate
And there abydeth in prosperite
Such thynges is gladsome, as thynketh me
And of suche thyng were good for to tel.
Ye (q̃ our Host) by saynt Poules bel
Ye say right soth, this Monke clappeth loude
He spake, how fortunered coue with a cloude
I wote not what, and also of a Tragedy
Right nowe ye herde, and perdy no remedy
It is for to bewaylen, ne complayne
That that is done, and als it is a payne
As ye haue sayd, to here of heuynesse
Sir mõke no more of this, so god you blesse
Your tale anoyeth al this company
Suche talkyng is not worth a butterfly
For therin is there no disporte ne game
Therfore sir monke, dã Piers by your name
I pray you hertely, tel vs somwhat elles
For sykerly, nere clynkyng of your belles
That on your bridell honge, on euery syde
By heuen kyng, that for vs al dyde
I shulde er this haue fal downe for slepe
Al though the slough had ben neuer so depe
Than had your tale al be tolde in vayne
For certaynly, as that these clerkes sayne
where as a man may haue none audyence
Nought helpeth it to tel hys sentence
And wel I wote, the substaunce is in me
If any thyng, shal wel reported be
Sir, saye somwhat of huntyng I you pray
Nay (q̃ this mõke) I haue no lust to play
Nowe let an other tel, as I haue tolde.
¶ Thã spake our host, vp rude speche & bolde
And sayd, vnto the nonnes preest anon
Come nere ÿ preest, come hider thou sir John
Tel vs such a thing, as may our hertes glade
Be blythe, though thou ryde vpon a iade
what though thy horse be bothe foule & lene
If he wol serue the, recke not a bene
Loke that thy herte be mery euer mo
¶ Yes sir (q̃ he) yes host, so mote I go
But I be mery, iwys I wol be blamed
And Right anon, his tale he hath atamed
And thus he sayd, vnto vs euerychon
This swete preest, this goodly man sir John

¶ Here endeth the Prologue of the nonnes preest, and here foloweth hys tale.

A Poore wydowe, some dele ystept in age
was whylom dwellyng in a poore cotage
Besyde a groue, stondynge in a dale
This wydow, of which I tel you my tale
Sens the day that she was laste a wyfe
In pacience, ledde a ful symple lyfe
For lytel was her catel and her rent
By husbondrie, of suche as god her sent
She fonde her self, & eke her doughters two
Thre large sowes had she, and no mo
Thre kyne, & eke a shepe that hyght Mal
wel sooty was her boure, and eke her hal
In whyche she ete many a slender mele
Of poynaũt sauce, ne knewe she neuer a dele
Ne deynty morcel passed through her throte
Her dyet was accordaunt to her cote
Repletion ne made her neuer syke
A temperate dyete was her phisyke
And exercyse, and hertes suffysaunce
The goute let her nothing for to daunce
Ne apoplexie shent not her heed
No wyne ne dranke she, whyte ne reed
Her borde was most serued w̃ whyte & black
Milke & broũ breed in which she fõde no lack
Seynde bakon, & somtyme an eye or twey
For she was as it were a maner dey.
¶ A yerde she had, enclosed al aboute
with stykes, and drie dytched without
In which she had a cocke hight Chaũteclere
In al the londe, of crowyng nas hys pere.
His voyce was meryer than the mery orgon
On masse dayes, that in the churches gon
wel sykerer was his crowyng in hys loge
Than is a clocke, or in an abbey an orloge
By nature he knewe eche assentioun
Of the equinoctial in the toun
For whan degrees. xv. were assended
Thã crewe he, that it might not be amended
His combe was redder than the fyne coral
And batelled, as it had be a castel wal
His byl was blacke, as any gete it shone
Lyke asure were his legges and his tone
His nayles whyter than the lylly floure
And lyke the burned golde was his coloure.
¶ This gentil cocke, had in gouernaunce
Seuen hennes, to done his plesaunce
which were his susters, and his paramours
And wonder lyke to him, as of colours
Of whiche the fayrest hewed in the throte

was

was called fayre damosel Pertelote
He fethered her an hundred tymes a daye
And she him pleaseth, al that euer she maye
Curteys she was, discrete, and debonayre
And compenable, and bare her selfe so fayre
Seng the tyme that she was seuenyght olde
That truly che, she hath the herte in holde
Of Chaunteclere, lokyng in euery lyth
He loueth her so, that wel was him therwith
But suche a ioye it was to here hem synge
whan the bright sunne gan to sprynge
In swete acorde, my lefe is ferre in londe
For that tyme, as I haue vnderstonde
Beestes and bydes coulde speke and synge
And it so fyl, that in the dawnyng
As Chaunteclere, amonge his wyues al
Sate on his perche, that was in the hal
And nert hym sate his fayre Pertelote
This Chaūteclere gā to grone in his throte
As a man in his dreme is drenched sore
And whā that Pertelot thus herde him rore
She was agaste, and sayd herte dere
what eyleth you to grone in this manere
Ye be a very sleper, fye for shame.
And he answerde thus, by god madame
I pray you, that ye take it not in grefe
By god I mette, I was in suche mischefe
Right now, that yet myn hert is sore a fright
Nowe god (q he) my sweuen retche a right
And kepe my body out of foule prisoun
Me mette, that I romed vp and doun
within our yerde, where I sawe a beest
was lyke an houde, & wold haue made arrest
Vpon my body, and wolde haue had me deed
His colour was betwyxt yelowe and reed
And typped was his tayle, & bothe his eeres
with black, vnlike the remenāt of his heeres
His snowte smal, with glowyng eyen twey
Yet for his loke, almoste for feare I dey
This causeth me my gronyng doutlesse.
Away (q she) fye for shame hertlesse
Alas (q she) for by god aboue
Nowe haue ye loste my herte, & al my loue
I can not loue a cowarde by my faythe
For certes, what so any woman saythe
we al desyre, yf that it myght be
To haue husbondes, hardy, wyse, and fre
And secrete, and no nygarde, ne no fole
Ne hym that is agaste of euery tole
Ne none auauntour, by that god aboue
Howe durst ye say for shame, vnto your loue
That anye sweuen might make you a ferde
Haue ye no mannes herte, and haue a berde
Alas, and con ye be a ferde of sweuenis
Nothing but vanyte god wotte in sweuen is
Sweuens ben engendred of replections
And of fume, and of complections
whan humours ben to habundāt in a wight
Certes thys dreme, whyche ye haue met to (night
I tel you trouthe, ye may trust me
Cometh of superfluyte, & reed colour parde
whiche cause folke to drede in her dremes
Of arowes, and of fyre with reed lemes
Of reed beestes, that wol hem byte
Of conteke, and of waspes great and lyte
Right as the humour of melancolye
Causeth many a man in slepe to crye
For fere of great bulles, and beres blake
Or els that blacke dyuels wol hem take
Of other humours coulde I tel also
That worke a man in slepe moche wo
But I wol passe, as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton, which that was so wyse a mā
Sayd he not thus, do no force of dremes
Now sir (q she) whā we flye fro ÿ bemes
For goddes loue, as taketh some laxatyfe
Vp peryl of my soule, and of my lyfe
I counsayle you the beste, I wol not lye
That bothe of colour, and of melancolye
Ye purge you, and for ye shul not tary
Though in this towne, be none apotecary
I shal my selfe two herbes teche you
That shal be for your heale, & for your prow
And in our yerde, tho herbes shal I fynde
The whiche haue of her properte by kynde
To purge you byneth, and eke aboue
Forgete not this, for goddes owne loue
Ye be right coleryke of complection
where the sunne is in his ascention
Ne kynde you not replete of humours hote
For yf ye do, I dare wel lay a grote
That ye shal haue a feuer terciane
Or els an ague, that may be your bane
A day or two, ye shal haue digestyues
Of wormes, or ye take your laxatyues
Of laurel, centorie, and of fenetere
Or els of elder beryes, that growe there
Of catapuce, or of gaytres beris
Of herbe yue, growing ī our yerde ÿ mery is
Plucke hem vp as they growe, & eate hem in
Be mery husbonde, for your father kyn
Dredeth no dreme, I can say you no more.
Madame (q he) gramercy of your lore
But natheless, as touchyng dan Catoun

That

That of wyldom hath so great renoun
Though he bade no dremes for to drede
By god, men may in olde bokes rede
Of many a man, more of auctorite
Than euer Caton was, so mote I the
That al the reuers saythe of hys sentence
And haue wel founde by experyence
That dremes ben signyfycations
As wel of ioye, as of trybulations
That folke endure, in this lyke present
There nedeth to make of this none argumēt
The very prefe sheweth it in dede
One of the greatest auctours that mē rede
Sayth thus, that whilom two felowes wēt
On pylgrimage, in ful good entent
And happed so, they come in to a toun
where as there was suche congregation
Of people, and eke of strayte herbygage
That they ne fonde, as moche as a cotage
In whiche they bothe might yloged be
Wherfore they mote of necessyte
As for that nyght, departe company
And eche of hem gothe to his hostelry
And toke hys lodgyng, as it wolde fal
That one of hem, was lodged in a stal
Farre in a yerde, with oxen of the plough
That other man was lodged wel ynough
As was his auenture, or his fortune
That vs gouerneth al, as in comune
And so befel, longe or it were day
This mā mette in his bedde, there as he lay
Howe that his felowe gan vpon him cal
And sayd (alas) for in an oxes stal
This nyght shal I be murdred, there I lye
Nowe helpe me dere brother or I dye
In al haste, come to me (he sayd)
This man out of hys slepe for feere abrayd
But whan he was waked of his slepe
He turned him, and toke of this no kepe
Him thought his dreme was but a vanyte
Thus twyse in his slepe dremed he
And at the thyrde tyme, yet his felawe
Cam as him thought, & sayd I now am slawe
Beholde my blody woundes, depe and wyde
Arise vp erly, in the morowe tyde
And at the west gate of the towne (q̃ he)
A carte ful of donge, there shalt thou se
In whiche my body is hydde ful priuely
Do thou that carte areste boldly
My golde caused my dethe, sothe to sayne
And told him euery point how he was slayn
with a ful pytous face, pale of hewe
And trust wel his dreme, he foūd right trew
For on the morowe, as sone as it was day
To his felowes inne, he toke the waye
And whan that he came to the oxes stal
After his felowe, he began to cal
The hosteler answerde him anon
And sayd, syr your felowe is gon
As sone as it was day, he went out of ꝑ toun
This man gan fal in suspectioun
Remembring of his dremes that he mette
And forthe he goth, no lenger wolde he lette
Unto the westgate of the towne, and fonde
A donge carte, as it were to donge londe
That was arayed in the same wyse
As ye haue herde the deed man deuyse
And with hardy herte, he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and iustyce of this felonye
My felowe murdred is this same night
And in this carte he lythe, gapyng vpright
I crye out on the mynisters (q̃ he)
That shulde kepe and rule this cyte
Harowe alas, here lythe my felowe slayne
What shulde I more of this tale sayne
The people out starte, & cast ꝑ carte to groūd
And in the myddel of the donge they founde
The deed man, that murdred was al newe.
O blysful god, that arte so good and trewe
Lo, howe thou bewrayest murdre alway
Murdre wol out, that se we day by day
Murdre is so waltsome and abhomynable
To god, that so iuste is and resonable
That he ne wol it suffre healed to be
Though it abyde a yere, two, or thre
Murdre wol out, this is my conclusyoun.
And right anon, the mynisters of the toun
Haue hente the carter, and fore him pyned
And eke the hosteler so fore engyned
That they beknewe her wickednesse anone
And were hanged by the necke bone
Here may ye se, that dremes ben to drede.
And certes, in the same lefe I rede
Right in the next chapiter after this
I gabbe not, so haue I ioye and blys
Two men wolde haue passed oner the se
For certayne causes, in to a ferre countre
If the wynde ne had be contrarie
That made hem in a cyte to tarye
That stode ful mery vpon an hauen syde
But on a daye, ayenst an euen tyde
The wynde gan chaunge, & blew as hem lest
Joly and glad, they went to rest
And caste hem ful erly for to sayle

But

But herken, to one mã fyl a great meruayle
To one of hem, in slepyng as he lay
He met a wonders dreme, agayn the day
Him thought a mã stode by his beddes syde
And hym cõmaunded, that he shulde abyde
And sayd him thus, if thou to morow wende
Thou shalte be dreynt, my tale is at an ende.
¶ He woke, & tolde his felow what he mette
And prayed him his voyage for to lette
As for that day, he prayed him for to abyde
His felowe, that lay by his beddes syde
Gan for to laugh, and scorned him ful faste
No dreme (qꝯ he) may so my herte agaste
That I wol let for to do my thynges
I set not a strawe for thy dremynges
For sweuens ben but vanytees and iapes
Men meten alday of oules and of apes
And eke of many a mase therwithal
And dremen of thing that neuer was, ne shal
But sythe I se that thou wolte here abyde
And thus slouthe wylfully thy tyde
God wote it rueth me, and haue good day
And thus he toke his leue, & went his way
But er he had halfe his course ysayled
I not why, ne what mischaunce it ayled
But casuelly the shyppes botome to rent
And shyp and men, vnder the water went
In syght of other shyppes besyde
That with hem sayled at the same tyde
And therfore fayre Pertelot so dere
By suche ensamples olde, maystu thou lere
That no man shulde be to recheleſſe
Of dremes, for I say the doutleſſe
That many a dreme ful sore is for to drede
Lo in the lyfe of saynt Kenelm we rede
That was Kenelphus sonne, the noble kyng
Of Mercrike, how Kenelm mette a thyng
A lytel er he were murdred on a day
His murder in hys visyon he say
His norice him expowned it euery dele
His sweuen, and badde him kepe hym wele
Fro trayson, but he was but seuen yere olde
And therfore lytel tale he therof tolde
Of any dreme, so holy was his hert
By god, I had rather than my shert
That ye had herde his legende, as haue I
Dame Pertelot, I say to you trewly
Macrobius, that writeth the auisyon
In Affrike, of the worthy Scipion
Affyrmeth dremes, and sayth that they been
Warnyng of thynges, that we after seen
And farthermore I pray you loketh well
In the olde Testament, of Danyel
Yf he helde dremes for vanyte
Rede eke of Joseph, and there shal ye se
Wonders ben somtyme, but I say nat al
Warnyng of thynges, that after shal fal.
¶ Lo of Egipt the kyng, that hight Pharao
His Baker, and his butteler also
Whether they felte none effecte in dremes?
Who so wol seke actes of sondrie remes
May rede of dremes a wonder thyng
Lo Cresus, whiche was of Lyde kyng
Mette he not that he, satte vpon a tree
Whiche signifyed he shulde honged be
Lo Adromeda, that was Hectors wyfe
That day that Hector shulde lese his lyfe
She dremed in the same night before
Howe the lyfe of Hector shulde be lorne
Yf that day he went vnto bataile
She warned him, but it might nat auayle
He wente for to fyght neuertheleſſe
But he was slayne anon of Achilles
But that tale is to long to tel
And eke it is nigh day I may nat dwel
Shortely I say, as for conclusyon
That I shal haue of this auision
Aduersyte: and I say farthermore
That I ne tel of laxatyues no store
For they ben venemous, I wote it wele
I hem defye, I loue hem neuer a dele
But let vs speke of mythe, & stynte al this
Madame Pertelot, so haue I blys
Of one thyng god hath me sent large grace
For whan I se the beautie of your face
Ye be so scarlet reed aboute your eyen
It maketh al my drede for to dyen
For also syker, as In principio
Mulier est hominis confusio.
¶ Madame, the sentence of this latyn is
Woman is mannes ioye and his blys
For whan I fele on night your softe syde
Al be it that I may not on you ryde
For that our perche is made so narowe alas
I am so ful of ioye and of solas
That I defye bothe sweuen and dreme
And with ý worde he flew down fro ý beme
For it was day, and eke the hennes al
And with a chucke, he gan hem for to cal
For he had founde a corne lay in the yerde
Royal he was, and no more a ferde
He feddred Pertelot twenty tyme
And tradde her eke as oft, er it was prime
He loketh as he were a grymme lyoun

And on

And on his toes he romed vp and doun
Him deyned not to set his fete to the grounde
And chucked, whan he had a corne ifounde
And to him than ran his wyues al
As royal as a prince in his hal
Leaue I this Chaunteclere, in his pasture
And after wol I tel of his auenture.
Cwhan ý monthe, in whiche ý worlde begã
That hight Marche, that god first made mã
was complete, and passed were also
Sythe Marche began, twenty dayes & two
Befyl that Chauntecler, in al his pride
His seuen wyues walkyng him besyde
Caste vp his eyen to the bright sonne
That in the sygne of Taurus was ironne
Fourty degrees & one, and somwhat more
He knewe by kynde, and by none other lore
That it was prime, & crew w̃ a blisful steuẽ
The sunne he sayd is clombe vp to the heuen
Fourty degrees & one, & sõwhat more iwys
Madame Pertelot, my worldes blysse
Herken howe this blisful bydes synge
And se the freshe floures howe they sprynge
Ful is myne hert of reuel, and solas
But sodainly him fel a sorouful caas
For euer the later ende of ioye is wo
God wote, worldly ioye is soone ago
And if a rethore coude faire endite
He in a cronycle myght sauely write
As for a souerayne notabilyte
Nowe euery wyse man herken to me
This storie is al so trewe I vndertake
As is the boke of Launcelot du Lake
That women holde in ful great reuerence
Nowe wol I turne ayen to my sentence
CA col fox (ful of sleyght and iniquite)
That in the groue had wonned yeres thre
By hygh ymagynacion a forne caste
The same nyght, through the hedge braste
In to the yerde, there Chaũteclere the fayre
was wonte and eke his wyues to repayre
And in a bedde of wortes styl he lay
Tyl it was passed vndren of the day
waytyng his tyme, on Chaunteclere to fal
As gladly done these homycides al
That in a wayte lye to murdre men
O false murdrer, ruckyng in thy den
O newe Scariot, and newe Genylion
False dissymuler, O greke Synon
That broughtest Troy vtterly to sorowe
O Chauntecler, acursed be the morowe
That thou in thy yerde flewe from ý bemes
Thou were ful wel warned by thy dremes
That ilke day was perylous to the
But what ý god afore wote, must nedes be
After the oppynion of certayne clerkes
witnesse of him, that any clerke is
That in schole is great altercation
In this mater, and great disputation
And hath ben, of an hundred thousande men
But I ne can not boulte it to the bren
As can the holy doctour saynt Austyn
Or Boece, or the bysshop Bradwardyn
whether that goddes worthy forewetyng
Strayneth me nedely to do a thyng
(Nedely clepe I symple necessyte)
Or yf the fre choyce be graunted me
To do that same thyng, or do it nought
Though god forwote it, or it was wrought
Or yf his wetyng strayneth neuer a dele
But by necessyte condycionele
I wol not haue to done of suche matere
My tale is of a cocke, as ye shal here
That toke his coũsayle of his wife w̃ sorow
To walke in the yerde vpon the morowe
That he had met the dreme, as I you tolde
womens counsayles ben ful ofte colde
Womens counsayle brought vs fyrst to wo
And made Adam fro paradise to go
There as he was ful mery, and well at ease
But for I not, whom I myght displease
If I counsayle of women wolde blame
Passe ouer, I sayd it in my game (tere
Redeth authors, wher they trete of such ma-
And what they say of women, ye mowe here
These ben the cockes wordes, and not myne
I can of women no harme deuyne.
CFaire in the sonde, to bathe her merily
Lieth Pertelot, and al her susters by
Ayenst the sunne, and Chaunteclere so free
Songe meryer, than the Mermayde in ý see
For Phisiologus saythe vtterly
Howe that they syngen wel and merily
And so befyl, as he cast his eye
Among the wortes on a butterflye
He was ware of this fox that laye ful lowe
Nothyng than lyst hym for to crowe
But cried cocke cocke, and vp he stert
As one that was affrayde in his hert
For naturally, beestes desyreth to flye
Fro her contrary, yf he may it se
Tho he neuer erst had seen it with his eye.
This Chaunteclere, whan he gan hym espye
He wolde haue fledde, but the fox anone

Sayd

Sayd gentil sir, alas: what wol ye done?
Be ye afrayde of me, that am your frende?
Nowe certes: I were worse than a fende
Yf I to you wolde harme, or villany
I am not come your counsayle to espye
But trewly the cause of my commyng
Was onely to here howe ye syng
For sothly ye haue as mery a steuen
As any angel hath, that is in heuen
Therwith ye haue of musyke more felyng
Than had Boece, or any that can syng
My lorde your father, god his soule blesse
And eke your mother, of her gentylnesse
Haue in my house ben, to my great ease
And certes sir, ful fayne wolde I you please.
But for men speken of syngyng, I wol sey
So mote I broken wel myn eyen twey
Saue you, ne herde I neuer man so synge
As dyd your father in the mornynge
Certes it was of herte, al that he songe
And for to make his voyce more stronge
He wold so payne him, ý with both his eyen
He muste wynke, so loude he muste cryen
And stonden on his typtoes ther withal
And stretche forth his necke, longe and smal
And eke he was of suche discrecion
That there was no man in no regyon
That him in songe or wysedom might passe
I haue wel redde dan Burnel the asse
Among his verses, how ý there was a cocke
For that a preestes sonne yaue hym a knocke
Upō his legges, whyle he was yonge & nyce
He made him for to lese his benefyce
But certayne there is no comparyson
Betwyxt the wysedom and discrecion
Of your father, and of his subtylte
Nowe syngeth sir, for saynte charyte
Let se, can ye your father counterfete.
¶ This Chaūteclere his wynges gā to bete
As a man that coulde not his treson aspye
So was he rauysched with his flaterye
Alas ye lordes, many a false flaterour
Is in your courte, & manye a false lesyngour
That please you wel more, by my faythe
Than he that sothfastnesse vnto you saythe
Redeth Ecclesiast of flaterye
Beware ye lordes of her trecherye.
¶ This Chaūteclere stode hye vpon his toos
Stretching his necke, & helde his eyen cloos
And gan to crowe loude for the nones
And dan Russel the fore starte vp at ones
And by the gorget hent Chaunteclere
And on his backe toward ý woode him bere
For yet was there no man that hym sued
O desteny, that mayst not be eschued
Alas that Chaunteclere flewe fro the bemes
Alas his wyfe raught not of dremes
And on a friday fyl al this mischaunce
O Venus that arte goddesse of plesaunce
Sithnes ý thy seruaūt was this Chaūtecler
And in thy seruyce dyd al his powere
More for delyte, thā the worlde to multiplye
Why woldest ý suffre him on thy day to dye?
¶ O Gaulfryde, dere maystersouerayne
That whā ý worthy king richard was slayn
With shot, complaynedest his dethe so sore
Why ne had I nowe thy science and thy lore
The friday for to chyde, as dyd ye
For on a friday, shortly slayne was he
Thā wold I shew you how ý I coude playn
For Chaunteclere drede, and for his payne.
¶ Certes suche crye, ne lamentacion
Nas neuer of ladyes made, whan that Ilion
Was won, & Pirrus with his bright swerde
Whan he hent kyng Priam by the berde
And slough him (as sayd Eneidos)
As made al the hennes in the cloos
Whan they had lost of Chaūteclere the syght
But souerayn ly dame Pertelot shright
Wel louder than dyd Hasdrubalies wyfe
Whan that her husbonde had loste his lyfe
And that the Romayns had brent Cartage
She was so ful of turment and of rage
That wylfully in to the fyre she sterte
And brent herselfe, with a stedfaste herte.
¶ O woful hennes, right so cryed ye
As whan that Nero brent the cyte
Of Rome, cryed the senatours wyues
For that her husbondes shulde lese her lyues
Withouten gylte Nero hath hem slayne
Nowe wol I turne to my tale agayne.
¶ The sely wydowe, & her doughters two
Herde the hennes crye and make wo
And out at the dore sterte they anon
And sawe the fore towarde the wodde gon
And bare vpon his backe the cocke away
And cryed out harowe and wel away
A ha the fore, and after him they ran
And eke with staues, many a nother man
Ran Col our dogge, Talbot, & eke garlonde
And Malkyn, with her distaffe in her honde
Ran cowe & calfe, and eke the very hogges
For they so fore a ferde were of the dogges
And shoutyng of men, and of women eke

They ran so, her herte thought to breke
They yellen as fendes do in hel
The duckes cryed, as men wolde hem quell
The geese for feare flewe ouer the trees
Out of the hyues came the swarme of bees
So hydous was the noyse, a benedicite
Certes Jacke Strawe, ne his meyne
Ne made neuer shoutes halfe so shril
whan that they wolde any flemmyng kyl
As that day was made vpon the fox
Of brasse they blewe the trompes & of box
Of horne & bone, in which they blew & pou-
And therwith they shriked and shouted (ped
It semed, as though heuen shulde fal
Nowe good men I pray you herken al.
Lo howe fortune turneth sodainly
The hope and the pride of her enemy
This cocke that lay vpon the foxes bake
In al his drede, vnto the fox he spake
And sayd, syr: If I were as ye
Yet shulde I say, as wyse god helpe me
Turneth ayen, ye proude churles al
A very pestylence vpon you fal
Nowe am I come vnto this woodes syde
Maugre your heed, the cocke shal here abyde
I wol hym eete in faythe, and that anone
¶ The fox answerd, in fayth it shal be done
And as he spake the worde, al sodaynly
This cocke brake from his mouthe deliuerly
And hygh vpon a tree he flewe anon
And whan the fox sawe that he was gon
Alas (q̃ he) o Chaunteclere alas
I haue (q̃ he) do to you trespas
In as moche as I made you aferde
whã I you hent, & brought out of your yerde
But sir, I dyd it not in no wicked entent
Come downe, & I shal tel you what I ment
I shal you say sothe, god helpe me so.
¶ Nay than (q̃ he) I shrewe vs bothe two
And first I shrew my self, both blode & bones
If thou begyle me ofter than ones
Thou shalte no more with thy flaterye
Do me synge with a wynkyng eye
For he that wynketh, whan he shulde se
All wylfully, god let him neuer thee.
Nay (q̃ ỳ fox) but god yeue him mischãce
That is so indiscrete of gouernance
That iangleth, whã that he shuld haue pees
¶ Lo, suche it is for to be recheles
And neglygent, and truste on flaterye
But ye that holde this tale a lye
As of a fox, of a cocke, and of a hen
Taketh the moralyte good men
For saynt Poule saythe, al that written is
To our doctryne it is written iwys
Taketh the fruyte, and let the chaffe be styl
Nowe good god, yf that it be thy wyl
As saythe my lorde, so make vs al good men
And bryngc vs to thy hygh blysse. Amen.

¶ Here endeth the tale of the nonnes preest, and here foloweth the Manciples prologue.

Sir nonnes preest, oure hoste sayd anone
Yblessed be thy breche & euery stone
This was a mery tale of Chauntecler
But by my trouthe, yf thou were a seculer
Thou woldest be a tredfoule a right
For yf thou haue corage, as thou hast might
The were nede of hennes, as I wene
Ye more than seuen tymes seuentene
Se whiche brawnes hath this gentil preest
So great a necke, and suche a large breest
He loketh as a sperhauke with hys eyen
Him nedeth not his colours for to dyen
With brasyl, ne with grayne of Portyngale
But sir, fayre fal you for your tale
And after that, he with ful mery chere
Sayd to a nother man, as ye shal here.
¶ Wote ye not where stondeth a lytel towne
Whiche that is called Bob vp and downe
Under the blee, in Cauntebury way
There gan our hoste to iape and to play
And said, sirs: what: dunne is in the myre
Is there no man, for prayer ne for hyre
That wol awake our felowe behynde
A theke him might ful lightly robbe & bynde
Se howe he nappeth, se for cockes bones
Howe he wol fal from his horse atones
Is that a coke of London, with mischaunce
Do him confort, he knoweth his penaunce
For he shal tel a tale by my fey
Al thought it be not worthe a botel of hey
Awake thou coke (q̃ he) god yeue the sorowe
what eyleth the to slepe by the morowe
Hast thou had fleen al night, or art ỳ dronke
Or hast ỳ al night with som queen iswonke

So

So that thou mayste not hold vp thyn heed.
This coke that was ful pale, nothing reed
Sayd, sir host: so god my soule blesse
There is fal on me great heuynesse
But I not why, me were leuer to slepe
Than the best gallon of wyne in chepe
Wel (q̃ the Manciple) yf it may do ese
To the sir coke, and to no wight displese
Whiche that here ryde in this companye
And that our hoste wyl of his curtesye
I wol as nowe excuse the of thy tale
For in good faythe thy visage is ful pale
Thyn eyen dase, sothely as me thynketh
And wel I wot, thy breth ful sowre stinketh
That sheweth wel thou art not wel disposed
Of me certayne thou shalt not be glosed
Se howe he galpeth, lo this dronke wight
As though he wolde vs swalow anon right
Holde close thy mouthe, by thy father kyn
The dyuel of hel set his fote therin
Thy cursed brethe wyl enfecte vs al
Fye stynking swyne, fye foule mote the befal
Taketh hede sirs of this lusty man
Nowe swete sir, wol ye iuste at the ban
Therto me thynketh ye be wel shape
I trowe that ye haue dronken wyne ape
And that is whan men play at strawe.
And w̃ his speche the coke weyed al wrawe
And on the manciple he gan to nodde faste
For lacke of speche: a down his horse him cast
Where as he lay, tyl that men him vp toke
This was a fayre cheuesaunce of a coke
Alas that he ne had holde him by his ladyl
Ar̃der that he ayen were in the sadyl
There was a great shouyng to and fro
To lyfte him vp, and moche care and wo
So vnweldy was this sely palled goste
And to the Manciple than spake our host.
Bycause that drinke hath domynation
Vpon this man, by my saluation
I trowe leudely wol he tel his tale
For were it wyne, or olde moysty ale
That he hath dronke, he speketh so in ỳ nose
And snyueleth fast, and eke hathe the pose
He also hath to do more than ynough
To kepe him on his caple out of the slough
And yf he fal from his caple ere sone
Than shal we al haue ynough to done
In lyftyng vp his dronken corse
Tel on thy tale, of hym make I no force
But yet Manciple, in fayth thou art to nyce
Thus openly to reprene him of his vyce
An other day he wol parauenture
Reclayme the, and bring thy to lure
I mene he speke wyl of smale thynges
And for to pynche at thy rekenynges
That were not honest, yf it came to prefe.
No (q̃ ỳ Manciple) ỳ were a gret mischefe
So myght he bringe me in to the snare
Yet had I leuer paye for the mare
Which he rydeth on, thã he shuld w̃ me stryue
I wol not wrathe him, so mote I thriue
That I spake, I sayd it but in bourde
And wote ye what, I haue here in my gourd
A draught of wyne, ye of a rype grape
And right anon ye shal se a good iape
This coke shal drinke therof, yf I maye
Vp payne of my lyfe he wol not say naye
And certaynly, to tellen as it was
Of this vessel the coke dranke faste, alas
What nedeth it, he dranke ynough before
And whan he had pouped in his horne
To the Manciple he toke the gourde agayne
And of the drinke the coke was ful fayne
And thonked him, in suche wyse as he coude
Than gan our host to laugh w̃der loude
And sayd: I se wel it is necessary
Wher that we gon, good drinke w̃ vs to cary
For that wyl turne rancoure and disese
To accorde & loue, and many a worde to pese
O Bacchus, yblessed be thy holy name
That so canste turne ernest in to game
Worshyp and thonke be to thy deite
Of that mater ye get no more of me.
Tel on thy tale thou Manciple, I the pray
wel sir (q̃ he) herkeneth what I say.

Here endeth the Manciples prologue, and here foloweth hys tale.

Han Phebus dwelled
here in erth adoun
As old bokes make mē
cioun
He was the moste lusty
bacheler
Of al the worlde, and
eke the best archer
He slough Pheton the serpent as he lay
Slepyng ayenst the sunne vpon a day
And many a nother noble worthy dede
He with his bow wrought, as mē mow rede
Play he coulde on euery mynstralcye
And synge, that it was a melodye
To here of his clere voyce the soun
Certes the kyng of Thebes, Amphion
That with his songe, walled the cyte
Coude neuer synge halfe so wel as he
Therto he was the semelyst man
That is or was, sythe the worlde began
what nedeth it his feture to discryue:
For in this worlde nas none so fayre a lyue
He was therwith fulfylled of gentylnesse
Of honoure, and of perfyte worthynesse
This Phebus, ꝑ was floure of bachelerye
As wel in fredome, as in chyualrye
For his disporte, in signe eke of victory
Of Pheton, so as telleth vs the story
was wonte to beare in his honde a bowe
Now had this Phebus in his house a crow
within a cage ifostred many a daye
And taught it speche, as men teche a iaye
whyte was thys crowe, as is a whyte swan
And countrefete the speche of euery man
He coulde, whan he shulde tel a tale
There was in al this world no nightyngale
Ne coulde, by an hundred thousande dele
Synge so wonderly mery and wele
Now had this Phebus in his house a wife
whiche that he loued more than his lyfe
And nyght and day, dyd euer his dyligence
Her for to plese, and do her reuerence
Saue onely, yf I the sothe shal sayne
Jelous he was, & wolde haue kept her fayne
For him were lothe, iaped for to be
And so is euery wight, in suche degre
But al for naught, for it auayleth nought
A good wife, ꝑ is clene of werke & thought
Shulde not be kept in none awayte certayn
And trewly the labour is in vayne
To kepe a shrewe, for it wol not be
This holde I for a very nycete
To spyl laboure, for to kepe wyues
Thus writen olde clerkes in her lyues
But nowe to purpose, as I fyrst began
This worthy Phebus, dothe al that he can
To plese her, wenyng through such plesauce
And for his manhode, & for his gouernaunce
That no man shulde put him from her grace
But god it wote, there may no man enbrace
As to distrayne a thyng, which that nature
Hath naturally set in a creature
Take any byrde, and put him in a cage
And do al thyne entent, and thy corage
To foster

To foster it tenderly with meate and drinke
Of al dayntiés that thou canste bethynke
And kepe it also clenly as thou may
Al though the cage of golde be neuer so gay
Yet had this byrde, by twēty thousand folde
Leuer in a forest, that is wyde and colde
Go eete wormes, and suche wretchydnesse
For euer this byrde wyl do his besynesse
To escape out of his cage whan he maye
His lyberte the byrde desyreth aye.
Let take a catte, & foster her with mylke
And tender flesche, & make her couche of sylke
And let her se a mouse go by the wal
Anon she weyueth flesche, & couche, and al
And euery deyntie, that is in that house
Suche appetyte hath she to eete the mouse
Lo here hath luste his domynacion
And appetyte flemeth discrecion.
A she wolfe, hath also a vylanous kynde
The leudest wolfe that she may fynde
Or leste of reputacion, that wol she take
In tyme whan her luste to haue a make
Al these ensamples speke I by these men
That ben vntrue, & no thyng by women
For men haue euer a lycorouse appetyte
On lower thyng, to perfourme her delyte
Than on her wyues, be they neuer so fayre
Ne neuer so trewe, ne so debonayre
Flesche is so newfangel, with mischaunce
That we ne conne in nothyng haue plesaūce
That sowneth vnto vertue, any whyle.
¶ This Phebus, whiche thought no gyle
Disceyued was, for al his iolyte
For vnder him an other had she
A man of lytel reputation
Nought worthe to Phebus, in comparyson
The more harme is, it happeth ofte so
Of whiche there cometh moche harme & wo
And so befel, whan Phebus was absent
His wyfe anon hath for her lemman sent
Her lemman, certes that is a knauysh speche
Forgeue it me, and that I you beseche.
¶ The wyse Plato saythe, as ye mowe rede
The worde must nedes acorde with the dede
If men shulde tel properly a thyng
The worde muste cosyn be to the werkyng
I am a boystouse man, right thus say I
There is but lytel difference truely
Betwyxt a wyfe, that is of hye degre
If of her body dishonest she be
And a poore wenche, other than this
If it so be they werke bothe amys
But for the gentyl is in estate aboue
She shal be called his lady and his loue
And for that tother is a poore woman
She shal be called his wench, or his lemmā
And god it wote, myn owne dere brother
Men lay as lowe that one as that other
Right so betwixt a tytleless tyraunt
And an outlawe, or a theke erraunt
The same I say, there is no dyfference
To Alysaunder was tolde this sentence
That for the tyraunt is of greater might
By force of meyne, to slee downe right
And brenne house & home, & make al playn
Lo therfore is he called a capitayne
And for the outlawe hath but smal meyne
And may not do so great an harm, as he
Ne bryngе a countrey to so great mischeke
Men callen him an outlawe or a theke.
¶ But for I am a man not textuele
I wol not tel of textes neuer a dele
I wol go to my tale, as I began.
Whā Phebus wife had sent for her lemmā
Anon they wrought al theyr luste volage
This whyte crowe, that hynge aye in ꝑ cage
Behelde their werke, and said neuer a worde
And whā hom was come Phebus ꝑ lorde
This crowe songe, cuckow, cuckow, cuckow
what birde (qꝑ Phebus) what syngest thou
Ne were thou not wont so merily to synge
That to my herte it was a reioysyng
To here thy voyce, alas, what songe is this
¶ By god (qꝑ he) I synge not amys
Phebus (qꝑ he) for al thy worthynesse
For al thy beaute, and thy gentylnesse
For al thy songe, and thy mynstralsye
For al thy waytyng, blered is thyn eye
with one of lytel reputatyon
Not worthe to the in comparison
The mountenāce of a gnat, so mote I thriue
For on thy bed, thy wife I sawe hym swyue
what wol ye more ꝑ crow anon him told
By sadde tokens, and by wordes bolde
Howe that his wyfe had done her lechery
Him to great shame, and to great vyllany
And tolde him eft, he sawe it with his eyen
¶ This Phebus gan awayward for to prie
Him thought his woful herte braste a two
His bowe he bent, and set therin a flo
And in his yre he hath his wyfe slayne
This is the effecte, there is no more to sayne
For sorow wherof, he brake his mynstralsye
Bothe harpe and lute, getern, and sautrye

And eke he brake his arowes, and his bowe
And after that, thus spake he to the crowe.
¶ Traytour (q̃ he) with tonge of scorpion
Thou haste me brought to my confusyon
Alas that I was wrought, why nere I deed
O dere wyfe, o gemme, o lustyheed
That were to me so sadde, & eke so trewe
Now lyest thou deed, with face pale of hewe
Ful gyltlesse, that durst I swere iwys
O rakel honde, to do so foule amys
O troubled wytte, o yre retchelesse
That vnauysed smytest gyltlesse
O wantrust, ful of false suspection
Where was thy wytte and thy discretion
Oh, euery man beware of rekylnesse
Ne trowe no thyng, without strōg wytnesse
Smyte not to sone, or thou wete why
And be auysed wel and sykerly
Or ye do any execution
Upon your yre, for suspection
Alas, a thousande folke hath rekel yre
Fully fordone, & brought hem in the myre
Alas, for to sorowe I wol my selfe sle
And to the crowe, o false thefe said he
I wol quite anon thy false tale
Thou songe whylom, lyke a nyghtyngale
Nowe shalt thou false thefe, thy song forgon
And eke thy whyte fethers euerychon
Ne neuer in al thy lyfe shalte thou speke
Thus shul men on a traytour be awreke
Thou & thyn ofspring euer shal be blake
Ne neuer swete noyse shal ye make
But euer cryen ayenst tempest and rayne
In token, that through the my wife is slayne
And to the crowe he sterte, and that anon
And pulled of hys whyte fethers euerychon
And made him blacke, & reft him al his songe
And eke his speche, & out at dore him slonge
Unto the dyuel, whiche I him betake
And for this cause ben al crowes blake.
¶ Lordiges, by this ensāple I wol you pray
Beware, and take kepe what I say
Ne telleth neuer no man in your lyfe
Howe that an other mā hath dight his wife
He wol you hate mortally certayne
Dan Salomon, as wyse clerkes sayne
Techeth a man to kepe his tonge wel
But as I sayd, I am not textuel
But natheleſſe, thus taught me my dame
My sonne, thinke on ẏ crowe a goddes name
My sōne kepe wel thy tonge, & kepe thy frēde
A wycked tonge is worse than a fende
My sonne, from a fende men may hem blesse
My sonne, god of his endelesse goodnesse
walled a tonge with tethe, and lyppes eke
For man shulde him auyse what he speke
My sonne, ful ofte for to mykel speche
Hath many a man be spylte, as clerkes teche
But for lytel speche, spoken auysedly
Is no man shente, to speke generally
My sonne, thy tonge shuldest thou restrayne
At al tymes, but whan thou doest thy payne
To speke of god, in honoure and prayere
The fyrst vertue sonne, yf thou wolt lere
Is to restrayne, and kepe wel thy tonge
Thus lerne children, whan they be yonge
My sonne, of mykel spekyng vnauysed
(There lasse spekyng had ynough suffyced)
Cometh mykel harme, thus was me taught
In moche speche, synne wanteth naught
woste thou wherfore a rakel tonge serueth
Right as a sworde forcutteth and forkerueth
An arme on two, my dere sonne right so
A tonge cutteth frendschyp al a to
A iangler is to god abhomynable
Rede Salomon, so wyse and honourable
Rede Dauid in his psalmes, rede Senecke
My sonne speke not, ne wyth thy heed becke
Dissimule as thou were deefe, if ẏ thou here
The ianglour speketh of perlous matere.
The flēming sayth, lerne if that thou leste
That lytel ianglyng causeth moche reste
My sonne, if thou no wicked word hast saide
The dare not drede for to be bewrayde
But he that hath missayd, I dare wel sayne
He may by no way clepe his worde agayne
Thyng that is sayd, is sayd, & forthe it gothe
Though him repent, or him be neuer so loth
He is thral to him, to whom he hath sayde
A tale, for whiche he is nowe yuel apayde
My sonne beware, & be none auctour newe
Of tidynges, whether they be false or trewe
Where so thou come, amonge hye or lowe
Kepe wel thy tonge, & thynke on the crowe.

¶ Here endeth the Manciples tale, and here begynneth the Persons Prologue.

By

By that the Manciple had
hys tale ended
The sonne fro the south
syde is dyscended
So lowe, that it was not
to my syght
Degrees of fyue and twē
tye on hyghte
Ten a clocke it was, so as I gesse
For elleuen foote, a lytell more or lesse
My shadowe was at that tyme, as there
Of suche fete as my lengthe parted were
In syxe fete equally of proportion
Therwyth the Moones exaltation
I meane Libra, alwaye gan ascende
As we were entryng at the thropes ende
For which our hoste, as he was wont to gye
Aye in thys case, thys iolyl companye
Sayd in thys wyse, lordynges euerychone
Nowe lacketh vs no tale more then one
Fulfylled is my sentence and my decre
who woll nowe tell a tale let se
Almoste fulfylled is myne ordinaunce
I pray to god so yeue him ryght good chaūce
That telleth thys tale to vs lustely
Syr preest (q̃ he) arte thou a vicary
Or arte thou a person, say soth by thy fay
Be what thou be, breke thou not our play
For euery man saue thou, hath tolde his tale
Unbokell, & shewe vs what is in thy male
For truely me thynketh by thy chere
Thou shuldest knyt vp well a great matere
Tell vs a fable anone, for kockes bones
¶ Thys person hym answerde all at ones
Thou gettest fable none tolde of me
For Paule, that wryteth to Timothe
Repreueth hem that wayuen sothfastnesse
And teachen fables, and suche wretchednesse
why shulde I sowe draffe out of my fyst
when I maye sowe wheate, yf that my lyst
For whych I saye, yf that ye lyst to here
Moralite, and of vertuous matere
And then, yf ye woll yeue me audience
I wolde full fayne at Christes reuerence
Done you pleasaunce lefull, as I can
But trusteth well, I am a sotherne man
I can not ieste, rum, ram, ruf, by letter
And god wote, ryme holde I but lytel better
And therfore yf ye lyst, I woll not glose
I woll you tell a lytell tale in prose
To knyt vp al thys feest, and make an ende
And Jesu for hys grace, wyt me sende
To shewe you the waye, in thys voyage
Of thylke perfyte glorious pylgrimage
That hyght Hierusalem celestiall
And yf ye vouchsaue, anone I shall
Begyn vpon my tale, for whych I pray
Tel your aduyse, I can no better say
But natheless thys meditacion
I put it aye, vnder the correction
Of clerkes, for I am not textuell
I take but the sentence, trusteth well
Therfore I make protestation
That I woll stande to correction.
¶ Upon thys worde we haue assented sone
For as it semed, it was for to done
To ende in some vertuous sentence
And for to yeue hym space and audience
And bad our hoste he shulde to hym saye
That all we, to tell hys tale hym pray
Our hoste had the wordes for vs all
Syr preest (q̃ he) nowe fayre mote you befal
Sayeth what ye lyste, & we shal gladly here
And wyth that word he sayd in this manere
Telleth (q̃ he) your meditation
But hasteth you, the sunne woll adoun
Beth fructuous, and that in lytell space
And to do wel, god sende you his grace.

¶ Here endeth the Persones prologue, and here after foloweth hys tale.

¶ Jeremi. vi. State super vias, et videte, et interrogate de semitis antiquis, que sit via bona, ambulate in ea et inuenietis refrigerium animabus vestris.

Ur swete Lorde God of heuen, wolde that no mã shulde perysche, but that we tourne al to the knowlege of hym, & to the blyssfull lyfe that is perdurable, amonysheth vs by the prophete Jeremye, that sayeth in thys wyse. Standeth vpon the wayes and seeth, and asketh of olde pathes: that is to saye, of olde sentences, whych is the good waye, and walketh in that waye, and ye shall fynde refreshynge for your soules. &c. Many be the wayes espirituels that lede folke to oure Lorde Jesu Christe, and to the reygne of glorye: Of whych wayes there is a full noble way, and full couenable, which maye not fayle to manne to woman, that through synne hath mysgone fro the ryght waye of Hierusalem celestiall: and thys waye is called penitence, of whych man shulde gladly herkẽ and enquire wyth al hys herte, to wete what is penitẽce, and whych is called penitence, and how many maners bene of actions or werkynges of penitence, and howe many speces there bene of penitence, and whych thinges appertayne and behoue to penitence, and which thynges dystourbe penitence.

Saynt Ambrose sayeth, that penitence is the playnynge of man for the gylte ý he hath done, & no more to do any thynge for whych him ought to playne. And some doctoure sayeth, Penitence is the waymentynge of man that sorroweth for his synne, and paineth him selfe, for he hath mysdone. Penitẽce wyth certayne circumstaunces, is very repentaũce of a man that holt hym selfe in sorowe, & other payne for hys gyltes: and for he shalbe very penytent, he shall fyrst bewayle synnes that he hath done, and stedfastlye purpose in hys herte to haue shryfte of mouth, and to do satisfaccion, and neuer to do thynge, for whyche hym ought more bewayle or complayne, and continue in good workes: or els hys repentaunce maye not auayle. For as saint Isoder sayeth. He is a iaper and a lyer, & no very repentaunt, that eftsone doth thinge, for which hym ought repent. Weepynge and not for to stynte to do synne, may not auayle: But nathelesse mẽ shal hope that at euery tyme that man falleth, be it neuer so ofte, that he maye aryse through penaũce, yf he haue grace: but certayne it is great doute, for as sayeth saynt Gregorye. Unnethes aryseth he out of synne that is charged wyth ý charge of yuel vsage.

And

And therfore repentaunt folke, that stynt for to synne, and leue synne or synne leue them, holy churche holdeth them syker of their saluacion. And he that synneth, and verely repēteth hym in hys laste ende: holy churche yet hopeth hys saluacion, by the great mercye of our Lorde Jesu Christ, for hys repentaunce: but take the syker waye.

¶ And nowe syth I haue declared you, what thynge is Penitence, now ye shal vnderstād, that there ben thre actions of penitence. The first is, that a man be baptysed after that he hath synned. Saynt Austyn sayeth, but he be penitent for hys olde synfull lyfe, he maye not begynne the newe clene lyfe: For certes yf he be baptysed wythout penitence of hys olde gylte, he retayneth ÿ marke of baptyme, but not the grace ne the remissyon of hys synnes, tyll he haue very repentaunce. An other defaute is thys, that men do deedly synne after that they haue receyued baptysme. The thyrde defaute is thys, that men fall in venyall synnes after her baptysme, fro day to day. Therof sayeth saynt Augustyne, that penitence of good and humble folke, is the penitence of euery daye.

The speces of penitence ben thre: That one of hem is solempne: an other is cōmune, & the thyrd is priuy. That penaūce that is solempne is in two maners: As to be put out of holy churche in lent, for slaughter of chyldren, and suche maner thynge. An other is when a man hath synned openly, of whyche synne the fame is openly spoken in the countrey: and then holy church by iugement, dystrayneth hym for to do open penaunce.

Cōmen penaunce is, that preestes enioyne men in certayne case: as for to go perauēture naked in pylgrymage, or barefote. Priuy penaunce is that, that men do al daye for priuy synnes, of whych we shryue vs priuely, and receyue priuy penaunce.

Thys is a Canterbury tale

¶ Nowe shalt thou vnderstande, what is behouefull and necessarye to very perfyte penytence: and thys stonte on thre thynges. Contricion of herte, confession of mouthe, and satisfaction. For whych sayth saynt John Chrisostome. Penitence dystrayneth a man to accept benignely euery payne, that hym is enioyned, wyth contricion of herte, and shryfte of mouthe, wyth satisfaction: and in werkynge of all maner humilite. And thys is frutefull penitence ayenst thre thynges, in whyche we wrath our Lorde Jesu Christe: thys is to saye: By delyte in thynkynge, by retchlesnesse in speakinge, and by wycked synfull werkynge. And ayenst these wycked gyltes is penitence, that maye be lykened vnto a tree.

The roote of thys tree is contricion, that hydeth hym in the herte of hym that is verye repentaūt, ryght as the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the earth. Of thys roote of contricion spryngeth a stalke, that beareth braunches & leues of confessyon, and frute of satisfaction. For whych Christ sayth in hys gospel. Doth digne fruyte of penitence, for by thys fruyte men maye knowe the tre, and not by the rote that is hyde in the herte of man, ne by ÿ braūches, ne the leues of confession. And therfore our Lorde Jesu Christ sayeth thus: By the fruyte of hem shall ye knowe hem. Of thys roote also spryngeth a sede of grace, ÿ whych sede is mother of all sykernesse, and thys sede is egre & hote. The grace of thys sede spryngeth of God, through remembraunce of the daye of dome, and on the paynes of hell. Of thys mater sayeth Salomon, that in ÿ drede of God, man forletteth hys synne. The heate of thys sede is the loue of God, and the desyrynge of the ioye perdurable: Thys hete draweth the herte of man to God, and doth him hate hys synne: For sothly there is nothynge that sauoureth so well to a chyld, as ÿ mylke of hys nouryce, ne nothynge is to hym more abhominable then that malke, whē it is medled wyth other meate. Ryght so the synfull man that loueth hys synne, hym semeth that it is to hym moost swete of any thynge, but fro that tyme he loueth sadlye our Lorde Jesu Christe, and desyreth the lyfe perdurable, there is to hym nothinge more abhominable For sothly the lawe of god is the loue of god For whyche Dauid the prophete sayeth: I haue loued thy lawe, and hated wyckednesse. He that loueth God, kepeth hys lawe and hys worde.

¶ Thys tree sawe the prophete Daniell in spirite, on the visyon of Nabuchodonosor, when he counsayled hym to do penitence. Penaunce is the tree of lyfe, to hem that it receyue, and he that holdeth hym in very penitence is blessed, after the sentence of Salomon. In thys penitence or contricion, man shall

shal understand foure thynges, that is to say what is contrityon, and whyche ben the causes that moue a man to contrycion, and howe he shulde be contryte, and what contrycion auayleth to the soule. Then is it thus that contrycion is the very sorowe, that a mā receyueth in hys herte for hys synnes, wyth sadde purpose to shryue hym, and to do penaunce, and neuer more to do synne: And thys sorowe shalbe in thys maner, as sayeth saynt Bernarde: It shalbe heuye and greuous, and full sharpe and poynaunt in herte.

Fyrste, for a man hath agylted hys lorde and hys creatoure, and more sharpe and poynaunt, for he hath agylted hys father celestiall: And yet more sharpe and poynaunt, for he hath wrathed & agylted him that bought hym, that wyth hys precioule blonde hath delyuered vs fro the bondes of synne, and fro the cruelte of the dyuell, and fro the paynes of hell.

The causes that ought moue a man to cōtrycion bene syxe. Fyrste a man shall remembre hym of hys synnes, but loke that that remembraunce ne be to hym no delyte, by no waye, but great shame & sorowe for hys synnes. For Job sayeth, synfull men done workes worthy of confessyon. And therfore sayeth Ezechiel: I wol remembre me al the yeres of my lyfe, in the bytternesse of my herte And God sayeth in the Apocalypse: Remēbre ye from whence that ye be fall, for before that tyme that ye synned, ye were chyldren of God, and lymmes of the raygne of God: But for youre synne ye be waxen thrall and foule and membres of the fende: hate of aungels, slaunder of holye churche, and foode of the false serpent, perpetual matere of the fyre of hel: And yet more foule and abhominable, for ye trespace so oft tymes, as doth an houde that returneth ayen to eate hys owne spewynge: and yet be ye fouler, for youre longe cōtinuynge in synne, and youre synfull vsage, for whyche ye be rooted in youre synne, as a beest in hys donge. Suche maner of thoughtes make a man to haue shame of hys synne, and no delyte. As God sayeth, by the prophet Ezechiel: ye shal remēbre you of your wayes and they shal dysplease you sothly. Synnes ben the wayes that lede folke to hell.

The seconde cause that oughte make a man to haue dysdayne of sinne is this, that as sayeth saynt Peter: who so doth syn, is thrall of synne, and synne putteth a man in great thraldome. And therfore sayeth the prophete Ezechiel: I wente sorowfull, in dysdayne of my selfe. Certes well ought a mā haue dysdayne of synne, and wythdrawe hym fro that thraldome and vylanye. And lo what sayeth Seneke in thys mater, he sayeth thus: Though I wyste, that neyther God ne man shulde neuer knowe it, yet wolde I haue dysdayne for to synne. And the same Seneke also sayeth: I am borne to greater thynge, thē to be thrall to my body, or for to make of my body a thrall. Ne a fouler thrall maye no man ne woman make of hys bodye, then for to yeue his body to do synne, al were it ÿ foulest churle, or the foulest woman that lyueth, and lest of value, yet is he then more foule and more in seruitude. Euer fro the hygher degre that man falleth the more is he thrall, and more to God & to the worlde vyle & abhomynable. O good God, well ought man haue great dysdayne of synne, sythe that throughe synne, there he was free he is made bonde. And therfore sayeth saynt Austyne: Yf thou hast dysdayne of thy seruaunt, yf he offēde or synne, haue thou then dysdayne that thou thy selfe shuldest do synne. Take rewarde of thyne owne value, that thou ne be to foule to thy selfe. Alas wel ought they then haue dysdayne to be seruaūtes and thralles to synne, and sore to be ashamed of them selfe, that God of hys endlesse goodnesse hathe sette in hygh astate, or yeue hem wytte, strength of bodye, heale, beauty, or prosperite and boughte hem fro the death wyth hys herte blonde, that they so vnkyndlye agaynst hys gentylnesse quyte hym so vylaynously to slaughter of her owne soules.

O good God ye women that bene of greate beautye remembreth you on the prouerbe of Salomon. He sayeth he lykeneth a fayre woman that is a foole of her body to a rynge of golde ÿ were worne on the groyne of a sowe For ryghte as a sow wroteth in euery ordure so wroteth she her beaute in stynkyng ordure of synne.

The

THe thyrde cause that oughte meue a man to contricion, is drede of the daye of dome, & of the horrible paynes of hel. For as saynt Jerome sayeth: At euery tyme that me remē-breth of the daye of dome, I quake: For whē I eate and drynke, or what so that I do, euer semeth me that the trompe sowneth in myne eare: Ryseth ye vp that bene deed, & cōmeth to the iudgement. O good God, moch ought a man to drede suche a iugement, ther as we shalbe al, as saint Poule sayeth, before ꝑ sete of our Lorde Jesu Christe, where as he shal make a generall congregation, where as no man may be absent, for certes there auayleth none essoyne ne excusation, and not only that oure defautes shalbe iuged, but also that all our werkes shal opēly be knowē. And as sayeth saint Bernarde, there ne shal no pleading auayle, ne no sleyght: we shal yeue rekenyng of euery ydell worde. There shall we haue a iuge that maye not be dysceyued ne corrupte, and why: For certes, all our thoughtes bene dyscouered, as to hym, ne for prayer ne for mede, he shall not be corrupte. And therfore sayeth Salomō: The wrath of God ne wol not spare no wyght, for prayer ne for yefte. And therfore at the daye of dome, there is no hope to escape. Wherfore as sayeth saint Anselme: full greate anguyshe shall the synfull folke haue at that tyme: There shal ꝑ fyerce and wroth iuge sytte aboue, and vnder hym the horrible pytte of hell open, to destroy him that muste beknowe hys synnes, whych synnes openlye ben shewed before God & before euery creature: And on the lefte syde, mo dyuels then any herte may thynke, for to hale & drawe the synfull soules to the payne of hel, and wythin the hertes of folke shalbe the bytynge conscience, and wythout forth shall be the worlde al brennynge: whyther shal then the wretched synfull man flye to hyde hym. Certes he maye not hyde hym, he must come forth and shewe hym. For certes as sayeth saynt Jerome, the earth shall cast hym out of it and the see also, and the ayre that shalbe ful of thonder clappes and lyghtenynges. Now sothly, who so woll remembreth him of these thynges: I gesse, that thys synne shall not turne hym in delyte, but to greate sorowe, for dredde of the payne of hell. And therfore sayeth Job to God: suffre lorde, that I may a whyle bewaile and wepe, er I go without returnynge to the derke londe, couered wyth the darkenesse of death, to the lāde of mysese and of derknesse, where as is the shadowe of death, where as there is none ordre or ordynaunce, but ferefull drede that euer shall last. Lo, here maye ye se, that Job prayed respyte a whyle, to bewepe and wayle hys trespace: for sothly one day of respyte is better then al the treasoure of thys worlde. And for as moche as a man maye acquyte hym selfe before God by penitence in thys worlde, and not by treasoure, therfore shulde he praye to God to yeue hym respyte a whyle, to bewepe and wayle hys trespace: For certes al the sorowe that a man myght make fro the begynnynge of the worlde, nys but a lytell thynge, at regarde of the sorowe of hell. The cause why that Job calleth hell the lande of darknesse, vnderstandeth that he calleth it lande or earth, for it is stable and neuer shal fayle, and derke: for he that is in hell hath defaute of lyght material, for certes the darke lyght that shall come out of the fyre that euer shall brenne, shall turne hym all to payne that is in hell, for it sheweth hym to the horrible deuels that hym turmenteth, couered wyth the darkenesse of death, that is to saye, that he that is in hel, shal haue defaute of the syght of God: for certes the syght of God is ꝑ lyfe perdurable. The derkenesse of death, bene the synnes that the wretched man hath done whyche that dystourbe hym to se the face of God, ryght as the derke cloude betwyxt vs and the sunne. Londe of mysese, bycause that there ben thre maner of defautes, ayenst thre thynges that folke of thys worlde haue in thys present lyfe, that is to saye: honours, delyces, and richesse. Ayenst honoure haue they in hell, shame and confusyon: For well ye wote, that men call honoure the reuerence that man doth to man, but in hell is none honoure ne reuerence. For certes, no more reuerence shalbe do there to a kynge, then to a knaue. For whyche God sayeth by the prophete Jeremye: Those folke that me dyspise shalbe in dyspyte. Honour is also called great lordshyp: there shall no wyght serue other, but of harme & turment. Honoure is also called great dygnite & hyghnesse, but in hel shal they be al fortroden of dyuels. As god sayeth

the

the horrible deuels shall go and come vpon the heedes of dampned folke: and thys is for as moche as ꝑ hygher that they were in this present lyfe, the more shal they be abated and defoyled in hell. Ayenst the rychesse of thys worlde shal they haue mysese of pouerte, that shal be in foure thynges: In defaute of treasoure. Of whyche Dauid sayeth: The rych folke that enbrase and knytte all her herte to treasoure of thys worlde, shall slepe in the slepynge of death, and nothynge ne shul they fynde in her hondes of all her treasoure. And more ouer the mysese of hel shalbe in defaute of meate and drynke. For God sayeth thus by Moses: They shalbe wasted wyth honger, and the bydes of hell shal deuoure hem, wyth bytter death, and the gall of the dragon shall be her drynke, and the venym of the dragon her morsels. Also her mysease shalbe in defaute of clothynge, for they shalbe naked in bodye, as of clothyge, saue the fyre in whych they brenne, and other fylthes: & naked shall they be of soule, of all maner of vertues, whyche that is the clothynge of the soule. Where bene then the gaye robes, the softe shetes, and the smale shertes. Lo, what sayeth God of hem by the prophete Isaye, that vnder hem shall be strewed moughtes, and her couertures shall be of wormes of hell. Also her mysease shalbe in defaut of frendes for he is not poore that hath good frendes, but there is no frende, for neyther God ne no creature shalbe frende to them, & eche of hem shall hate other wyth deedly hate: The sonnes and the doughters shall rebell ayenst father and mother, and kynrede ayenst kynred, chyde & dispyse eche other, both daye & nyght as god sayeth by the prophete Micheas: And the louynge chyldrē ꝑ whylom loued so flesh-lye eche other, wolde eche of hem eate other yf they myght. For howe shulde they loue together in the paynes of hell, whē they hated eche other ī ꝑ prospe rite of this life: for trust wel, her flesh ly loue was deadly hate. As sayeth the prophet Dauid: who so ꝑ loueth wyckednesse, he hateth his soule, & who so hateth hys owne soule, certes he may loue none other wyght in no maner: And therfore in hel is no solace ne no frendschyp, but euer ꝑ more kynredes that ben in hel, the more cursynges the more chydynges, and ꝑ more deedly hate there is amonge them. Also they shal haue defaute of all maner delyces, for certes delyces ben after the appetites of the fyue wittes: as syght, hearynge, smellynge, sauourynge, and touchynge. But in hell her syght shalbe ful of derkneſſe and of smoke, & therfore full of teares, and her hearynge full of waylynge and gryntynge of tethe: As sayeth Jesu Christe. Her nostrylles shalbe ful of stynkynge. And as sayeth Isaye the prophete: Her sauourynge shalbe full of bytter gall, and as touchynge of al her bodyes, ycouered wyth fyre that neuer shall quenche, and wyth wormes that neuer shall dye. As God sayeth by the mouthe of Isaye: and for as moche as they shall not wene that they maye dye for payne, and by death flye fro payne, that maye they vnderstande in the wordes of Job, that sayeth: There is the shadowe of deathe. Certes a shadowe hath the lykenes of the thynge of whych it is shadowed, but shadowe is not ꝑ same thynge of whych it is shadowed: ryght so fareth the payne of hel, it is lyke death, for the horrible anguysche. And why? For it payneth hem euer as though they shulde dye anone, but certes they shal not dye. For as sayeth saynt Gregory to wretched caytyfes shall be death wythout death, & ende wythout end & defaute wythout fayling, for her death shal alway lyue, & her ende shall euer more begyn and her defaute shal not fayle.

And therfore sayeth saynt John the Euangelyst, they shal folowe death and they shall not fynde hym, and they shall desyre to dye, & death shall flye fro hem. And also Job sayeth, that in hel is no ordre of rule. And al be it so, that God hath create al thynge in ryghte order, and nothynge wythout order, but all thynges ben ordred and nombred, yet natheless they that ben dampned ben nothynge in order, ne hold none order, for the erth ne shal beare hem no frute. For as the prophete Dauid sayeth: God shall destroye the frute of the earth, as for hem, ne water, ne shal yeue hem no moysture, ne the eyre no refreschynge, ne fyre no lyght. For as sayeth saynt Basilie: The brennynge of the fyre of thys worlde shal God yeue in hell to hem that bene dampned, but the lyght and the clerenesse shall he yeue in heauen to hys chyldren: ryghte as good men yeue flesche to her chyldren, and bones to her houndes. And for they shal haue none hope to escape, sayeth saynt Job at last

last, that there shal ertour and grisly drede dwell without ende. Horrour is alway dred that is to come, and this drede shal alwaye dwell in the hertes of hem that be damned. And therfore haue they lost all her hope, for vii. causes. First for god ȳ is her iuge shalbe without mercye to hem, and they maye not please hym ne none of his sayncte, ne they maye not gyue nothyng for her raunsom, ne they shall haue no voyce to speke to hym, ne they may not flye fro payne, ne they haue no goodnesse in hem, that they maye shewe to delyuer hem fro payne. And therfore sayeth Salomon: The wycked man dyeth, & whā he is deed, he shal haue no hope to escape fro payne. who so than wolde wel vnderstonde the paynes, and bethynke hym well that he hath deserued those paynes for his synnes, certes he shuld haue more talēt to sygh and wepe, than for to synge and playe. For as sayth Salomon: whoso that had the sciēce to knowe the paynes that ben ordeyned for synne, he wolde make sorowe. That science, as sayeth sayncte Austyn, maketh a man to weyment in his herte.

The fourth poynt that ought to make a man haue contrition, is the sorow full remembraunce of the good that he hath lefte to do here in erthe, and also the good that he hath loste. Sothlye the good werkes that he hath left, eyther they be the good werkes that he wroughte er he fyll in deedly synne, or els the good werkes that he wrought whyle he laye in synne. Sothlye the good werkes that he dyd before that he fell in synne ben all mortifyed astonyed and dull by oft synnynge. The werkes that he dyd whyle he laye in syne be deed, as to the lyfe perdurable in heuen: than the good werkes that ben mortifyed by oft synning, whiche he dyd beinge in charitie, may not quyck ayen without very penitēce. And of it sayth God by the mouth of Ezechiel: Yf the ryght full man returne ayen fro his ryghtousnesse and do wyckednesse, shall he lyue? nay, for al the good werkes that he hath done shal neuer be in remembraunce, for he shall dye in his synne. And vpon that chapter sayth S. Gregorye thus, that we shall vnderstonde this principally: Yf that we don deedly syn, it is for nought than, to reherse or drawe in to memory the good werkes that we haue wrought before: for certes in the werkynge of deedlye syn, there is no truste in no good werke that we haue done before: that is to saye, as for to haue therby the lyfe perdurable in heuē. But natheleſſe the good werkes quycken and come agayne, and helpe and auayle to haue the lyfe perdurable in heuen, whan we haue contrition: But sothlye the good werkes that men do whyle they be in deedly synne, for as moch as they wer don in deedly syn, they may neuer quycke: for certes, thynge that neuer had lyfe, maye neuer quycke: And natheleſſe, al be it that they auayle not to haue the lyfe perdurable, yet auayle they to abredge of the payne of hel, or els to get tēporall rychesses, or els that god wol the rather enlumyn or lyght the hert of the synful man to haue repentaūce, and eke they auayl for to vse a man to do good werkes, that the fende haue the lesse power of his soule. And thus the curteys Lorde Jesu Christ ne wol that no good werke be lost for in somwhat it shal auayle. But for as moch as the good werkes that men done whyle they ben in good lyfe, ben all amortified by syn folowyng: & also syth that all the good werkes that men don whyle they ben in deedly syn ben vtterly deed, as for to haue ȳ lyfe perdurable: wel may that man that no good werke ne doeth, synge that stresche newe songe (Jay tout perdu mon temps, et mon labure). For certes synne byreueth a man bothe the goodnesse of nature, and also the goodnesse of grace. For sothlye the grace of the holye ghooste fareth lyke fyre that maye not be ydle, for fyre fayleth anon as it forletteth his werkyng: and ryght so grace fayleth anon as it forletteth his werkynge. Than leseth the synfull man the goodnesse of glory, that onely is behyght to good men that labour and werke. wel maye he be sory than that oweth all hys lyfe to God as lōge as he hath lyued, & also as longe as he shall lyue, that no goodnesse ne hath to pay with his det to God, to whome he oweth all hys lyfe: for trust well he shall yeue accōptes, as sayth saynet Bernarde, of the goodes that haue ben yeue hym in this present lyfe, and how he hath hem dispēded, insomoch ȳ ther shall not perysh an heer of his heed, ne a moment of an houre, ne shal not perisshe of hys tyme, that he ne shall yeue of it a rekenynge.

THe fyfth thynge that ought to moue a man to contrition, is remembraunce of the passion that our Lorde Jesu Christ suffred for our synnes. For as sayth saynt Bernard whyle that I lyue I shall haue remēbraūce of the trauayles that our Lord Jesu christ suffred in preachyuge, his werynesse in trauaylynge: his temptations whan he fasted his longe wakynges whan he prayed, hys teares whan that he wept for pytie of good people, the wo, the shame, and the fylth that men sayde to hym: of the foule spyttynge that men spyt in his face, of the buffettes ý men yaue hym: of the foule mowes, and of the reproues that men sayde to hym, of the nayles wyth whiche he was nayled to the crosse, and of all the remnaunt of his passion that he suffred for my synnes, and nothyng for his gylt. And ye shal vnderstond, that in mans synne is euerye maner ordre or ordynaunce turned vp so downe. For it is soth, that god, reason, sensualitie, and the body of man, bene ordayned that eche of these foure thynges shoulde haue lordshyppe ouer that other: as thus. God should haue lordshyppe ouer reason, and reason ouer sensualytye, and sensualitie ouer the body of man. But sothly whan man synneth, all this ordre or ordinaunce is turned vp so downe. And therfore than, for as moche as reason of man ne woll not be subiect ne obeysaūt to god, that is his Lorde by ryght, therfore leseth it the lordshyppe that it shulde haue ouer sensualytie, and also ouer the bodye of man. And why-for sensualitie rebelleth then ayenst reson: and by that way ledeth reson the lordshyp ouer sensualitie and ouer the body: For ryght as reason is rebell to god, ryght so is both sensualitie rebell to reason, & to the body also. And certes this disordinaunce and this rebellion our Lord Jesu Christ bought vpon his precious body full dere: & hearken in what wyse. For as moche than as reason is rebel to god, therfore is man worthye to haue sorowe & to be deed. This suffred oure Lord Jesu Christ for man, after that he had be betrayed of his disciple, & distrayned and bound, so that his bloude brast out at euery nayle of his hondes, as sayth s. Austin. And ferthermore, for as moche as reason of man wol not daunt sensualite, when it may, therfore is man worthye to haue shame: & thys suffred our Lord Jesu christ for man, whan they spyt in his visage. And ferthermore for as moch thā as the caytif body of man is rebel both to resō & to sensualitie, therfore it is worthy death: & this suffred our Lord Jesu Christ vpon the crosse, where as there was no parte of his bodye free withoute greate payne & bytter passyon: and all this suffred our Lord Jesu Christ that neuer forfayted And therfore resonably maye be sayd of Jesu in this maner: To moch am I pained for thinges that I neuer deserued, and to moch defouled for shame that man is worthye to haue: And therfore may the synful man wel say, as saynt Bernarde. Accursed be the bytternesse of my synne, for which ther must be suffred so moche bitternesse. For certes after the dyuers discordaunce of our wickednesse was the passyon of Jesu Christe ordayned in dyuers thynges: as thus. Certes synfull mans soule is betrayed of the deuyll by couetyse of temporal prosperitie, & scorned by disceyte when that he cheseth fleshly desyres, & yet it is turmented by impatience of aduersitie, & bespet by seruage & subiection of syn, and at the last it is slayne fynallye. For this disordinaūce of synful man was Jesu christ betrayed, & after ý was he boūde, that came for to vnbynde vs of synne & of payne. Than was he bescorned, ý only shuld haue be honoured in al thinges. Thā was his bysage that ought to be desyred to be sene of al mākynde, in which visage angels desire to loke bylaynly bespet. Than was he scourged ý nothing had trespassed, and finally thā was he crucifyed and slayne. Than was accōplisshed the wordes of Esay: He was woūded for our mysdedes, and defoyled for our felonies. Now sith that Jesu christ toke on him the paines of our wickednesses, moch ought synful man wepe and bewayle, that for hys synnes Gods sonne of heuen, should al this payne endure.

THe first thing that shuld meue a man to cōtrition, is ý hope of thre thinges, that is to say forgeuenesse of syn, and ý yeft of grace for to do well, and ý glory of heuen w̄ which God shall rewarde man for his good dedes: and for as moche as Jesu christ yeueth vs these yeftes of his

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lar genesse & of his souerayn boũty, therfore is he called (Jesus Nazarenus rex Judeorũ) Jesus is to saye, sauyour or saluaciõ, on whom men shall hope to haue forgyueuenesse of synnes, which that is proprely saluacion of synnes. And therfore said the angel to Joseph: thou shalte call his name Jesus, that shall saue his people of her synnes. And her of sayth S. Peter: There is none other name vnder heuen ỳ is yeue to any man, by which a man maye be saued, but only Jesus. Nazarenus is as moche for to saye, as florysching in which a mã shal hope, that he that yeueth hym remyssyon of synnes, shall yeue hym also grace well for to do. I was at the dore of thyne herr, sayth Jesus, & called for to enter he that openeth to me shal haue forgyueuenes of synne. I wyl entre to hym by my grace, & suppe with hym by the good werkes, that he shall do, whiche werkes ben the foode of the soul, & he shal suppe with me by ỳ great ioye that I shal yeue hym. Thus shall man hope for his werkes of penaunce, that God shall yeue hym hys reygne, as he behyghte hym in the gospell. Now shal a man vnderstonde in whiche maner shall be his contrycion: I saye that it shalbe vniuersall and totall, this is to saye: a man shalbe very repentaunt for all his synnes that he hath done in delyte of his thought, for it is ryght perylous. For there ben two maner of consentinges, that one of hem is called consentyng of affection, whan a man is moued to do syn, and than delyteth hym longe for to thynke on that synne, and his reason apperceyueth it well that it is synne ayenst the law of god and yet his reason refrayneth not his foule delyte or talent, though he se well apertlye, that it is ayenste the reuerence of God, although his reason ne consent not to do that synne in dede, yet saye some doctoures that suche delyte that dwelleth longe is ful perilous, albeit neuer so lytle. And also a man shoulde sorowe, namely for all that euer he hath desyred ayenst the lawe of God, wyth perfyt consentyng of his reason, for thereof is no doubt that it is deedly synne in consentyng: for certes there is no deedly synne, but that it is fyrste in mans thought, and after that in his delyte, and so forth into consentynge and into dede: wherfore I saye that many mẽ ne repẽt hem neuer of such thoughtes and delytes, ne neuer shryue hym ofit, but onelye of the dede of greate synnes outwarde: wherfore I saye that suche wycked delytes bene subtyll begylers of them that shalbe dampned. Moreouer, man ought to sorowe for his wycked wordes as well as for hys wycked dedes: for certes the repentaũce of a synguler syn, and not repentaunt of all his other synnes, or els repent hym of all his other synnes, and not of a syngular syn, may not auayle: For certes god almighty is all good, and therfore eyther he forgyueth all, or els ryght nought. And therfore sayth saynct Austyn: I wot certaynly that god is enemye to euery synner: and how thã he that obserueth one synne, shal he haue forgyueuenesse of those other synnes? Naye. And moreouer cõtrition shuld be wonder sorowfull and anguishous, & therfore yeueth hym God playnly hys mercy: And therfore whã my soule was anguysched and sorowfull wỡ in me, than had I remembraunce of God, that my prayer myght come to hym. Fertheremore, contrition must be contynuall, & that man haue stedfaste purpose to shryue hym, and to amende hym of his lyfe. For sothly whyle contrition lasteth, man maye euer hope to haue forgyueuenesse. And of thys cõmeth hate of synne, that destroyeth bothe synne in hym selfe, and also in other folke at hys power. For which sayeth Dauid: They that loue god hate wyckednesse: For to loue god is for to loue that he loueth, and hate ỳ he hateth. The last thynge that mẽ shal vnderstande is this. wherfore auayleth contrition. I saye the contrition somtyme delyuereth man fro synne: Of which Dauid sayth I saye, sayd Dauid: I purposed fermely to shryue me, and thou Lorde releaseddest my synne. And ryght so as contrition auayleth not without sad purpose of shrift if mã haue oportunitye, ryght so lytle worth is shryfte or satisfaction withoute contrition. And moreouer contrition destroyeth the prisõ of hell, & maketh weake and feble all the strengthes of the deuylles, and restoreth the yeftes of the holy ghost and of al good vertues and it clenseth the soule of syn, & delyuereth it fro the payne of hell, & fro the company of the dyuel, and fro the seruage of synne, and restoreth it to all goodes spiritueis, to the companye and communion of holy churche.

Ferthermore it maketh hym that whylom was sonne of yre, to be the sonne of grace. And all these thynges ben proued by holye wrytte. And therfore he that wolde set hys entent to these thynges he were full wyse, for truly he ne shulde haue than in al his life corage to synne, but yeue his hert and body to serue Christ, and therof do hym homage For truly our Lord hath spared vs so meke lye in our follyes, that yf he ne had pytye of mannes soule, a sorye songe myghte we all synge.

¶ Explicit prima pars penitentie et incipit pars secunda.

THe seconde parte of penitence is confessyon, that is signe of contrition. Now shul ye vnderstōd what is confessyon, and yf it ought to be done or no, & which thynges be couenable to very confessyon. First shalt thou vnderstond ý confessyon is very shewyng of synnes to the prest: this is to saye very, for he must confesse hym of all the condicions that belonge to his synne, as ferforth as he can: al must be said, & nothing excused ne hydde, and not auaunt the of thy good werkes. Also it is necessary to vnderstonde whence that synnes spring, & howe they entre, and which they ben. Of the sprinyng of synnes sayeth saynt Poule in thys wyse: that rygh as by one man, syn entred first into this worlde, and through syn deth rygh so the deth entreth into all men that synne, and this man was Adam, by whom synne entred into this world, whē he brake the commaundement of God. And therfore he that first was so mighty that he ne shuld haue dyed, becam so that he must nedes dye whether he wolde or no, and all his progeny in this worlde that in the sayd man synned. Loke that in the state of innocency whē Adam and Eue were naked in paradyse, & shamed not therof, how the serpent wylyest of all other beastes that god made, sayde to the woman: why commaunded god you ý ye shulde not eate of euery tree in paradyse? The woman answered: Of the frute sayde she of the trees of paradyse we fede vs, but of the frute of the mydle tre of paradyse god forbod vs to eat & touche, lest we shuld dye. The serpent sayd to the woman. Nay nay, ye shall not dye of death, forsoth god wotte that what daye that ye eat therof, your eyē shall open, and ye shalbe as goddes, knowing good and harme. The woman thā saw that the tree was good to fedyng, and fayr to the eyen, and delectable to syght, she toke of the frute of the tree and ate, & yaue to her husbonde, and he ate, and anon the eyen of hem both opened: And whā that they knew that they wer naked, they sowed of fyggeleues in maner of breches to hyde her mēbres There maye ye se that deedly syn hath first suggestion of the fende as sheweth here by the adder, and afterwarde the delyte of the flesh, as sheweth by Eue, and after that consentyng of reason, as sheweth here by Adā. For trust wel though so it were that ý fend tempted Eue, that is to say the flesh, and the flesche had delyte in the beautye of the frute defended, yet certes tyll that reason, that is to say Adam, consented to the eatyng of the frute, yet stode he in the state of innocencie. Of the sayd Adam toke we the sayde original syn of hym fleshly discended be we all, & engendred of vyle and corrupte mater: And whan the soule is put in oure bodyes, right anon is contract original syn, and that that was erst but onely payne of concupiscence is afterward both payne and syn, and therfore we bene all borne sonnes of wrath, and of dampnatiō perdurable, if it nere baptym that we receyue, whiche benymmeth vs the coulpe but forsoth the pyne dwelleth wyth vs as to temptation, which pyne hyght concuppyscence. This concupiscence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordayned in man, it maketh hym coueyte by couetysye of flesche fleshly synne by syght of his eyen, as to erthlye thynges, and also couetyse of hyghnesse by pryde of herte.

Now as to speake of the first couetisethat is concupiscence, after the lawe of our membres that were lawfully made, and by right ful iudgement of God: I saye for as moche as man is not obeysaunte to God, that is his Lorde, therfore is the flesh to hym disobeysaunt through concupiscence, whiche is called norysthing of synne, and occasyon of synne. Therfore all the whyle that a man hath within him the pyne of concuppyscence it is impossyble but he be tēpted somtyme & moued in his flesche to syn. And this thynge

maye

may not fayle as long as he lyueth. It may wel ware feble by vertue of baptim, and by the grace of god through penitence, but fully ne shall it neuer quenche that he ne shall somtyme be moued in him self, but if he wer al refrayned by sycknesse or by malyce of sorcery or colde drynkes. For lo, what sayth s. Poule: the flesh coueteth ayenst the spyryte and the spyrite ayenst the flesh: they bene so contrary & so stryuen, that a man maye not alway do as he wold. The same saynt poul after his greate penaunce, in water, and in londe: in water by night & by day, in greate peryl and in great pyne. In londe, famyne & thyrst, colde, and clothlesse, & ones stoned al most to deth. Yet (sayde he) alas, I caytyfe man, who shall delyuer me fro the prison of my caytyfe body. And saynt Jerom whē he longe tyme had dwelled in desert, where as he had no companye but of wylde beastes, where as he had no meate but herbes & water to drink, ne bed but the naked erth, wherfore his flesshe was blacke as an Ethiopien for hete and nye distroyed for colde. Yet sayd he, that the brennyng of lechery boyled in al his body: wherfore I wot well that they be disceyued that saye, they be not tempted in her bodyes. wytnesse saynt James ý sayeth that euerye wyght is tempted in hys owne conscięce, that is to say: that eche of vs hath mater and occasion to be tempted of the norysching of syn tha[t] is in his body. And therfore sayth saynt John the euangelist: yf we say that we ben without synne, we disceyue our self, and truthe is not in vs. Now shall ye vnderstonde how syn wexeth and encreaeth in man. The first thing is the same norysching of syn of which I spoke before, the fleshlye cōcupiscence, and after that cōmeth suggestyon of the deuil, this is to say the deuyls belous, with which he bloweth in mā the fire of cōcupiscence, and after that a mā bethinketh him wheder he wyll do or no, ý thing to which he is tēpted. And then yf a man withstōd & weyue the first entisyng of his flesshe, & of the fende, thā it is no syn, & yf so be he do not, thā feleth he anon a flame of delite, & thā it is good to beware & kepe him well, or els he wyll fall anon, to cōsentynge of syn, & than wyll he do it yf he maye haue tyme & place. And of this mater sayth Moses by the deuyll, in this maner: ý fēd sayth, I wyll chace & pursue man by wycked suggestyon, & I wyll take hym by mouyng and steryng of syn, & I woll depart my pryse of my praye by delyberation, and my lust shal be accōplyched in delyte: I wyll drawe my sworde in consentynge. For certes, ryght as a swerde departeth a thynge in two peces, ryght so cōsentyng departeth god fro man, & than wyl I sle hym with my hond in dede of syn: thus sayth the fende. For certes than is a man all deed in soule, & thus is syn accōplyched with temptation by delyte & consentyng: & than is the syn actual. Forsoth syn is in two maners, eyther it is venyall or deedly syn. Sothlye whan man loueth any creature more then Jesu Chryste our creatour, than it is deedly synne, & venyall synn it is, yf man loue Jesu chryst lesse thā him ought. Forsoth the dede of this venyal syn is ful perylous, for it mynisheth the loue that man shuld haue to god more and more. And therfore yf a man charge hym selfe with manye suche venyall synnes: certes but if so be that he somtyme discharge hym of hem by shryft They may ful lyghtly mynysh in hym al the loue that he hath to Jesu Christ, and in this wyse skyppeth venyall synne into deedly sin For certes, the more that a man chargeth his soule with venyall synnes, the more he is enclyned to fall into deedlye synne. And therfore lette vs not be neglygent to charge vs of venyal synnes. For the prouerbe sayth that many small make a great. Herken this ensample. A greate dawe of the see commeth sometyme with so greate a vyolence, that it drowneth the shyppe. And the same harme do somtyme the smal droppes of water that entreth through a lytle creueys, into the tymbre and to the botume of the shyp, yf men be so geglygent, that they dyscharge hem not bytymes. And therfore althoughe there be a dyfference betwyxt these two causes of drownynge, allgates the shyppe is drowned. Ryghte so fareth it sometyme of deedlye synne, and of anoyous venyall synnes, whan they multyplye in man so greatlye, that those worldlye thynges that he loueth, through whyche he synneth venyally, is as great in his herte as the loue of God, or more: and therfore the loue of euery thing that is not beset in God, ne done pryncipallye for Goddes sake, althoughe that a man

loue it selfe then God: yet is it venyal synne and deedly synne whē the loue of any thing weyeth in the hert of man as moche as the loue of God or more. Deedly synne as sayth saynct Austyn is when a man turneth hys hert fro God: which that is very souerayne bounty that maye not chaunge: and gyueth his hert to a thyng that may chaunge & flit and certes that is euery thyng saue God of heauen. For sothe is that if a manne gyue hys loue whyche that he oweth to God, with all his hert vnto a creature: certes as moche of loue as he yeueth to that same creature so moche he bereueth fro God: & therfore doth he synne. For he that is dettour to God ne yeldeth not to god al his det that is to saye: al the loue of his hert. Now sith mā vnderstandeth generally whiche is venyall syn, then it is couenable to tell specyallye of synne which that many a mā peraduenture demeth hem no synnes: & shryueth hym not of the same thinges: & yet neuertheleſſe they be synnes sothly as these clerkes write that is to saye. At euery tyme that man eateth or drinketh more then suffiseth to ý sustenaūce of his body in certayne he doth synne: & also when he speaketh more then it nedeth it is sinne. Also when he herkeneth not benignly the cōplaynt of the pore. Also when he is in heale of body: and wol not fast when other folkes faste withoute cause resonable: also when he slepeth more then nedeth: or when he cōmeth perchaūce to late to church: or other werkes of charitie. Also when he vseth his wyfe without souerayne desyre of engē dure to the honour of god: or for the entent to yelde to his wyfe dette of his body. Also when he wol not vysit the sycke or the prisoner: yf he maye. Also yf he loue wyfe or child or other wordly thyng more then reason requyreth. Also yf he flatter or blandyse more then him ought for any necessitye. Also yf he minish or withdrawe ý almesse of the pore. Also if he apparel his meat more deliciously then nede is or eate to hastelye by lycorousnes. Also yf he talke vanityes at churche or at gods seruise, or that he be a talker of ydle wordes, of foly or vylanye, for he shal yelde accomptes of it at the daye of dome. Also when he behyghteth or assureth to do thynges that he may not performe. Also when ý he by lyghtnesse or folye mysayeth or scorneth his neighbour. Also when he hath any wicked suspection of any thynge that he ne wot of sothfastnesse. These thinges and mo without nōbre be synnes as sayth s. Austyn Now shal men vnderstande that albeit so ý none erthly man maye eschue al venyal synnes, yet maye he refrayne hym by the brennyng loue ý he hath to our lord Jesu chryst and by prayers and confession & other good werkes, so that it shalbe but lytle greſe. For as saeth s. Austin: yf a man loue god in such maner, that al that euer he doth is the loue of god, or for ý loue of god verely, for he brēneth in the loue of god: loke how moch that one droppe of water whiche doth fal into a great furneys ful of fyre anoyeth or greueth the brennyng of the fyre: in lyke maner anoyeth or greueth a venyall syn vnto that mā which is stedfast and perfyte in the loue of our sauyour Jesu Chryst. Ferthermore mē maye also refrayne and put awaye venyall syn, by commenyng and receyuing worthely the body of our sauyour Jesu Chryst. Also by takynge of holy water, by almesdede, by general confessyon of Confiteor at masse and at complyn, & by blessynges of bysshops and prestes, and other good werkes.

This is a cautorbury tale.

¶ De septem peccatis mortalibus, et de eorum dependentiis circumstantis et speciebus.

Now is it expediēt to tel which bene the seuen deedly synnes, that is to saye, the chefetayns of synnes. All they renne in o lees, but in dyuers maners.

Now bene they called seuen Cenes, for as moch as they be chefe, & spryngе of al other synnes. Of the roote of these seuen synnes, then is pryde the general rote of al harmes For of this rote spryngeth certen braūches: as yre, enuy, accidie or slouth, auarice, or couetyse, to cōmē vnderstanding glotony and lechery: And eche of these chefe synnes haue her braunches and twigges, as it shalbe declared in her chapiters folowynge. And though so be ý noman can vtterly tel the nōbre of twigges, and of the harmes that com of pryde: yet wol I shew a parte of hem, as ye shall vnderstonde. There is Inobedience

auaun-

auauntyng, ypocrisy, dispite, errogance, impedence, swellyng of hert, insolence, elation, impacience, strife, contumacy, presumption irreuerence, pertinacy, veyne glory, and many other twygges that I can not declare.
Inobedience is he that disobeyeth for dispyte the commaundementes of God, to his souerains, and to his gostly father. Auaunter is he that bosteth of the harme or of the boute that he hath done. Ipocrite is he that hideth to shewe hym such as he is, and sheweth hym to seme such as he is not. Dispitous is he that hath disdayne of hys neighbour, that is to saye, of hys euyn christen, or hath dispite to do that hym ought to do. Errogance is he that thynketh ý he hath those boūties in hym that he hath not, or weneth that he shulde haue hem by hys desertes, or els that he demeth he is that he is not. Impedent is he, ý for hys pride hath no shame of hys pride ne synne. Swellyng of hert, is whan man reioyseth hym of harme that he hath done. Insolence is he that dispiceth in his iudgement all other folke, as in regard of his value, of hys conyng, of hys spekyng and of hys berynge. Elation is whan he ne may neither suffre to haue maister ne felow Impacient is he that wyl not be taught ne rebuked of hys vyce, and by stryfe denyeth trouth wyttyngly, and defendeth hys foly. Contumaxe is he that throughe hys indignation is ayenst euerye auctorite or power of hem that ben hys souerayns. Presumption is whā a man vndertaketh an empryse that him ought not to do or els that he may nat do, and this is called surquidie. Irreuerence is, whan manne dothe not honoure there as hym ought to do, and loke to be reuerenced. Pertinacye is whan men defende her foly, & trust to much on her owne witte. Vaynglory is for to haue pompe and delite in hys temporel hynesse, and glorye hym in worldlye estates. Janglynge is whan men speke to much before folke and clappeth as a myl, and take no kepe what they say. And yet is there a priuy spice of pride, that wayteth first to be salewed or he woll salue, all be he lesse worthy thā that other is. And also he wayteth or desyreth to sytte, or els to go aboue hym in the waye, or kysse pax, to be encensed, or go to offrynge before hys neyghbour, and such semblable thynges ayenst his dutie parauēture, but that he hath hys hert and hys entente, in suche a proude desyre to be magnyfyed and honoured before the people. Nowe bene here two maners of prides. One of hem is wythin the hert of a man, and that other is wythout.
Of whych forsayd thynges sothlye and mo than I haue sayd apertayn to pride, that is in the hert of man, and other spices of pride ben wythout, but nathles, that one of these spices of pride is signe of that other, ryghte as the gay leuesel at the tauerne, is signe of the wyne that is in the celer. And thys is in many thynges: as in speche & coūtenance & outragious aray of clothyng: For certes, yf ther had ben no syn in clothing, Christ wold not so sone haue noted and spoken of the clothyng of the ryche men in the gospell. And as saint Greg. saith that precious clothing is culpable, for the derth of it & for his softnesse, and for hys straungenesse and disguisyng: and for the superfluite, or for the inordinate scantnesse of it. Alas, may nat a man se in our dayes the synfull costlye arraye of clothyng, and namely in to much superfluite, or elles in to disordinate scantnesse. As to the fyrst synne in superfluite of clothynge suche that maketh it so dere to the harme of the people, not only the cost of imbroydyng the disguysed endendyng, or barringe, oundyng, palyng, wyndynge, or bendynge, and semblable wast of cloth in vanite. But there is also the costlye furrynge in her gowneſ, so much ponsyng of chesel to make hooles, so much daggyng of sheres forche, with the superfluite in lengthe of the forsayd gownes, traylyng in the donge & in the myre, on horse and also on fote, as well of man as of woman. That all that traylynge is verilye as in effecte wasted, consumed thredebare & rotten wyth donge, rather than it is yeue to the poore, to greate damage of the forsayde pore folke, & ý in sōdrie wise, thys is to saye that the more the cloth is wasted, the more muste it coste the poore people for the scarsnesse. And moreouer, yf so be that they wold yeue such pounced and dagged clothyng to the poore people, it is not cōuenient to were for her estate, ne sufficient to her necessite, to kepe hem fro the distemperaunce of the firmament. Upon that other syde, to speke of ý horrible disordinate scātnesse, of clothinge

as ben these cutted sloppes or hanselines, ý
through her shortnes couer not the shamful
mẽbres of mã, to wicked intent. Alas, some
of hem shew the bosse of her shap, & the horib-
le swole membres that semeth like to ma-
lady of hernia, in the wrappyng of her hosẽ
& also the buttockes of hem fare as it were
the hynder parte of a she ape in the ful of the
mone. And moreouer the wretched swollen
mẽbres that they shewe through disguising
in departing of her hosen, in white and reed
semeth that halfe her shameful preuy mem
bres were flayne. And yf so be that they de-
part her hosen in other colours, as is white
& blew, or whyte and blacke, or blacke & red
and so forth: Thã semeth it as by variaũce
of colour that ý halfe part of her preuy mẽ-
bres, ben corrupt by the fyre of saynt Antho
ny, or by canker, or other such mischaunce.
Of the hinder part of her buttockes it is ful
horrible for to se, for certes in that parte of
her body there as they purge her stynkynge
ordure, that foule partie shew they to ý peo-
ple proudly in dispite of honestie, which ho-
nestie that Jesu Christ and hys frendes ob-
serued to shewe in her life. Now as the out-
ragious araye of women, God wotte that
thoughe ý visages of some of hem seme full
chast, & debonayre, yet notify in her araye or
atyre, licorousnes & pride: I say not that ho
nestie in clothing of mã or woman is vnco-
uenable, but certes the superfluitie of diso-
dinate quantite of clothynge is reprouable.
Also the syn of ornement or of apparayle is
in thinges that apertayne to rydynge, as in
companye, delicate horses that bene holden
for delite, that ben so fayre, fatte, & costlye, &
also in many a nyce knaue, that is sustenned
bicause of hem, in curious harneis, as in sa-
dels, cropers, peytrels, & bridels couered w̃
precious clothing, & rich barres of plates of
gold & of siluer. For which god sayth by za-
charye the prophete, I woll confounde the
ryders of such horses. These folke take lytel
regarde of the riding of goddes sonne of he-
uen, and of hys harneys whan he rode vpõ
the asse, and non other harneys but the pore
clothes of his disciples, ne we rede not that
euer he rode on other beest. I speke thys for
the synne of superfluitie, and not for resona-
ble honestye, whan reason it requireth. And
moreouer, certes pryde is greatly notyfyed
in holdynge of great meyny, whan they ben
of lytle profyte, or of ryght no profyte, and
namely whan that meyne is felonous and
dammageous to the people by hardynes of
hygh lordshyp, or by waye of offyces. For
certes such lordes sell thã her lordshyppe to
the dyuel of hell, whã they sustayne the wic
kednesse of her meyne. Or els, whan these
folke of lowe degree: as those that kepe ho-
stelries, sustayne these of the hostelers, and
that is in manye maner of disceytes: those
maner of folke ben the flyes that folow the
hony, or els the houndes that folow the ca-
rayn. Such forsaid folke strangel spirituel-
ly her lordshyps: For such, thus sayeth Da-
uid the prophete, wicked death might come
on those lordships, and God gyue that they
might discend in to hel, all down: For in her
houses bene iniquities and shreudnesse, and
not god of heuen. And certes, tyll they done
amendemẽt, right as god yaue hys blessing
to Pharao by the seruice of Jacob, & to La-
ban, by the seruice of Joseph: Ryght so god
wol yeue hys curse to such lordshyps, as su-
stayn the wyckednes of her seruauntes, but
they come to amendement. Pride of the ta-
ble appeareth also full ofte: for certes, ryche
men ben called to festes, and pore folke bene
put awaye & rebuked. And also in excesse of
diuers meates and drynkes, & namely such
maner bake meates & dishemetes brenning
of wylde fyre: peynted and castelled wyth
paper and semblable waste, so that it is ab-
usyon to thynke. And also in to greate pre-
cyousnesse of vessell and curiosytye of my-
stralcye, the whyche a man is sterred more
to delyces of lecherye, yf so be he sette hys
herte the lesse vpon oure Lorde Jesu Christ
certaynlye it is a synne. And certaynlye
the delyces myght be so greate in thys case,
that a man myghte lyghtlye fall by hem in
to a deadly synne. The especes that sourde
of pride, sothly whan they sourde of malyce
ymagined, auysed, and forecaste, or els of vs-
age ben deedly syn, it is no dout. And whã
they sourde by freelte vnauysed sodenlye, &
sodenlye wythdrawe ayene, all be they gre-
uouse synnes, I gesse that they be nat deed-
ly. Now might mẽ aske, wherof that pride
sourdeth and springeth. I saye that sõtyme
it springeth of the goodes of nature, som-
tyme of the goodes of fortune, and sõtyme
of the

of the goodes of grace. Certes the goodes of nature stondeth only in goodes of bodye, or goodes of ý soule. Certes goodes of the body bene heel of body, strength, deliuernes beautie, gentry, frãchise. Goodes of nature of the soule, ben good with sharpe vnderstãdyng, subtel engin, vertue naturel, good memory. Goodes of fortune, be ryches, hye degrees of lordships, praysyngs of the people Goodes of grace: bene science, power to suffer spouuell traueyle, benigne, vertuous cõtemplation, vnderstanding of temptation & semblable thynges: of whych forsayd goodes: certes it is a full greate folye, a man to haue pride in any of hem all. Nowe, as for to speke of goodes of nature, God wot, that somtyme we haue hem in nature, asmoche to our damage as to our profyt. As to speke of heel of body, truly it passeth ful lyghtly, & also it is full oft occasion of sickenesse of the soule: for God wot ý flesche is a great enemy to the soule: & therfore the more that the body is hole, the more be we in peril to fal. Also for to haue pride in hys strength of body, it is an hie foly: for certes the flesche coueteth ayenst the spirite: & the more strõg the flesche is the sorier maye the soule be. And ouer all this strength of body & worldly hardinesse, causeth ful oft many man to perell and mischaunce, & also to haue pride of his gentry, is right great foly: for oftyme the gẽtry of ý body, taketh awey the gentry of the soule: & also we ben al of o father & mother: & all we ben of o nature rotten & corrupt, both rich & pore. For soth o maner gẽtry is for to praise that aparelleth mãnes courage: wyt vertue & moralite, maketh him Christes chyld. For trust well, that ouer what mã that syn hath maystry, he is a very churle to synne.

Nowe ben there general signes of gẽtlenes as eschewyng of vice & ribaudry, & seruage of syn: in worde, in werke, & countenaunce & vsyng of vertue, curtesy, & clennes, & to be liberal: that is to say, large by measure: for ý ý passeth measure, is foly & synne: Another is to remembre hym of boũtie, that he of other folke hath receiued: Another is to be benigne to hys good subiectes, wherfore sayth Senecke: there is nothyng more couenable to a mã of hygh estate, than debonairte and pite. And therfore these flyes that men call bees, whan they make her kynge, they chese one that hath no pricke, wherwyth he may stynge.

Another is, man to haue a noble hert & a diligent, to attayne to the hyghe vertuous thynges. Nowe certes, a man to haue pride in the goodes of grace, is also an outragious foly: for those gyftes of grace ý shulde haue tourned hym to goodnesse, and to medycen, tourneth hym to venym and confusion, as sayth saynte Greg. Certes also, who so hath pride in the goodnesse of fortune, he is a ful greate fole: For somtyme is a mã a greate lorde by the morne, that is a catyfe, and a wretche or it be nyght: and somtyme the ryches of a man is cause of his death. Somtyme the delyces of a man, is cause of a greuous melady throughe whyche he dyeth. Certes, the comendation of the people is somtyme full false and brotell for to trust Thys day they prayse, to morow they blame. God wot, desyre to haue cõmendation of the people, hath caused death to manye a busye man. Nowe syth that so it is, that ye haue vnderstande what is pride, and which be the speces of it, and whence it sourdeth & spryngeth: nowe ye shall vnderstand which is the remedy ayenst it. Humilytie or mekenesse is the remedye ayenst pride, ý is a vertue, through whyche a mã hath very knowledge of hym selfe, and holdeth of hym selfe no price ne deyntie, as in regarde of hys desertes, consyderynge euer hys freelte. Now bene there thre maner of humilytes: As humylyte in herte, another humylytye is in mouthe, and the thyrde is in workes. The humilytie in herte, is in four maners: That one is, whan a manne holdeth hym selfe as nought worth before God of heuen. The seconde is, whan he dispiceth none other man. The thyrde is, whan he ne recketh nat though men holde hym nought worth. And the fourth is, whã he is not sory of his humiliation. Also the humilitie of mouth is in four thynges. In a temperate speche, in humilitie of spech, & whã he cõfesseth with his owne mouth, that he is suche as him thynketh, that he is in his hert: Another is, whã he prayseth the bounte of another man & nothyng therof minysheth. Humilitye also in werke, is in foure maners. The fyrste is, whan he putteth other men before him, ý second is to chese the lowest place ouer al, the

thyrde

thyrde is, gladly to assent to good coũsayle, the fourth in, to stand gladly to the awarde of his souerains, or of him that is in hier degre. Certeyn this is gret werke of humilite.

¶ De Inuidia.

After Pride woll I speke of the foule synne of Enuye, whyche that is after the worde of the philosofer, sorow of other mennes prosperitie. And after the worde of saynt Augustin: it is sorowe of other mennes wele, & the ioy of other mẽnes harme. This foule synne is platly agaynste the holy ghost: al be it so, that euery synne is ayenst the holy gost: yet nathles, for asmoch as bounte apertayneth properly to the holy gost: & enuy cometh properly of malice, therfore it is properlye ayenst the bountie of the holy gost. Nowe hath malice two speces, ý is to say: hardines of herte in wickednes, or els the flesche of a man is so blynde, that he cõsidreth nat that he is in syn, or recketh nat ý he is in syn, which is the hardines of ý deuyl. That other spece of enuy is, whan that a mã denyeth trouth, whã he knoweth that it is trouth, & also whã he repenteth ý grace that God hath yeue to his neyghbour: & all this is by enuy. Certes, thã is enuy ý worst sinne that is, for sothly al other sinnes be cõtime onely ayenst o speciall vertue: but certes, enuy is against al vertues & al goodnes. For it is sory ayenst al boũties of her neighbour, & in this maner, it is diuers from al other synnes. Alas: for there ne is any synne that it ne hathe some delyte in it selefe, saue only enuy, that euer hath in it selfe anguishe & sorow. The speces of enuy ben these, there is fyrste sorowe of other mennes goodnesse and of her prosperitie, & prosperite is kyndlye mater of ioye: Than is enuye a synne ayenst kynde. The seconde spece of enuye, is ioy of other mennes harme, and that is properly lyke to the deuyll, that euer reioyseth hym of mannes harme. Of these two speces cometh bacbytynge, and thys synne of bacbytynge or detractynge hathe certayne speces, as thus: Some man prayseth hys neyghboure by a wycked entent, for he maketh alwaye a wycked knot at the last ende: alway he maketh a but at the last ende that is digne of more blame, thã is worth al the praysyng. The seconde spece is, that if a mã be good, or doth or sayeth a thynge to good entente, the backbyter woll turne al ý goodnesse vp so downe, to hys shreude entente. The thyrde is to amynishe the bountye of hys neyghbour. The fourth spece of backbytyng is thys, that yf men speke goodnesse of a man, than woll the backbiter saye: Perfay such a man is yet better than he, in dispraysynge of hym ý men prayse. The fylth spece is thys, for to cõsent gladly and herkẽ gladly to ý harme that men speke of other folke: Thys synne is ful great, and aye encreseth after the wycked entent of the backbiter. After backbytynge cometh grutching or murmuration, and somtyme it spryngeth of impacience ayenst God, and somtyme ayenst man. Ayenst God it is whan a man grutcheth ayenst payne of hel, or ayenst pouertie or losse of catel, or ayenst rayne or tempeste, or els grutcheth that shrewes haue prosperite, or els for that good mẽ haue aduersite: and all these thynges shulde men suffre paciently, for they come by the ryghtfull iudgement and ordinaunce of God. Somtime cometh grutching of auarice, as Judas grutched ayenst Maudelen, whan she anoynted the heed of our lorde Jesu Christe, with her precious oyntment. Thys maner murmurynge is suche, as whan man grutcheth of goodnes that hym selfe doth, or that other folke done of her owne catel. Somtyme cometh murmure of pride, as whan Symon the pharisee grutched ayenst Maudeleyn, whan she aproched to Jesu Christ & wepte at hys fete for her synnes. And somtyme it sourdeth of enuy, whã mẽ discouer a mans harme ý was priuy, or bereth him on hand a thing that is false. Murmure also is ofte among seruaũtes ý grutche whã her souerayne byd hem do lefull thynges, & for as much as they dare not opẽly wythsay ý cõmaũdemẽt of her souerayne, yet woll they say harme & grutche & murmure priuely for very dispite: which wordes they cal the dyuels pater noster, though so be that the dyuel had neuer pater noster, but ý leude folke yeueth it such a name. Somtyme it cometh of yre or priuy hate, ý nourysheth rancoure in the herte, as afterwarde I shall declare. Than cometh also bytternesse of herte, thorowe

rowe whych bytternesse euery good dede of hys neyghboure semeth to hym bitter & vnsauery. Than cometh discorde that vnbyndeth al maner of frendshyp. Than cometh scornyng of hys neyghbour, all do he neuer so well. Than cometh accusynge, as whan man seketh occasion to anoy his neighbour whych is lyke the craft of the dyuel, ý wayteth both daye and nyght to accuse vs all. Than cometh malignitie, through whyche a man anoyeth hys neyghbour priuely if he may: and yf he may not, algate hys wycked wyll shall not let as for to brenne his house priuely, or enpoyson or sle hys beastes, and semblable thynges. Nowe woll I speke of the remedye ayenst thys foule synne of enuy. First is the loue of God principally, and louyng of hys neyghbour as hym selfe: for sothly that one ne may not be wythout that other. And truste well that in the name of thy neyghbour thou shalte vnderstande the name of thy brother, for certes all we haue one father fleshly & one mother, ý is to saye, Adam & Eue, & also one father spirituell ý is God of heuen. Thy neyghboure art thou bounde for to loue, & wyll him all goodnesse & therfore sayth god: loue thy neighbour as thy selfe, ý is to saye, to saluatiõ both of lyfe & soule. And moreouer thou shalte loue hym in worde & in benigne admonyshynge & chastysyng, & comforte him in his noyaunces, & pray for him with al thy hert. And in dede thou shalte loue him in such wyse that thou shalt do to him in charitie, as thou woldest that it were done to thine owne person: and therfore thou ne shalt do hym no damage in wicked worde, ne harme in his bodye ne in his catel, ne in hys soule by entysyng of wicked ensample. Thou shalte not desyre hys wyfe ne none of hys thynges. Understande also that in the name of neyghbour is comprehẽded hys enemy: Certes man shal loue hys enemy by the commaundement of God and sothly thy frende thou shalt loue in god. I saye thine enemy shalt thou loue for goddes sake, by hys cõmaũdemẽt, for if it were reason that man shulde hate his enemy, forsoth god wolde not receyue vs to hys loue ý ben hys enemies. Ayenst thre maner of wrõges that his enemy doth to him, he shall do thre thynges, as thus: ayenst hate & rãcour of hert, he shal loue hym in hys hert: Ayenst chiding & wicked wordes, he shall praye for his enemy: Ayenst wicked dedes, he shal do him bountie. For Christe sayeth: Loue your enemies, & pray for hem ý speke you harme & for hem that chase and pursue you: and do bounte to hem ý hate you. Lo, thus cõmaũdeth vs our Lorde Jesu Christ to do to our enemies: For soth nature driueth vs to loue our frendes, and parfay our enemyes haue more nede of loue than our frendes, & they ý more nede haue, certes to hem shall men do goodnesse. And certes in that dede haue we remembraunce of the loue of Jesu Christ ý dyed for hys enemyes: And in asmuche as that loue is more greuous to perfourme, so much is the more gret the merite, & therfore the louyng of our enemye hath cõfounded ý dyuels venym: For ryght as the dyuel is cõfounded by humilitie, righte so is he wounded to the deth by the loue of our enemy, certes thã is loue the medicyn that casteth out the venym of enuie fro mannes herte. The speces of this place shall be more largely declared in her chapiters folowyng.

¶ De Ira.

After enuye wol I discriue the synne of Ire, for sothly who so hath enuye vpon hys neyghbour, anone he woll comenlye fynde hym a mater of wrathe in word or in dede, ayenst hym to whõ he hath enuye: And as wel cometh ire of pride as of enuy, for sothly he that is proud or enuyous is lyghtly wrothe. Thys synne of yre, after the discriuynge of saynte Austyn is wycked wyll to be auẽged by worde or by dede. Ire after the phylosopher, is the feruent bloude of mã yquycked in hys hert, through which he wolde harme to hym that he hateth: for certes the herte of man by eschaufynge and mouyng of hys bloude, wexeth so troubled that it is out of al maner of iugement of reason. But ye shal vnderstande ý ire is in two maners, that one of hem is good, & that other is wicked. The good ire is by ielousye of goodnes, through which a mã is wrothe with wickednes, & ayenst wickednesse. And therfore saith a wise man, that ire is bet thã playe. This ire is with debonairte, and it is wroth without bitternes, not wroth ayenst the man, but wrath with the mysdede of the

man: As saith the prophete Dauid: Irascimini, et nolite peccare. Nowe vnderstande that wicked ire is in two maners, that is to saye, sodayn ire or hasty ire wythout auysement & consentyng of reason: The meaning and the sence of this is, that the reason of a mã ne cõsent not to that sodayne ire, & than it is venyal. Another ire is ful wycked, that cometh of felony of hert, auysed and cast before, wyth wicked wyl to do vengeaunce, & therto his reason cõsenteth: and sothly thys is deedly synne. Thys ire is so displeasaunt to God, that it troubleth hys house, & chaseth the holy goste out of mans soule, & wasteth & distroyeth that likenesse of God, that is to say the vertue of that is in mans soule and putteth in hym the lykenesse of the dyuel, and taketh the man fro God that is his rightful lord. This is a ful great pleasaũce to the dyuell, for it is the dyuels fournayes that is eschauffed with the fyre of hell: For certes ryght so as fyre is more myghtye to distroy erthly thinges thã any other elemẽt ryght so ire is myghty to distroy al spirituel thynges. Loke how that fyre of smale coles that ben almost deed vnder asshen, woll reuyue or quycke ayen whan they bene touched wyth brymstone, right so ire wol euermore quyck ayen whan it is touched by the pride that is couered in mans hert. For certes fyre ne maye not come out of nothynge, but yf it were first in the same thinge naturally: as fyre is drawe out of flyntes wyth stele. And ryght so as pride is many tymes mater of ire, ryghte so is rancour nourice & keper of ire. There is a maner tree, as sayth saynt Isodore, ý whan a man maketh fyre of the sayd tree, & couer the coles of it wyth asshen, sothly the fyre of it wol last a yere or more: And right so fareth it of rãcoure whã it is ones conceyued in the hertes of some men, certes it wol last perauẽture from one Ester day vntyl another Ester day or more But certes that same man is ful ferre from the mercy of god al that whyle. In this forsayde dyuels fourneis there forge thre shrewes: Pride that aye bloweth & encreaseth the fyre by chiding & wicked wordes: Than standeth enuy & holdeth hote yron in ý fyre vpon the hert of man with a payre of longe tonges of long rãcour. And thã stãdeth the syn of cõtumely or strife & chest, & battereth and forgeth by vilaynous reprenuinges. Certes this cursed syn anoyeth both to the man hym selfe & also hys neyghbour. For sothly almoost al the harme or damage that anye mã doth to his neighbour cõmeth of wrath for certes outragious wrath dothe all that euer the foule fende willeth or cõmaundeth hym, for he ne spareth neither our lorde Jesu Christe, neyther his swete mother. And in hys outragiouse angre & yre, alas alas, ful many & diuers at that time, feleth in his hert ful wickedly both of Christ and also of al his halowes: Is not this a cursed vice yes certes. Alas it taketh fro mã his witte & hys reason, and all his debonayre lyfe spirituell that shulde kepe his soule. Certes it wythdraweth also goddes dewe lordshyp, and that is mans soule, and the loue of hys neighbours. It stryueth also all day ayenst trouth, it reueth him the quyete of his hert, & subuerteth hys soule. Of ire cõmeth these stinkinge engendrures. First hate, ý is olde wrath discord, through which a man forsaketh his olde frend ý he hath loued ful long And than cometh warre and euerye maner of wrong that a mã doth to his neyghbour in body or in catell. Of this cursed syn of ire cometh also mãslaughter. And vnderstand wel that homicide, that is manslaughter is in diuers wyse.

Some maner of homicide is spirituell and some is bodily. Spirituell manslaughter is in. vi. thynges. Fyrst by hate as sayth Saynte Johan: He that hateth hys brother, is an homicide. Homicede is also by backebytynge, of whyche backebytinge sayeth Salomon, that they haue two swordes, wyth whych they slee her neyghbours For sothlye as wycked is to take from hym hys good name as hys lyfe. Homicide is also in geuing of wycked counsel by fraude as for to geue counsayle to areyse wrongfull customes, and talages. Of whyche sayeth Salomon: A Lyon rorinde and a beere hongry, be lyke to the cruel lordes in wythholdyng or abredging of the shepe or ý hyre of the wages of seruauntes, or els in vsury, or in wythdrawyng of the almesse of poore folke. For whyche the wyse man sayeth. Fedethe hym that almooste dyeth for honger, for sothly but if ye fede him ye slee him. And al these bene deedlye synnes. Bodylye man-

slaughter

slaughter is when thou sleest hym wyth thy tonge: An other maner is, when thou commaundest to slee a mã, or els yeuest coũsayle to slee a man. Manslaughter in dede is in foure maners. That one is by lawe, ryghte as a Justyce dampneth hym that is coulpable to the death: But let the Justice be ware that he do it ryghtfully, & that he do it not for delyte to spyll bloode, but for kepyng of rygh teousnes. An other homicide is done for necessitie, as when a mã sleeth an other in his defence, and that he ne maye none otherwyse escape wythout slaughter of hys aduersary, he doth synne, and he shal beare penaunce as for deedly synne. Also yf a man by case or aduenture shote an arowe or caste a stone, with whych he sleeth a man, he is an homicide. Also if a womã by negligẽce ouerlieth her child in her slepynge, it is homicide & deedly synne Also when a man disturbleth conception of a chylde, and maketh a woman eyther bareyne by drynkynge of venymous herbes, thorough whyche she maye not conceyue, or sleeth a chylde by drynkes, or els putteth certayne materiall thynges in her secre places to slee the chylde, or els doth vnkyndly synne by whyche a man or a womã shedeth her nature in maner or in a place there as a chylde maye not be conceyued. Or els yf so be that a woman hathe conceyued, and hurteth her selfe, and by that myshap the chylde is slayne yet it is homicide. What saye we of those women that murtheren her chyldren for bycause of eschewynge of worldly shame. Certes it is an horryble homicide. Homicide is also yf a man approche to a womã by desyre of lecherye, thorough whyche the chylde is peryshed, or els smyteth a woman wetyngly throughe whyche she leseth her chylde: All these bene homicides and horrible dedly synnes. Yet come there of yre mo synnes, as well in worde as in thought, and dede: As he that arretteth vpon God, or blameth god of the thynge of whych he is hym selfe gylty or dyspyseth God and all hys halowes, as done the cursed hasardours in dyuers countreyes: Thys cursed synne done they, when they sele in her herte ful wyckedly of God & of hys halowes. Also when they treate vnreuerentlye the sacrament of the aulter, that synne is so great that vnneth it may be released, but that the mercy of God passeth al hys werkes it is so greate and he so benygne.

Then commeth of yre an atterly anger, whẽ a man is sharpelye amonesched in hys shryfte to leaue hys synne: Then woll he be angry and answere hokerlye and angerlye, or dekende or excuse hys synne by vnstedfastnesse of hys flesche, or elles he dydde it for to holde companye wyth hys felowes, or elles he sayeth the fende entyced hym, or elles he dothe it for hys youth, or elles his complexion is so corragious that he maye not forbeare, or elles it is hys destenye he sayeth vnto a certayne age, or elles he sayeth it commeth hym of gẽtylnesse of hys aũcesters, and semblable thynges. All these maner of folke so wrappe hem in her synnes, that they ne woll not delyuer hym selfe: For sothlye no wyghte that excuseth hym selfe wylfullye of hys synne, maye not be delyuered of hys synne tyl that he mekelye beknoweth hys synne. After thys then commeth swearynge, that is expresse agaynste the commaundemente of God, and thys befalleth often of angre and of yre.

God sayeth: Thou shalte not take the name of thy Lorde God in vayne or in ydell.

Also oure Lorde Jesu Christe sayeth by the worde of saynte Mathewe: Ne wyll ye not sweare in all maner, neyther by heauen, for it is goddes trone, ne by earth, for it is the benche of his feete, ne by Hierusalem, for it is the cytie of a greate kynge, ne by thyne heed, for thou mayste not make an heere neyther whyte ne blacke: but say by youre worde, yea yea, naye naye: and what that is more, it is of yuell. Thus sayeth Christe. For Christes sake sweare not so synfullye in dysmembrynge of Christe: By soule, herte, bones, and bodye, for certes it semeth that ye thynke that the cursed Jewes ne dysmembred not ynoughe the precyous persone of Christe, but ye dysmembre hym more. And yf so be that the lawe compell you to sweare, then ruleth you after the lawe of God in your swearyng as sayeth Jeremy the fourth chapter. Thou shalte kepe thre condicions, thou shalt swere in trouth, in dome & in ryghtwysenesse, thys is to saye, thou shalte sweare sothe. For euerye lesynge is ayenst Christ, for Christ is berye trouth. And thynke well thys that euerye great swearer not compelled lawfully to swere, the plage shal not depart fro his house whyle he vseth suche vnlawfull swearynge.

Thou shalte swere also in dome, when thou arte constrayned by thy domes man to wytnesse trouthe: Also thou shalt not sweare for enuye, neyther for fauoure, neyther for mede or rewarde, but onelye for ryghteousnesse & for declaryngе of it to the honoure and worshyppe of God, and to the aydinge and helpe of thyne euen christen. And therfore euerye man that taketh goddes name in ydel, or falselye sweareth wyth hys mouthe, or els taketh on hym the name of Christe to be called a christen man, and lyueth ayenst Christes lyuynge and hys teachynge, all they take goddes name in ydell. Loke also what sayeth saynt Peter, Actuum.iiij. Capitu. Non est aliud nomē sub celo.&c. There is none other name sayeth saynt Peter vnder heauen yeue to men, in whyche they maye be saued, that is to saye, but the name of Jesu Christ. Take hede eke howe precious is the name of Jesu Christ, as sayeth saynt Paule, ad Philippenses secundo. In nomine Jesu.&c. That in the name of Jesu euery knee of heauenly creatures, earthlye, and of hell shulde bowe, for it is so hye and so worshyppfull, that the cursed fende in hel shulde tremble to heare it named Then semeth it that men that sweare so horriblye by hys blessed name, that they dyspyse it more boldely then the cursed Jewes, or els the dyuell that trembleth whē he heareth hys name.

Nowe certes syth that swearyng, but yf it be lawfullye done, is so hyelye defended: moche more is forswearynge falslye, and yet nedelesse.

What say we also of hem that delyte hem in swearynge, and holde it a genterye or a māly dede to sweare great othes. And what of hem ý of very vsage ne cease not to sweare greate othes, all be the cause not worthe a strawe. Certes thys is horrible synne. Swerynge sodeynly is also a great synne. But let vs go now to that horrible synne swearynge of adiuration and coniuration, as done these false enchaūtours or nigromācers in basyns full of water, or in a bryght swearde, in a cercle, in a fyre, or in the sholderbone of a shepe. I can not saye but that they done cursedly & dampnably ayenst Christe, and all the fayth of holy churche.

What say we of hem ý beleue on Deuinales, as by flyghte or by noyse of byrdes or of beestes, or by sorte, by Geomācye, by dremes, by chyrkynge of dores or crakynge of houses, by gnawynge of rattes, & suche maner wretchednesse. Certes al these thynges ben defended by god and holy church, for whyche they bē accursed tyl they come to amendemēt ý on such fylth set her belyue. Charmes for woūdes or maladye of men or of beestes, yf they take any effecte, it maye be perauenture that God suffreth it, for folke shuld yeue the more fayth and reuerence to hys name.

Nowe woll I speke of leasynges whych generally is false sygnifyaunce of worde in entent to dysceyue hys euen christen. Some lesynge is, of which there cometh none auaūtage to no wyght, and some leasyng turneth to the profyte or ease of o man, and to the damage of an other man. An other leasynge is for to saue hys lyfe or hys catell, whych commeth of delyte for to lye, in which delyte they woll forge a longe tale, and paynt it wyth al circumstaunces, where al the tale of ý groūd is false. Some leasynge cometh for he woll susteyne hys wordes: Some leasyng cometh of retchelesnesse wythout auysemēt, and semblable thynges. Lette vs nowe touche the vyce of flaterye, whyche ne cometh not gladlye but for drede, or for couetyse. Flatterye is generally wronful praysynge. Flaterers bene the dyuels nouryces, that norysche, hys chyldren wyth mylke of losyngerye: Forsoth Salomon sayeth that Flatery is worse then detraction, for somtyme detractiō maketh an hauteyne man be the more humble, for he dredeth detraction, but certes flaterye maketh a man tenhannce hys herte and countenaunce Flaterers be ý deuels enchaūtours, for they make a man to wene hym selfe be lyke, that he is not lyke. Those be lyke to Judas that betraye a man to sell hym to hys enemy. Flaterers ben the dyuels chapleyns ý euer singe Placebo. I reken flatery in the vyces of yre for ofte tyme yf a man be wrothe wyth another, then woll he flater some wyghte to sustayne hym in hys quarell. Speake we nowe of suche cursynge as cometh of yrous herte Malyson generally maye be sayd euery maner power of harme: Such cursing bereueth man fro the raygne of God, as sayeth saynt Poule. And oft tyme such cursyng wrongfully returneth ayen to him that curseth, as byrd that turneth ayen to hys owne nesse. And

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ouer all thynge men ought eschewe to curse her chyldren and yeue to the deuel her engendrure as farre forth as in hem is: certes it is great peryll and great synne. Lette vs then speake of chydynge and reproche, whych ben full great woundes in mãs herte, for they vnsowe the semes of frendshyp in mans herte: for certes vnneth maye a man be playnly be accorded wyth hym, that hym openly hath reuyled and repreued, and dyffaundred: Thys is a full gastly synne as Christe sayeth in the gospell. And take hede nowe that he that repreueth hys neyghboure eyther he repreueth hym by some harme of paine that he hath vpon hys body as mesell, croked, harlot, or by some synne that he doth. Now yf he repreue hym by harme of payne, then turneth the repreke to Jesu Christ: For payne is sende by the ryghtwyse sonde of God, and by hys sufferaunce, be it meselry, meyme, or maladye: And yf he repreue him vncharitably of synne as thou holour, thou dronkelewe harlot, and so forth. Then pertayneth that to the reioysynge of the deuell, whyche euer hath ioye ỳ men done synne. And certes chydynge maye not come but of vylaynous hert, for after the haboundaunce of the herte speaketh ỳ mouth full ofte. And ye shal vnderstande, that loke by any waye when any man shall chastyse or correct another, that he beware frõ chydyng or repryuynge: for truely but he beware, he maye full lyghtlye quycken the fyre of angre and of wroth, whych he shulde quenche: And perauenture sleeth him whych he myght chastyse wyth benignite. For as sayeth Salomõ The amiable tonge is the tree of lyfe, that is to saye, of lyfe spirituell. And sothlye a dissolute tonge sleeth the spirites of hym that repreueth, and also of hym whych is repreued Lo, what sayeth saynt Augustyne: There is nothynge so lyke the dyuels chylde, as he whych ofte chydeth.

A seruaunt of God behoueth not to chyde And thoughe that chydynge be a vyllainous thynge betwyxte all maner folke, yet it is certes moost vncouenable bytwene a man and hys wyfe, for there is neuer reste. And therfore sayeth Salomon: An house that is vncouered and droppynge and a chydynge wyfe, ben alyke.

A man whych is in a droppynge house in many places, though he eschewe the droppynge in one place, it droppeth on hym in an other place: So fareth it by a chydynge wyfe, yf she chyde hym in one place she woll chyde hym in another: And therfore better and greatly more plesaunt is a morsell or lytell gobet of bread wyth ioye, then an house fylled full of delyces wyth chydynge & gnerynge, sayeth Salomon. Saynt Poule sayeth: O ye women, beth ye subiecte to youre husbandes, as you behoueth and ought in God: And ye mẽ loueth your wyues, ad Colossenses.iij.

Afterwarde speke we of scornyng whych is a wycked synne, and namely when he scorneth a man for hys good werkes: For certes suche scorners fare lyke the foule tode, that maye not endure to smell ỳ swete sauoure of the vyne whẽ it flourysheth. These scorners benẽ partynge felowes wyth the dyuell, for they haue ioye whẽ the dyuell wynneth, and sorowe yf he leseth. They ben aduersaryes of Jesu Christ, for they hate that he loueth, that is to saye, saluation of soule.

Speake we nowe of wycked counsayle, ỳ whych is a traytoure, for he dysceyueth hym that trusteth in hym: Vt Achitofel ad Salomonem. But natheleſſe, yet is hys wycked counsayle fyrst ayenst hym selfe, for as sayeth the wyse man: euery false lyuynge hath this properte in hym selfe, that he that wol anoye another man, he anoyeth fyrst hym selfe. And men shall vnderstande, that man shall not take hys counsayle of false folke, ne of angrye folke, or greuous folke, ne of folke that loue specially to moche worldly folke, namely in counsaylynge of soules.

Nowe cometh the synne of hem that sowe and make dyscorde amonge folke, whyche is a synne that Christ hateth vtterly, & no wonder is: for he deyde for to make concorde. And more shame do they to Christe then dyd they that hym crucifyed: For God loueth better that frendship be amonges folke then he dyd hys owne body, which that he gaue for vnite Therfore ben they lykened to the dyuell that euer be aboute to make dyscorde. Nowe commeth the synne of double tõge, such as speke fayre before folke, and wyckedly behynde, or els they make semblaũt as though they spak of good entencion, or els in game and playe, and yet they speake of wycked entent.

Nowe cometh bewrayenge of counsayle,

through whych a man is dyffamed: Certes vnneth maye he restore the domage. Nowe cometh menace, that is an open folye, for he that ofte menaceth, he threateth more then he maye performe full ofte tyme. Nowe cometh ydell wordes, that is wythout profyte of hym that speaketh the wordes, and also of hym that herkeneth the wordes: Or els ydel wordes ben those that ben nedelesse or wythout entent of naturall profyte. And all be it that ydell wordes be somtyme venyall synne yet shulde men doute hem, for we shall yeue rekenynge of hem before God. Now cometh ianglynge that maye not be wythout synne. And as sayeth Salomon: it is a sygne of a perte folye. And therfore a philosopher sayde when men asked hym howe that he shulde please the people, he answerde: Do many good workes and speake few vanities. After this cometh the synne of iaperies, that ben ỳ deuels apes, for they make folke to laughe at her iaperye, as folke do at the gaudes of an ape: whych iapes defendeth saynt Paule. Loke howe that vertuous wordes and holy comforte hem that trauayle in the seruyce of Christ: Ryght so comforteth the villaynous wordes and knackes of iapers hem, that trauayle in the seruyce of the deuell. These bene the synnes of the tonge, that come of yre and of other synnes.

The remedy ayenst Ire

THe remedy ayenst Ire, is a vertue that men cal Mansuetude, that is Debonairte, and also another vertue that men clepe Pacience or sufferaunce. Debonayre wythdraweth and refrayneth the steerynges and mouynges of mannes corage in herte, in suche maner that they ne skyppe not out by anger ne yre. Sufferaunce suffereth swetely all the anoyaunces and wronges ỳ men done to man outwarde. Saynt Jerome sayeth thys of debonairte, ỳ it doth no harme to no wyght, ne sayeth: ne for no harme that men do ne saye, he ne chaketh ayenst reason. Thys vertue somtyme cometh of nature: for as sayeth the philosopher, A man is a quycke thynge by nature, debonayre and tretable to goodnesse: but when debonairte is enformed of grace, then it is the more worth.

Pacience is another remedye ayenst ire, & is a vertue that suffreth swetely euery mannes goodnesse, & is not wroth for no harme that is done to hym. The philosopher sayeth that pacience is the vertue that suffreth debonairly all the outrages of aduersite, and euerye wycked worde. Thys vertue maketh a man lyke to God, and maketh hym goddes owne chylde: as sayeth Christ. Thys vertue dyscomfyteth thyne enemye. And therfore sayeth the wyse man: Yf thou wolde banquyche thyne enemye learne to suffre. And thou shalte vnderstande that a man suffreth foure maner of greuaunces in outward thynges, ayenst the whyche foure he muste haue foure maner of paciences.

The fyrst greuaunce is of wycked wordes whyche suffred Jesu Christe wythout grutchynge full paciently, when the Jewes dyspyled hym full ofte. Suffre thou therfore paciently, for the wyse man sayeth: Yf thou stryue with a foole, though ỳ foole be wroth or though he laugh, alwaye thou shalte haue no reste. That other greuaunce outwarde is to haue domage of thy catell: There ayenst suffred Christ full paciently, whē he was dispoyled of al that he had in thys lyfe, and that was but hys clothes. The thyrde greuaunce is a man to haue harme in hys body: That suffred Christ full paciently in al his passion The fourth greuaunce is in outragious laboure in werkes. wherfore I saye, that folke that make her seruauntes to trauayle to greuouslye or out of tyme, as in holy dayes, sothly they do great synne. Here ayenst suffered Christ full paciently, and taught vs pacience when he bare vpon hys blessed shoulders the crosse, vpon which he shuld suffre dyspytous death. Here maye men learne to be paciēt, for certes not only Christen be paciente for loue of Jesu Christ, and for reward of blessed lyfe that is perdurable, but certes the olde payenems that neuer were christened, cōmended and vsed the vertue of paciēce. A philosopher vpon a tyme that wolde haue beate his dyscyple for hys great trespace, for whych he was moued, & brought a rodde to beate the chylde & when this chyld sawe the rodde, he sayd to hys mayster: what thynke ye to do? I woll beate the sayd the mayster for thy correction. Forsoth sayd the chylde, ye ought fyrst correct

your selfe that haue lost al your pacience for the offence of a chylde. Forsoth sayd the mayster all weppynge, thou sayest soth: Haue thou the rodde my dere chylde, and correcte me for myne impacience. Of pacience cometh obedience, throughe whyche a man is obediente to Christ & to al hem to which he ought be obediēt in Christ. And vnderstand wel that obedience is perfyte when that a man doth gladlye and hastely with good herte entierlye, all that he shulde do. Obedience generally is to perfourme the doctryne of God and of hys souerayngnes, to whych hym ought to be obeysaunt in all ryghteousnesse.

¶ De Accidia.

After the synnes of Enuy and yre, nowe woll I speke of the synne of Accidie: for enuy blindeth the herte of a mā, and yre troubleth a man & accidie maketh hym heuy, thoughtfull & pensyke. Enuye and yre maken bytternesse in herte, whych bytternesse is mother of accidie & taketh fro hym the loue of al goodnesse, thē is accidie the anguyshe of trouble of herte. And saynt Augustyne sayeth: It is anoye of goodnesse and anoye of harme. Certes thys is a dampnable synne, for it doth wronge to Jesu Christ, in as moche as it benōmeth the seruyce that men ought do to Christe, as sayeth Salomon: but accidie doth no suche diligence. He doth all thynge wyth anoye & with wrawnesse, slacknesse, and excusation: wyth ydelnesse and vnlust.

For whych the boke sayeth: Acursed be he that doth the seruice of god negligently. Thē is accidie enemye to euery estate of man. For certes the state of man is in thre maners.

Eyther it is in the estate of Innocency, as was the estate of Adam before that he fyll in to synne, in whych estate he was hold to worke, as in praysynge and laudynge God. And ther estate is ý estate of synfull mē: in which estate men bene holden to laboure in prayenge to God for amendement of her synnes, and that he woll graunte hem to ryse out of her synnes.

Another estate is the state of grace, in whiche state he is holden to workes of penitence: and certes to all these thynges is accidie contrary, for he loueth no busynesse at all. Nowe certes, thys foule synne accidie is also a full great enemye to the lykelode of the body, for it ne hath no purueyaunce ayenst tēporel necessite, for it forswoleth, forslogeth, & destroyeth al goodes temporel by recheleſnesse. The iiij. thynge is, that accidie is lyke hem ý bene in the payne of hel, bycause of her slouth and heuynesse: for they that be dampned bene so bounde, that they maye neyther well do ne thynke. Of accidie cometh fyrst that a man is anoyed and encombred to do any goodnesse, & maketh ý God hath abhominacion of such accidie, as sayeth saynt John. Nowe cometh slouth that wol nat suffre no hardnesse ne penaunce: for sothly slouth is so tēder and so delycate, as sayeth Salomon, that he woll suffre no hardnesse ne penaunce, and therfore he marreth all that he doth. Ayenst thys rotten synne of accidie & slouth, shulde men exercise hem selfe & vse hem to do good workes: and māly and vertuously catch corage to do, thynkynge that our Lorde Jesu Christe quyteth euery good dede, be it neuer so lyte. Vsage of labour is a great thyng. For it maketh as sayeth saynt Bernard, ý labourer to haue strōge armes and harde senewes: & slouth maketh heuye, feble, and tender. Then cometh drede to begynne to worke any good workes. For certes he that enclyneth to synne, hym thynketh it is so great an emprysse for to vndertak the workes of goodnesse, and casteth in hys herte, that the circumstaunces of goodnesse bene so greuouse and weyghtye for to suffre, that he dare not vndertake to do workes of goodnesse, as sayeth saynt Gregorye.

Nowe cometh wanhope, that is dyspayre of the mercye of God, that cometh somtyme of to moch outragious sorow, and somtyme of to moche drede, ymaginynge that he hath do so moch synne, that it wol not anayle him tho he wolde repent hym and forsake synne: thorough whych dyspayre or drede, he abandoneth al hys herte to euery maner synne, as sayeth saynt Augustyne. Whych dampnable synne, yf it continue vnto hys ende, it is called synnynge in the holy goost.

Thys horrible synne is so perylous, that he that is dyspayred there nys no felony ne no synne that he douteth for to do, as shewed well by Judas. Certes aboue al synnes then is thys synne moost dyspleasaunt to Christ and moste aduersary. Sothly he that

dyspayreth hym is lyke to the cowarde champion recreaunt, that flyeth wythout nede. Alas alas, nedeles is he recreaũt, and nedelesse dyspayreth. Certes the mercy of God is euer redy to the penitent person, & is aboue al hys werkes. Alas can not a mã bethynke hym on the gospel of saint Luke. xv. where as Christ sayeth, that as well shall there be ioye in heauen vpon a synfull man that doth penitence, as vpon foure score & nynetene ryghtful mẽ that nede no penitence. Loke ferther in the same gospell the ioye and ý feest of the good man that had loste hys sonne, whẽ hys sonne wyth repentaunce was retourned to hys father. Can they not remembre hem also, that (as sayeth saynt Luke) capi. xxx. Howe that the theke that was hãged besyde Jesu Christ sayd: Lorde remembre me, when thou commest in to thy reygne. Forsoth sayd Christ, I saye to the: To daye shalte thou be with me in paradyse. Certes, there is none so horrible synne of man, that ne maye in hys lyke be dystroyed by penitence, thorough vertue of passyon and of the death of Christe. Alas what nede men then to be dyspayred, syth that hys mercy is so ready and large. Aske and haue. Then commeth sompnolence, that is sluggye slombrynge, wheche maketh a man heuy and dull in body and in soule, & this sinne cometh of slouth: And certes the time that by waye of reason man shulde not slepe, is by ý morowe, but yf there were cause reasonable. For sothely the morowe tyde is most couenable a man to saye hys prayers, & for to thãke God, and to honoure God, & to yeue almesse to the poore, that cometh fyrst in the name of Jesu Christ. Lo, what sayth Salomõ: who so woll by the morowe awake to seke me, he shall fynde me. Then cometh neglygence or retchelesnesse, that recketh of nothynge. And though that ignoraunce be mother of al harmes, certes neglygence is the norryce. Negligence ne dothe no force when he shall do a thynge, whether he do it well or euell. The remedye of these two synnes is, as sayeth the wyse man: That he that dredeth God spareth not to do that he ought to do, and he that loueth god he woll do dylygẽce to please god by hys werkes, and abãdone hym selfe wyth al hys mygyt wel for to do. Thẽ cometh ydelnesse, that is the yate of all harmes. An ydell man is lyke to a place that hath no walles, ý dyuell maye entre on euerye syde, or shote at hym that is dyscouert, by temptation on euery syde. Thys ydelnesse is the thorrube of all wycked and vylayne thoughtes, and of al ordure. Certes the heauen is yeue to hem that wyll laboure, and not to ydell folke. Also Dauid sayeth, that they ne be not in the laboure of men, ne they shall not be whyppped wyth men. Certes then semeth it they shall be turmented wyth the dyuels in hell, but yf they do penaunce.

Then cometh the synne that mẽ cal Tarditas, as when a man is so latered, or tarienge or he woll tourne to god: and certes that is a great foly. He is lyke hym that falleth in the dyche, and woll not aryse. And thys vyce cometh of false hope, that he thynketh he shall lyue longe, but that hope fayleth full ofte.

Then cometh lachesse, that is he that whẽ he begynneth any good worke, anone he wol leaue and stynte it, as done they that haue any persone to gouerne, and ne take of him no more hede, anone as they fynde any contrary or any anoye. These ben the newe sheperdes that let theyr shepe wyttyngly go renne to ý wolfe that is in the breres, or do not force of her owne gouernaunce. Of thys cometh pouerte and destruction bothe of spirituall and temporell thynges. Then cometh a maner coldnesse that freseth the herte of man. Then cometh vndeuotion, through whyche a man is so blont, and as sayeth saynte Bernarde, hath suche langour in hys soule, that he may neyther rede ne synge in holy church, ne here ne thynke of no deuotion, ne trauayle wyth hys handes in no good worke, that it nys to hym vnsauery and al apalled. Then wareth he slowe and slombry and sone wol be wroth and sone is enclyned to hate and enuy. Then cometh the synne of worldly sorowe, such as is called Tristitia, that sleeth a man, as sayeth saynt Poule. For certes suche sorow worketh the death of the soule and body also, for therof cometh that a man is anoyed of hys owne lyfe. wherfore suche sorowe shorteth full ofte the lyfe of man, er that hys tyme is come by waye of kynde.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum Accidie.

Ayenst

Ayenst thys horryble synne of Accidie, and the braunches of the same, ther is a vertue that is called Fortitudo or strēgth, that is an affection, throughe whiche a man dispyseth anoyous thynges: This vertue is so mighty and so rygorous, that it dare withstonde mightily, and wisely kepe hym self fro perylles that ben wycked, and wrastel ayenst thassautes of the dyuel, for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth & maketh it feble: for thys fortitude may endure by longe sufferaunce the trauayles that ben couenable. This vertue hath manye speces, the fyrste is called Magnanimite, that is to say, great corage. For certes there behoueth great corage ayenst accidie, lest that it ne swalowe ȳ soule by the synne of sorowe, or distroye it by wanhope. Certes this vertue maketh folke vnder take harde and greuous thynges by her own wyl wisely and resonably. And for as moch as the deuyll fyghteth ayenst a man more by subtylte and sleyght than by strength, therfore shall a man wythstonde hym by wytte, reason, and discretion. Thā are there the vertues of faythe and hope in God and in hys sayntes, to eschue and accomplisshe the good workes, in the whyche he purposeth fermely to contynue. Than cometh suretie or sykernesse, and that is whan a man ne douteth no traueyle in tyme commyng, of the good workes that he hathe begonne. Than cometh Magnifycence, that is to saye, whan a man dothe and parformeth great workes of goodnesse that he hath begon, and that is thende why that men shuld do good workes. For in the accomplishyng of good workes, lyeth the great guerdon. Thā is there Constance, that is stablenesse of corage, and thys shulde be in hert by stedfast faythe, and in mouthe, in berynge, in chere, and in dede. Also there ben mo specyall remedyes ayenst accidie, in dyuers workes: as in cōsyderatyō of ȳ paynes of hell, the ioyes of heuen, and in truste of the grace of the holy ghoost, that wyll yeue hym myght to performe his good entent.

¶ De Auaricia.

After Accidie woll I speke of Auarice, and of couetyse. Of whych syn saynt Poule sayth the rote of al harmes is couetyse, ad Timoth. vi. For sothly whan the hert of man is cōfounded in it selfe and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of god, than seketh he an ydell solace of worldlye thynges. Auarice, after the discryption of saynt Augustyn, is a lycorousnesse in hert to haue erthly thynges. Some other folke saye, that auaryce is for to purchace many erthely thynges, & nothynge to yeue to hem that haue nede.

And vnderstonde that auarice stōdeth nat onely in londe ne catel, but somtyme in sciēce and glorye, & in euerye maner of outragious thynges is Auaryce. And couetyse is thys. Couetyse is for to coueit suche thynges that thou hast nat. And auarice is to withholde & kepe suche thynges as thou haste wythout right. Sothly this auarice is a synne that is ful dāpnable, for al holy writ curseth it, & speketh ayenst ȳ vice, for it doth wrong to Jesu christ: for it taketh fro him the loue that men to hym owe, & tourneth it backeward ayenst al reason, and maketh that the auarycious man hath more hoope in hys catell, than in Jesu Christ, and dothe more obseruaunce in kepyng of hys treasour, than he dothe in the seruyce of Jesu Christ. And therfore saythe saynt Poule, ad Ephesios quinto: That an auarycious man is the thraldome of idolatrye. What dyfference is there betwyxt an ydolaster and an auaricyous man? But that an ydolaster perauenture ne hathe nat but a mawmet or two, & the auaricious man hath many. For certes euery florein in hys coffre, is his maumet. And certes the synne of maumetry is the fyrste that God defended, as in the. x. commaūdements it beareth wytnesse, in Exodi Capitu. xx. Thou shalte haue no false goddes before me, ne thou shalte make to the no graue thynge. Thus is an auaricious man, that loueth hys treasour before God, an idolaster. And through this cursed synne of Auyryce and Couetyse, cometh these harde lordeshyppes, through whyche they ben streyned by tyllages, customes, and cariages, more than her duetye or reason is, or elles take they of her bondmen amercyamentes, whyche myght more resonablye be

called extortions than mercyamentes. Of whiche amerciamentes or raunsomynge of bondmen, some lordes stewardes say that it is rightful, for as moche as a churle hath no temporel thynge, that it ne is his lordes, as they saye. But certes these lordshyppes do wrong, that bereue theyr bondmen thynges that they neuer yaue hem. Augustinus de Ciuitate dei. Libro. ix. Sothe is, that the condiciō of thraldom, and the fyrst cause of thraldome was for synne.

Thus may ye se, that thoffence deserued thraldome, but nat nature. Wherfore these lordes ne shulde not moche glorifye hem in her lordeshyps, sythe that they by natural cōdycion ben not lordes ouer thralles, but for that thraldome came fyrste by the deserte of synne. And more ouer there as the law sayth, that temporel goodes of bonde folke ben the goodes of her lorde: ye, that is for to vnderstonde, the goodes of the Emperour, to defende hem in her ryght, but not to robbe hem ne reue hem. Therfore saythe Seneca: thy prudence shulde lyue benygnly with ÿ thralles. Those that thou callest thy thralles, ben goddes people: and for humble people ben Christes frendes, they ben contubernyall w̄ the lordes. Thynke also that of suche sede as chorles sprynge, of suche sede sprynge lordes: as wel may the chorle be saued as the lorde. The same dethe that taketh the chorle, suche dethe taketh the lorde. Wherfore I rede do right so with the chorle as thou woldest that thy lorde dyd wyth the yf thou were in hys plyght. Euery synful man is a chorle to syn: I rede the lorde certes, that thou werke in suche wyse with thy chorles, that they rather loue the thā drede the. I wote wel that there is degree aboue degree, as reson is, and skyll is that men do her deuoyre there as it is due: But certes extorcions and dispyte of your vnderlynges is dampnable. And ferthermore vnderstonde wel, that these conquerours or tyrauntes make ful ofte thralles of hem that ben borne of as royal bloode as ben they that hem conquere. This name of thraldom was neuer erst knowe, tyl that Noe sayd that his sonne Canaan shulde be thral to his brethern for hys synne. What saye we than of hē that pyl and do extorcions to holy church: Certes the swerde that men yeue fyrste to a knyght, whan he is newe dubbed, sygnyfyeth that he shulde defende holy churche, and not robbe and pyl it, and who so doth he is traytour to Christ. And as saythe saynt Austyn, they ben the dyuels woulues that strangle the shepe of Jesu christ, and done worse than woulues for sothely whan the woulfe hathe full hys wombe, he stynteth to strangle shepe: But sothlye the pyllours and dystroyers of holy church goodes ne do not so, for they ne stynte neuer to pyll. Nowe as I haue sayde, sythe so is that synne was fyrste cause of thraldom than is it thus, that at the tyme that all thys world was in synne, thā was al this worlde in thraldom and in subiection, but certes syth the tyme of grace came, god ordayned ÿ some folke shulde be more hye in estate and in degre, and some folke more lowe, and that eche shulde be serued in hys astate. And therfore in some coūtreys there they be thralles, whā they haue turned hem to ÿ faythe, they make her thralles free out of thraldome, and therfore certes the lorde oweth to hys man that the man oweth to the lorde. The pope calleth hym selfe seruaunte of the seruauntes of God, but for as the estate of holy churche ne might not haue ben, ne the comen profyte myght not haue be kept, ne peace ne reste in erthe, but yf god had ordayned that some mā had hier degree and some men lower. Therfore was souerayne ordayned to kepe, maynt ayne, and defende her vnderlynges and her subiectes in reason, as ferforth as it lyeth in her power, and not to distroye ne confounde hem. Wherfore I say, that those lordes that ben lyke wolues that deuour the possessyons or the catel of poore folkes wrongfully, with out mercy or mesure, they shal receyue be the same mesure ÿ they haue mesured to poore folke, the mesure of Jesu Christ but it be amended. Nowe cometh disceyte betwixt marchaunt and marchaunt. And thou shalt vnderstonde that marchaundyse is in two maners, that one is bodily, and that other is goostly: that one is honest and leful and that other is dishonest and vnleful.

The bodily marchaundyse that is lefull & honest is thys: that there as god hath ordayned that a reygne or a countreye is suffysaūt to hym selfe, than it is honeste and lefull that of haboundaunce of hys countrey, men helpe an other countrey that is nedy: And therfore there muste be merchaūtes to bring

fro

fro one countrey to that other her marchaundyse.

That other marchaundyse that mē haunten with fraude, and trecherye, and disceyte, with leasynges and false othes, is right cursed and dampnable. Espirituel marchaundyse is properly Symonye, that is ententife desyre to bye any thynge espyrituel, that is a thynge whyche apertayneth to the sayntuarye of God, and to cure of the soule. This desyre yf so be that a man do hys dilygence to perfourme it, al be it that hys desyre ne take non effecte, yet it is to him a deedlye synne, & yf he be ordred, he is irreguler. Certes symonye is called of Symon Magus, that wolde haue bought for temporell catell the yefte that God had yeue by the holy goost to saynt Peter and to the Apostels: And therfore vnderstonde that he that selleth and he that byethe thynges espyrituels, ben called Symonyakes, be it by catell, be it by procuring or by fleshly prayer of his frendes, fleshly frendes or espyrituell frendes, fleshly in two maners, as by kynred or other frendes: Sothlye yf they praye for hym that is not worthy and able, it is symonye yf he take the benefice, and yf he be worthy and able there is none. That other maner is whan man or woman prayeth for folke to auaunce hem only for wycked fleshly affection, whyche they haue vnto the persons, and that is foule symonye. But certes in seruyce, for which men yeuen thinges espyrituel vnto her seruaūtes it must be vnderstonde that the seruice muste be honest, or els not, and also that it be without bargeynyng, and that the person be able. For as sayth saynt Damasen: All the synnes of the worlde at regarde of this synne, are as a thyng of naught, for it is the greatest synne that may be after the synne of Lucifer and of Antichrist: For by this synne God forleseth the churche and the soule whyche he bought wyth hys precious bloode, by hem that yeue churches to hem that bē not worthy, for they put in theues hondes that steale the soules of Jesu Christ, and distroy hys patrimony. By suche vnworthy preestes and curates haue leude men lesse reuerence of the sacramentes of holy churche, and such yeuers of churches put the chyldren of Christ out, and put in the churche the dyuels owne sonnes: they sel the soules that lambes shulde kepe to the wolfe which strangleth hem, and therfore shal they neuer haue parte of the pasture of lambes, that is the blysse of heuen. Nowe cometh hasardrie wyth hys apertenauntes, as tables and raffles, of whyche cometh disceyte, false othes, chydynges, and al raupnesse, blasphemynges, and renyenges of God, and hate of hys neyghbours, waste of goodes, myspendynge of tyme, and somtyme manslaughter. Certes hasardours ne mowe not be without great synne. Of auarice cometh also lesynges theft, false wytnesse, and false othes: and ye shall vnderstonde that these be great synnes, and expresse ayenst the commaundementes of God, as I haue sayd. False wytnesse is in worde, and also in dede: In worde as for to bryeue thy neyghboures good name by thy false wytnesse, or bryeue hym his catel or his herytage, by thy false wytnessyng, whā thou for yre or for mede, or for enuye, bearest false wytnesse, or accusest him, or excusest thy selfe falsly. Ware ye questmongers and notaries: Certes for false wytnessynge was Susan in ful great sorowe & payn, and manye another mo. The syn of thefte is also expresse ayenst goddes hest, & in two maners, corporell and spirituel, the temporel theft is: As for to take thy neyghbours catel ayenst his wyl, be it by force or by sleight, be it by mette or by mesure by stealynge also of false endytementes vpō hym and in borowyng of thy neyghbours catell, in entent neuer to paye it ayen, and semblable thynges. Espyrituel thefte is sacrylege, that is to say, hurtyng of holye thynges sacred to Christ in two maners, by reason of the holy place, as churches or churche yerdes For which euery villaynous synne that men don in suche places maye be called sacrylege, or euerye vyolence in the semblable places. Also that they withdrawe falsely the rightes that longe to holye churche and pleasynge. And generally sacrilege is to reue holy thing fro holye place, or vnholye thynge out of holye place, or holy thynge out of vnholy place.

¶ Releuatio contra peccatum Auaricie.

Nowe

Owe shal ye vnderstonde, that releuynge of auarice is misericorde and pyte largely taken. And men might aske why that misericorde and pyte are releuyng of auarice: Certes the auaricious man sheweth no pyte ne misericorde to the nedeful man. For he delyteth hym in the kepynge of hys treasure, and nat in the rescuynge ne releuynge of his euyn christen. And therfore speke I fyrste of mysericorde. Than is mysericorde (as saythe the Philosopher) A vertue, by whyche the corage of man is stered, by ÿ mysease of hym that is mysesed. Upon whyche mysericorde foloweth pyte, in performyng and fulfilling of charitable workes of mercy, helpeth and comforteth him that is mysesed. And certes these thynges moue and stere a man to mysericorde of Jesu christ that he yaue hym selfe for our offence, & suffred dethe for mysericorde, and forgaue vs our original synnes, and therby released vs fro the paynes of hel, & mynished the paynes by penitens, and yeueth grace wel to do, and at laste the blysse of heuen. The speces of mysericorde ben for to lene, and also for to yeue: for to forgeue and release, and for to haue pyte in herte and compassyō, of the mischefe of his euen christen, and also to chastyse there as nede is. Another maner of remedy ayenst Auarice, is resonable largesse: but sothlye here behoueth the consyderacyon of the grace of Jesu Christ, and of the temporell goodes, and also of the goodes perdurable that Jesu Christ yafe to vs, and to haue remembraunce of the dethe whyche he shal receyue, he knoweth not whan where, ne howe: and also that he shall forgo all that he hath, saue onely that whyche he hath expended in good werkes.

But for as moche as some folke been vnmesurable, menne ought for to auoyde and eschue folyshe largesse, the whiche some people cal waste.

Certes he that is foole large, yeueth not hys catel, but he leseth hys catel.

Sothlye what thynge that he yeueth for beynglorye, as to mynstrels and to folke to beare his renome in the world, he hath synne therof & none almesse: Certes he leseth foule hys good that he ne seketh wyth the yefte of hys good nothyng but synne. He is lyke to an horse that seketh rather to drynke drouy or troubled water than for to drynke water of the clere welle. To hem apperteynē the sayd cursynges, that Christ shal yeue at the day of dome, to hem that shal be dampned.

¶ Sequitur de Gula.

After Auaryce cometh Gloteny, whyche is expresse ayenst the commaundement of god. Gloteny is vnmesurable appetyte to eete or to drynke, or els to do ynough to the vnmesurable appetyte and disordeyned couetyse to eate or to drynke. This synne corrupteth all thys worlde, as is well shewed in the synne of Adam and of Eue. Loke also what saythe saynt Poule of glotenye. Many (saythe he) gone, of whyche I haue often sayde to you, and nowe I say it weepynge, that ben the enemyes of the crosse of Chryst, of whyche the ende is dethe, and of whyche her wombe is her god and her glorye, in confusyon of hem that so deuour erthly thinges. He that is vsed to this synne of gloteny, he ne may no synne withstonde, he must be in seruage of al vices, for it is the dyuels hourde, there he hydeth and resteth hym. This synne hath many speces: The fyrste is dronkenesse that is the horryble sepulture of mans reson: and therfore whan man is dronke he hath loste his reson: And thys is deedly synne. But sothly whan that a man is not wonte to stronge drynke, and parauenture ne knoweth not ÿ strength of the drynke, or hath feblesse in hys heed, or hathe trauayled, through whych he drinketh the more, al be he sodainly caught wō drynke, it is no deedly synne, but venyal. The seconde spece of glotenye is, that the spyrite of a man wexeth al troubled, for dronkenesse bryeueth him the discretion of his wytte.

The thyrde maner spece of glotonye is whan a man deuoureth his meate, and hath not ryghtful maner of eetyng. The fourth is whan through the great abundaunce of hys meete, the humours in hys body ben distempred. The fyfth is forgetfulnesse by to moche drynkyng, for whych somtyme a man forgetteth er the mornyng what he dyd on the euenyng before.

In other

In other maner ben distyncte the speces of glotenye after saynt Gregorie. The kyrste is for to eate before tyme to eate. The seconde is whā a man gyueth hym to delycate meate or drynke. The thyrde is whan men take to moche ouer measure. The fourthe is curiosyte, wyth great entent to make and appareyle hys meate. The kyfthe is for to eate to gredely.

These ben the fyue fyngers of the dyuels honde, by whyche he draweth folke to synne.

¶ The remedy ayenst Glotony.

Ayenst glotony the remedy is abstynēce, as sayth Galyene: but that I holde nat meritorious, yf he do it for the heale of hys body. Saynte Augustyne woll that abstynence be done for vertue, and wyth pacience. Abstinence (sayth he) is lytel worth but yf a man haue good wyl therto, and but if he be enforced by pacience and charyte, and that men do it for goddes sake, and in hope to haue the blysse of heuen.

The felowes of abstynence be attemperaunce, that holdeth the meane in all thynges. Also shame that escheweth all dishonestye. Suffysaunce that seketh no ryche meates ne drynkes, ne dothe nat force of outragioug appareylyng of meate. Mesure also, that restreyneth by reason, the vnmesurable appetyte of eatyng. Sobernesse also, that restrayneth the outrage of drynke. Sparynge also, that restrayneth ŷ delycate ease to sytte longe at meate, wherfore some folke stonden of her owne wyl whan they eete, bycause they wol eate at lasse leysar.

¶ De Luxuria.

After Glotonye cometh Lecherye, for these two synnes been so nye cosyns, that oftyme they wol nat depart. God wote this synne is ful displesaunt to god, for he sayde hym selfe: do no lecherye. And therfore he putteth great paynes ayenst thys synne.

For in the olde lawe, yf a woman thyall were take in thys synne, she shulde be beate wyth staues to dethe. And yf she were a gentylwoman she shulde be slayne wyth stones. And yf she were a bysshops doughter, she shulde be brent by goddes commaundement.

Moreouer by the synne of lecherye, God drowned al the world and after that he brent fyue cytees with thunder and lightnyng, and sanke hem in to hel.

Nowe lette vs speke than of the sayd stynking synne of lechery, that men cal auowtrye of wedded folke, that is to saye, yf that one of hem be wedded or els bothe.

Saynt Johan saythe, that auoutrers shalbe in hell in a stacke brennynge of fyre and of brimstone for the stenche of her ordure: Certes the brekynge of this sacrament is an horryble thyng: It was made of God hym selfe in paradyse, and confermed by Jesu Christ, as wytnesseth saynt Mathewe in the gospel: A man shall leaue father and mother & take hym to hys wyfe, and they shalbe two in one flesh.

Thys sacrament betokeneth the knyttyng togyther of Chryste and holye churche. And not onely that god forbade auoutrye in dede, but also he commaunded that thou shuldest not coueyte thy neyghbours wyfe. In thys heste saythe saynt Augustyne is forboden all maner couetyse to do lecherye. Lo, what saythe saynt Mathewe in the gospell, that who so seeth a woman to couetyse of hys lust he hath done lecherye wyth her in his herte. Here may ye se that not only the dede of thys synne is forboden, but also the desyre to that synne. Thys cursed synne anoyeth greuously hem that it haunte: and fyrst to her soule, for he oblygethe it to synne and to payne of dethe, whyche is perdurable. Unto the body anoyeth it greuously also, for it dryeth hym and wasteth, and shenteth hym, and of hys bloode he maketh sacrifyce to the fende of hel: It wasteth hys catell and his substaūce. And certes yf it be a foule thynge a man to waste hys catell on women: yet it is a fouler thynge whan that for suche ordure women dispende vpon men her catell and her substaunce. This synne as sayth the Prophete, taketh from man and woman her good fame and her honour, and it is full delectable and pleasaunt to the dyuell. For therby wynneth he the more parte of thys wretched worlde. And ryght as a marchaūt delyteth him most in that

in that chaffare whyche he hath moste auaun tage and profyte of, ryght so delyteth ý fende in this ordure.

This is that other honde of the dyuel, with fyue fyngers, to catche the people to hys vila nye. The fyrste is the folyshe lokynge of the folyshe woman and of the folysche man, that sleeth ryght as the Basilycock or cokatryce sleeth folke by venym of hys syght: for the co uetyse of the eyen foloweth the couetyse of ý herte. The seconde fyngre is the vilaynous touchynge in wycked maner. And therfore sayth Salomon: that who so toucheth and handleth a woman, he fareth as that man that handleth the scorpyon, whiche styngeth & sodaynly sleeth through his enuenemyng, or as who so that toucheth warme pytche blemysheth hys fyngers. The thyrde is foule wordes, whych fareth lyke fyre, which right anon brenneth the herte. The fourth fynger is the kyssynge: And truely he were a great foole that wolde kysse the mouthe of a brennyng ouen or of a forneys. And more fooles ben they that kysse in vilanye, for that mouth is the mouthe of hell, and namely these olde dotardes holours, which woll kysse and flicker, and besye hem selfe thoughe they maye naught do. Certes they ben lyke to houndes: For an hounde whan he cometh nigh to the rosere, or by other benches, though so be that he maye not pysse, yet woll he heue vp hys legge and make a countenaunce to pysse. And for that manye man weneth that he maye not synne for no lycorousnesse that he dothe wyth hys wyfe. Truely that oppynyon is false: God wote a man maye slee hym selfe wyth hys owne knyfe, and make hym selfe dronke of his owne tonne. Certes be it wife, be it chylde or anye worldly thynge, that he loueth before God, it is hys maumet, and he is an ydolaster. A man shulde loue his wyfe by discrecyon, paciently and attemperatlye, and than is she as though it were his suster. The fyfthe fyngre of the dyuels honde is the stynkynge dede of lecherye. Truely the fyue fyngers of glotonye the dyuell putteth in to the wombe of a man: And wyth his fyue fyn gers of lecherye he grypeth hym by ý reynes for to throwe hym in to the furneys of helle, there as they shal haue the fyre and the wormes that euer shal laste, and weppynge and waylynge, and sharpe hungre and thurste, grymnesse of dyuels, whyche shal al to trede hem withouten ende. Of lecherye as I sayd sourdeth and springeth dyuers speces: As fornycacyon, that is bytwene man and woman which be not maryed and is deedly syn, and ayenst nature: Al that is enemye and distruction to nature is ayenst nature. Perfay the reason of a man telleth him wel also that it is deedly synne, for as moche as god forbade lecherye. And saynte Poule yeueth hem the reygne that nis dewe to no wyght but to hem that done deedly synne. An other synne of lecherye is to byreue a maydes maydenhede, for he that so dothe, certes he casteth a mayden out of the hyest degre that is in thys presente lyfe, and byreueth her that precious frute that the boke calleth the hundred frutes I ne can saye it none other wyse in English, but in Latyn it hight (Centesimus fructus.) Certes he that so dothe is cause of many damages and vilanyes, mo than anye man can reken: ryght as he is cause of many damages somtyme that beestes do in the felde, that breke the hedge or theclosure, through which he distroyeth that maye not be restored: For certes no more may mayden hede be restored than an arm that is smytte fro the body may retourne ayen and were: She maye haue mercy, this wote I wel, yf that she haue wil to do penitence, but neuer shall it be that she nas corrupte. And all be it so ý I haue spoke somwhat of auoutry, also it is good to shew the perylles that longe to auoutrye, for to eschewe that foule synne. Auoutrye in latyn is for to saye, approchynge of an other mannes bedde, throughe whyche those that somtyme were one flesh, abandon her bodyes to other persones. Of thys synne as saythe the wyse man folowe many harmes: Firste breakynge of faythe, and certes in faythe is the keye of christendome: and whan that faythe is broke and loste, sothly christendom stont beyneand without fruite. Thys synne is also theft, for thefte generally is to reue a wight his thyng ayenst hys wyll. Certes thys is the foulest thefte that may be, whan that a womā stealeth her body fro her husbonde and yeueth it to her holour to defoyle her, and stealeth her soule fro Christ, and yeueth it to the dyuell: This is a fouler thefte than for to breake a church and steale away the chalyce, for these auouterers breke the temple of god spyrituel ly, and

lye, and steale the vessell of grace, that is the body and the soule: For whyche Christ shall distroye hem, as sayth sayute Paule. Sothlye of thys thefte doubted greatlye Joseph, whan that hys Lordes wyfe prayed hym of vylanye, whan he sayde: Lo my Ladye howe my Lorde hath take to me vnder my warde, all that he hathe in thys worlde, ne nothynge of hys thynges is out of my power, but only ye that be his wyfe: and how shulde I than do thys wyckednesse and syn so horrible ayenst God, and ayenst my lorde God it forbede. Alas, all to lytell is suche trouthe nowe founde. The thyrde harme is the fylthe, throughe whyche they breake the commaundemente of God, and defoyle the auter of matrymonye, that is Christe. For certes in so muche as the sacrament of maryage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it greater synne for to breake it: For God made maryage in Paradyse in the estate of innocencye, to multiply mankynde in the seruice of God, and therfore is the breakynge therof the more greuous, of whyche breking come false heyres ofte time, that wrongfullye occupye folkes heritages, and therfore wol Christ put hem out of the reygne of heuen, that is herytage to good folke. Of thys breakyng cometh also oft time that folke vnware wedde or synne wyth her owne kynred: and namely these harlottes that haunte bordels of these foule women, that maye be lykened to a comune gonge, where as men pourge her ordure. what say we also of putours, that lyue by the horrible synne of putrye, and constreyne women to yeue to hem a certeyne rente of her bodyly putery, yee sõtyme of hys owne wyfe or hys chylde, as done these baudes: Certes these bene cursed synnes. Understande also that auoutrie is sette gladlye in the ten commaundementes bytwene thefte and man slaughter, for it is the greatest theft ỳ maybe, for it is thefte of bodye and of soule, and it is like to homicide for it kerueth a two and breketh a two hem that fyrst were made of one flesche. And therfore by the olde lawe of God they shulde be slaine, but nathlesse by ỳ law of Jesu Christ that is lawe of pytye, whan he sayde to the woman that was fonde in auoutrye, and shulde haue be slayne wyth stones after the wyll of the Jewes, as was her lawe: Go sayde Jesu Christe, and haue no more wyll to do sinne. Sothly the vengeaunce of auoutrye is awarded to the paynes of hell, but if so be that it be distourbed by penitence. Yet bene there mo speces of thys cursed synne, as whan that one of hem is relygyouse or elles bothe, or of folke that bene entred in to ordre, as subdeaken, deaken, or Preeste, or hospitaliers. And euer the hyer that he is in ordre, the greater is the synne. The thynges that greatlye agredge her synne is the breaking of her auow of chastitie whã they receyued the order. And more ouer sothe is that holye order is chefe of all the treasorye of God and hys especial signe and marke of chastite, to shew that they ben ioyned to chastitie, whych is the moost precious like that is: a these ordred folke bene speciallye titled to God and of the special meyne of God, for whyche whan they done deedly synne they bene traytoures of God and of hys people, for they lyue of the people. Preestes ben angels as by dignetie of her misterye, but forsoth sayut Paule sayth ỳ Sathanas transfourmeth hym in an angell of lyght. Sothly the preest that haunteth deedly synne, he maye be lykened to the angell of derkenesse, transfourmed in the aungell of lyght, he semeth angel of lyght, but forsoth he is angel of derkenesse. Suche preestes be the sonnes of Helye, as sheweth in the boke of kynges, that they were the sonnes of Beliall, that is the dyuell. Beliall is to saye wythout iudge and so fare they, hem thynketh they be free and haue no iuge, no more than hathe a free bulle that taketh whiche cowe that hym lyketh in the towne. So fare they by wemen, for ryght as one free bulle is ynoughe for al a towne, ryghte so is a wycked preeste corruption ynoughe for all a parysshe, or for all a countre: These preestes, as sayth the boke ne can not ministre the mistery of prestbode to the people, ne they knowe not God, they ne helde hem not apayed, as sayth the boke of sodeyne flesche that was to hem offered, but they toke by force the flesshe that was raw. Certes, so that these shrewes ne helde hem not apayed of rosted and sodde flesche, with which the people fedde hem in greate reuerence, but they wol haue rawe flesche of folkes wyues and her doughters, a certes these women ỳ cõsente to her harlotry done

great wronge to Christ and to holy church, al halowes, and al soules, for they byreue al these hem that shulde worschyp Christe, and holy churche, and praye for christen soules, and therfore haue such preestes and her lemmans also that consente to her lecherye, the cursing of al the court christen, til they come to amendemente. The thyrde spece of auoutrye is somtyme betwixt a mã & his wyfe, & that is whan they take no regarde in her assemblynge, but only to her fleschly delyte, as sayeth saynt Jerome, & ne reken of nothing but that they ben assẽbled bycause they ben maryed, al is good ynough, as they thinke: but in suche folke hath the dyuell power, as sayde the angell Raphaell to Tobye, for in her assemblyng they put Jesu Christ out of her herte, and gyue her selfe to all ordure.

The fourthe spece is the asseble of hem that bene of affinitie, or els of hem, wyth which her fathers or her kynred haue dealed in the synne of lecherye: Thys synne maketh hem lyke to houndes, that take no kepe to kynred And certes parentele is in two maners, eyther ghostly or fleschly: gostly as for to deale wyth hys godsyb, for ryght so as he that engendreth a chyld is hys fleschly father: right so is hys God father hys father espirituell: for whyche a woman maye in no lesse synne assemble wyth her godsyb, than wyth her owne fleschly brother. The fifth spece is that abhominable synne, of whyche abhominable syn no man vnneth ought speke ne write nathlesse it is openly rehersed in holy writ. Thys cursed synne done men and women in diuers entente and in diuers maner: But though that holy writ speke of horrible syn, certes holy writte maye not be defoyled, no more thã the sũne that shyneth on the dongh yll. Another synne apertayneth to lecherye that cometh sleping, & this syn cometh often to hem that be maydens, & also to hem that be corrupt, & this syn mẽ cal Polucion, that commeth of thre maners: Somtime of languyshyng of body, for the humours bene to ranke & aboundaunt in the body of man, sõtime of infirmite, for febleneſſe of the vertue retentife, as phisike maketh mencion: Somtime for surfet of meate & drinke, & somtime of vylanous thoughtes that ben enclosed in mannes mynd whã he goeth to slepe which maye not be without synne, for wych men muste kepe hem wyselye, or elles maye men synne full greuously.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum luxurie.

Owe cometh the remedy ayenst lecherye, & ỳ is generally chastitie and continence that restrayne all disordinate meuynges ỳ come of fleschely talentes. And euer the greater meryte shal he haue that moost restreyneth the wycked chaufynges of the ordoure of thys sin, & thys is in two maners: That is to say chastite in mariage & chastite in widowhed Now shalt ỳ vnderstande ỳ matrimony is leful asseblyng of man & woman that receiuen by vertue of thys sacramente, the bonde throughe whyche they maye not be departed in all her lyfe, that is to saye, while that they lyue both. Thys, as sayeth the boke, is a full greate sacramente, God made it as I haue sayd in paradyse, and wolde hym selfe be borne in mariage: and for to halowe maryage he was at a weddynge, where as he turned water in to wyne, whyche was the fyrste miracle that he wrought in earthe before hys disciples. Trew effecte of mariage clenseth fornication and replenysheth holye churche of good lynage, for that is the ende of mariage, and chaungeth deedly synne in to venyal sinne, bitwene hem that ben wedded, & maketh the hertes as one of hem that bene wedded, as well as the bodyes.

Very mariage was established by god er that syn began, whan naturall law was in his ryght poynt in Paradise. And it was ordayned that o man shulde haue but a woman, and o womã but o man, as saith saint Augustyne, by many reasons.

Fyrste for mariage is figured betwixt Christ and holy churche.

Another is for a man is head of a womã alway by ordinaunce it shuld be so. For yf a womã had mo men thã one, than shuld she haue mo heedes thã one, and that were a ryght horrible synne before God, and also a woman myght not please so manye folke at ones: and also there shuld neuer be rest ne quiete amonge hem, for eche of hem wolde

aske

aske her owne ryght. And furthermore, no man shulde know hys owne engendrure, ne who shulde haue hys heritage, and the woman shulde be the lesse beloued.

Now cometh how that a man shulde bere hym wyth hys wyfe, & namely in two thynges: that is to saye, in sufferaunce and reuerence, as shewed Christ whan he fyrste made womã. For he ne made her of ý heade of Adam, for she shulde not claym to greate lordshyp, for there as the woman hathe the maystrye, she maketh to muche variaunce, there nede no mo ensamples of thys, the experience al daye, ought ynough suffice.

Also certes, God ne made not woman of the fote of Adam, for she shuld not behold to lowe, for she can not paciently suffre: but God made woman of the rybbe of Adam, for woman shulde be felowe vnto man.

Man shulde beare hym to hys wyfe in fayth, in trouth, and in loue (as sayth saynt Paule) that a man shulde loue hys wyfe, as Christ loueth holye churche, that loued it so well that he dyed for it: so shulde a man for hys wyfe, yf it were nede.

Nowe howe that a woman shulde be subiecte to her husbande: that telleth saynte Peter, fyrst in obedience. And also as sayth the decree: A womã that is a wyfe, as long as she is a wyfe she hath none auctoritye to swere ne beare witnes without leaue of her husbande ý is her Lorde, alwaye he shulde be so by reason. She shulde also serue hym in al honestye & be attẽpperate of her array.

I woll well that they shulde set her entent to please her husbãdes but not be queintise of her araye. S. Jerom sayeth: wiues ý be apparelled in sylke and precious purple, ne mowe nat clothe hem in Jesu Christe. Saynt Greg. sayeth also: that no wyghte seketh precious aray, but only for bayngloryto be honoured the more of the people. It is great foly a woman to haue great araye, outwarde, and in her selfe be foule inwarde A wyfe shulde also be mesurable in lokynge in bearyng, and in laughing, and discrete in al her wordes and her dedes, and aboue all worldelye thynges she shulde loue her husbande wyth al her herte, and to hym be true of her bodye: So shulde an husbande be to hys wyfe: For sythe that all the body is the husbandes, so shuld her hert be, or els there is betwixte hem two, as in that no perfyte mariage. Than shall men vnderstande that for thre thynges a man and hys wyfe fleshly may assemble. The first is for thentent of engendrure of chyldren to the seruice of god for certes that is the cause finall of matrimony. Another cause is to yelde ech of hem to other ý dettes of her bodyes, for neyther of hem hath power of ther owne bodyes. The thyrde is to eschew lechery and vyllanye. The fourthe is forsoth deedlye synne. As to the fyrste is meritorye: the seconde also, for as sayeth the decre, that she hath meryte of chastite that yeldeth to her husbande the dette of her body, yee though it be ayenst her lykynge and the luste of her herte. The thyrde maner is venyall synne, and truelye scarcely may anye of these be wythout venyal synne for the corruption and for the delyte. The fouth maner is for to vnderstand if they assemble only for amorous loue, and for none of the forsayde causes, but for to accomplyshe the brennynge delyte, they recke not howe ofte, sothlye it is deedly sinne: and ý wyth sorowe some folke woll payne hem more to do then to her appetyte sufficeth.

The seconde maner of chastitye is for to be a clene wydowe and eschew the embrasynges of a man, and desyre the embrasynge of Jesu Christe: These bene those that haue bene wyues, and haue forgote her husbandes, and also women that haue done lecherye, and bene receyued by penitence. And certes yf that a wyfe coulde kepe her all chaste by licence of her husbande, so that she yeue neuer none occasion that he offende, it were to her a greate meryte. Thys maner of woman that obseruetb chastitie in clothynge & in countenaunce, abstinent in eatinge & drinkyng, in spekyng and in dede, she is the vessel or the bore of the blessed Maudelayne ý fulfylleth holy church of good ordour. The thyrde maner of chastitie is virginitie, and it behoueth that she be holye in herte, & clene of body, than is she spouse of Jesu Christe, and she is the lifc of aungels: she is the prayseynge of thys worlde, & she is as these martyrs in regaly: she hath in her ý tonge maye not tell ne herte thynke. Virginitie bare our Lorde Jesu Christe, and virgyn was hym selfe.

Another remedy ayenst lechery is speci-

allye to withdrawe suche thynges as yeue occasyon to that bylanye: as ease, eatynge, and drinkyng: For certes whan the potte boylleth stronglye, the best remedy is to wyth draw the fyre. Slepyng longe in great quiete is also a great nourycye to lecherye.

Another remedy ayenst lechery is that a man or a woman eschew the company of hem by whiche he douteth to be tẽpted: For all be it so that the dede is withstande, yet is there great temptation. Sothly a whyte walle, all thoughe it ne brenne not fullye by stickyng of the candell, yet is the wal blacke of the flame. Ful oft tyme I rede that no mã trust in hys owne perfection, but he be stronger than Sampson, or holyer than Daniel or wyser than Salomon.

Nowe after that I haue declared you as I can, the seuyn deedly sinnes, and some of her braũches, wyth her remedies: Sothly yf I coulde, I wolde tel you the ten commaundementes, but so hye doctrine I put to diuines. Nathlesse I hope to God they ben touched in this treatise eche of hem.

¶ Sequitur secunda pars penitentie.

NOwe for asmuche as the seconde parte of penitence stont in confession of mouth, as I be gan in the fyrste chap, I saye saynte Austen sayeth.

Sinne is euery worde and euery dede and all that men coniecte agaynst the lawe of Jesu Christe, and thys is for to synne in hert, in mouth, and in dede, by the fyue wyttes, which ben syght, hearyng, smellyng, tastyng or sauour, & felynge. Nowe it is good to vnderstande, that that agredgeth muche euery sinne. Thou shalt consider what thou art that doste the syn, whether thou be male or female, yonge or olde, gentyll or thrall, free or seruaunt, hole or sicke, wedded or single, ordred or vnordred, wyse or fole, clerke or seculer, yf she be of thy kynrede bodilye or gostly, or no, yf any of thy kynred haue synned wyth her or no, & many mo thynges. Another circumstaunce is this, whether it be done in fornicacion or in aduoutry or no, in maner of homiced or no, horrible great synnes or smal, & how long thou hast cõtinued in synne. The thyrde circumstaunce is the place there thou hast done synne, wheder in other mennes houses or in thyne owne, in felde, in church or in churchyarde, in church dedecate or no. For yf the churche be halowed & man or woman spyl his kinde, within that place by way of sinne or wicked tẽptation, the churche is enterdited, & the preest that dyd such a billany, the terme of all hys life he shulde no more synge masse, and if he did, he shulde do deedly synne at euery tyme ẏ he so songe masse. The fourth circũstaũce is by which mediatours or by which messãgers, or for enticement, or for cõsentment to beare cõpany with felowshyp. For manye a wretche for to beare cõpanye, wol go to the dyuel of heel: wherfore they that egge or cõsent to the sinne, ben parteners of the sinne, & of the temptation of the synner. The fyfth circumstaunce is howe many times that he hath synned, if it be in his minde, & how oft he hath fallen. For he that oft falleth in syn, he dispiceth the mercy of God and encreseth his sinne, & is vnkynde to Christ, & he wexeth the more feble to withstande syn, & synneth the more lyghtly & the later ryseth, & is more slow to shriue him, & namely to him ẏ is his cõfessour. For whiche that folke whã they fal ayen to her olde folyes, eyther they leaue their olde cõfessour, or els they depart her shrift in diuers partes. But sothly suche departed shrifte deserueth no mercy of God for her synnes. The sixte circumstaunce is, why that a man sinneth as by temptation: & if him selfe procure that temptation, or by the excitinge of other folke, or if he syn wyth a woman by force or by her assente, or yf the woman maugre her heede haue be a forced or none. This shall she tell, whether it were for couetise or pouertye, or yf it were by her procurement or no, and such other thinges. The seuenth circumstaunce is, in what maner he hathe do hys synne, or howe that she hathe suffred that folke haue do to her. And the same shall the man tell playnly wyth all the circumstaunces, and whether he hathe synned wyth cõmen bordel woman or none or done hys synne in holye tymes or none, in fasting time or none, or before hys shrifte or after hys later shryte, and hath parauenture broke therby his penaunce enioyned by whose helpe or whose counsayle, by sorcerye or craft

or craste, all muste be tolde, & all these thynges after as they be gret or smale, & grudge the conscience of man or womā. And eke the preest that is thy iuge, maye the better be auysed of his iugement in yeuyng of penaūce and that is after thy contrition. For vnderstande wel that after tyme that a man hath defoyled hys baptyme by synne, yf he woll come to saluation there is none other waye but by penaunce, shryfte, and satisfaction, & namely by the two, yf there be a confessoure to whom he may shriue him, and the thyrde yf he haue lyfe to perfourme it. Than shall a man loke and consider, that yf he wol make a trewe & a profitable confession, there must be foure conditions.

First it must be in sorowfulnesse of hert as sayth the kynge Ezechiel to God, I wol remēbre me al the yeres of my lyfe in bitternesse of my hert. This cōdition of bytternes hath fyue signes: The fyrst is that confession muste be shamefaste, not for to couer ne hide her sin for he hath offēded his lord god & defoyled his soule. And herof sayth saynte Augustyn: The herte traueyleth for shame of his sinne, & for he hath greate shamefastnes he is worthy to haue gret mercy of god which was the cōfession of the Publicaue, that wolde not heaue vp hys eyen to heuen for he had offended god of heuen, for which shamfastnesse he had anone ý mercy of god. And therof sayeth saynt Augustyn: ý suche shameful folke be next forgeueuenesse & mercy.

Another signe is humilite in cōfession, of which sayth saynt Peter: Humbleth you vnder the might of god: ý hande of God is strong in cōfession, for therby god forgeueth the thy sinnes, for he alone hath the power And this humilite shalbe in hert, and in outwarde signes: For righte as he hath humilitie to God in his herte, ryghte so shulde he humble his bodye outwarde to the preest, ý sytteth in goddes stede. For which in no maner, syth that Christe is souerayne, and the Preeste meane and mediatoure betwixte Christe, and the synner is laste by waye of reason. Than shulde nat the synner sytte as hye as his cōfessour but knele before him or at his fete, but yf syckenesse cause it: For he shal not take hede who sytteth there, but in whose place he sytteth. A man that hath trespassed to a Lorde & cometh to aske mercye and make hys accorde, and sytteth hym downe by hym, men wolde holde hym outragious and nat worthy so sone for to haue remission of hys trespace.

The thyrde signe is, howe thy shryfte shulde be full of teares yf thou maye, and yf thou maye nat wepe wyth thy bodily eyen, than wepe in thyne herte, whyche was the confession of saynte Peter. For after that he had forsake Jesu Christe, he wente out and wepte full bitterly.

The fourth signe is, that thou ne lette nat for shame to shewe thy cōfession: Such was the confession of Magdaleyn, that ne spared for no shame of hem that were at the feest, to go to oure Lorde Jesu Christe, and beknowe to hym her synnes. The fyfth signe is, that a man or a woman be obeysaunte to receyue the penaunce that hem is enioyned. For certes Jesu Christe, for the offences of man was obedient to deth. The seconde condition of very confession is, that it be hastely done. For certes, yf a man had a deedly wounde, euer the lenger that he taryeth to heale hym selfe, the more wolde it corrupte and haste hym to hys deathe, and also the wounde wolde be the worse for to heale. And ryghte so farethe synne, that longe tyme is in a man vnshewed. Certes a man ought hastelye shewe hys synnes for manye causes, as for drede of deathe, that commeth ofte sodaynlye, and no certayne what tyme it shall be, ne in what place, and also the drenchyng of o synne draweth in another: and also the lenger that he taryeth the farther he is fro Christe. And if he abide to hys last day, scarcely may he shriue hym or remembre hym of hys synnes, or repente for the greuous maladye of hys death. And for as muche as he ne hathe in hys lyfe herkened Jesu Christe whan he hath spoken, he shall crye to Jesu Christe at hys last day and scarcely woil he herken hym. And vnderstande that thys condition muste haue foure thynges.

Thy shryfte must be prouided before & auysed, for wycked hast doth no profyte, yf a mā shriue him of hys synnes, be it of pride or enuye, and so forthe wyth the speces and circumstaunces of synne. And that he haue cōprehended in hys mynde the nombre and greatnesse of hys synnes, and howe longe

he hathe lyen in syn. And also that he hathe be contrite for hys synnes, and in stedfaste purpose (by the grace of God) neuer ayen to fal to synne. And also that he drede & counterwayte hym selfe that he flye the occasion of synne, to whych he is enclined. Also thou shalt shryue the of al thy synnes to a man, & not part to o man and part to another, that is to vnderstande, in entent to depart thy cõfession for shame or drede, for it is but stranglynge of thy soule. For certes Jesu Christe is entierly al good, in hym nys none imperfection, and therfore eyther he forgyueth all perfeitely, or els neuer a deale. I saye nat ẏ yf thou be assigned to thy penytencer for certayne synne that thou arte bounde to shewe hym all ẏ remenant of thy synnes, of which thou haste bẽ shryuen of thy curate, but yf it lyke to the of thy humilite, thys is no parte of thy shrift. Ne I say nat there as I speke of diuision of cõfession, that yf thou haue licence to shryue the to a discrete & an honeste preeste where the lyketh, & by lycence of thy curate, that thou ne mayest well shryue the to him of al thy synnes. Let no synne be vntolde as farre as thou hast remembraunce. And whan thou shalt be shryuen to thy curate, tell hym all thy synnes that thou haste do syth thou wast laste shriuen. Thys is no wycked entent of diuision of shrift.

Also the very shrift asketh certayne cõdicions. First that thou shriue the by thy fre wyl, nat constrayned for shame of folke, sickenesse, ne such other thynges. For it is reason, that he that trespaceth by his free wyll that by his free wyl he confesse his trespace and that none other man tell hys synne but him selfe, ne he shal nat nay ne deny his sin, ne wrath him ayenst the preest for amonysshyng him to leaue hys synne. The seconde condition is, that thy shrykte be lauful, that is to say, that thou shriuest the. And also the preest that hereth thy confession be veryly in fayth of holy churche, and that a man ne be not dispeyred of the mercy of Jesu Christe, as Caym or Judas. And also a man muste accuse him selfe of his owne trespace & not a nother, but he shall blame & wyte hym selfe and his owne malice of his synne, and none other: But natheleſſe if that another man be occasion or entycer of hys syn, or the estate of a person be such by which his synne is agredged, or els ẏ he may not playnly shryue him but he tel the personne wyth whiche he hath synned, than may he tell, so that his entent ne be not to backbyte the person, but only to declare hys confession. Thou ne shalte not also make no leasynges in thy confessiõ for humilitie, parauenture to say that thou hast commised and done suche synnes as of whyche that thou ne were neuer gyltye. For saint Augustyn sayeth, yf that thou bicause of thyne humilitye makest leasynges of thy selfe, though thou were not in sinne before, yet arte thou than in synne through thy leasynge. Thou muste also shewe thy synne by thyne owne proper mouthe, but thou be domb & not by no letter: For thou that hast done the synne, shalte haue the shame therfore. Thou shalt not eke paynt thy cõfession by fayre subtell wordes, to couer the more thy synne: for than begylest thou thy selfe & nat the preest, thou muste tell it playne, be it neuer so foule ne horrible. Thou shalte also shryue the to a preest, that is discrete to coũsayle the, and also thou shalte nat shriue the for vayngloryę, ne for ypocrisye, ne for no cause but only for the loue and feare of Jesu Christ, and heale of thy soule. Thou shalte not also ren to the preest sodainly to tel him lightly thy sinne, as who sayth, to tel a iape or a tale, but auysedly and with good deuotion: And generally shryue the ofte yf thou ofte fal ofte aryse by confession. And though thou shriue the ofter than ones of the synne which thou hast be shriuen of, it is the more merite. And as sayth saynt Augustyn, thou shalt haue the more lyghtly forgyueness and grace of God, both of sinne and payne. And certes ones a yere at leest, it is laufull to be houseled, for surely ones a yere all thynges renouellen.

Nowe haue I tolde you of very cõfession, that is the seconde parte of penitence.

¶ Explicit secunda pars penitentie: Et sequitur tertia pars.

The thyrde part of penitence is satisfaction, & that stant moste generallye in almesse dedes & bodily payne. Now ben there thre maner of almes. Cõtritiõ of hert, where a mã offreth him selfe to god.

Another

An other is, to haue pytie of default of his neyghbour. And the thyrde is in gyuyng of good counsayle, goostly and bodily wheras men haue nede, and namely in sustenance of mans fode. And take kepe ý a mã hath nede of these thynges generallye, he hath nede of fode of clothing, & of herbrow: He hath nede of charitable counsayle, visityng in prison in sickenesse, and sepulture of his body. And if thou mayst nat visite the nedeful in thy persone, visite them with thy message & yeftes. These been generally the almesse & workes of charite, of hem that haue temporal riches or discretion in counsaylyng. Of these workes shalte thou here at the daye of dome.

These almesses shalt thou do of thyn owne proper thynges, & hastely & priuely if thou mayst: But natheleſſe, if thou mayst nat do it priuely, thou shalte nat forbeare to do almesse though mẽ se it, so that it be nat do for thanke of the worlde, but only for thanke of Jesu christ. For as witnesseth saynt Mathu Cap.v. A cyte maye nat be hydde that is set on a mountayne, ne men lyght nat a lantern to putte it vnder abusshel but sette it vpon a candelsticke to yeue light to men in ý house.

Right so shul your lyght, light before men that they maye se your good workes, & glorify our father that is in heuen.

Now as to speake of bodely payne, it stont in prayers, wakyng, fastyng, vertuous teachyng of orisons. And ye shal vnderstonde, that orisons or prayers is to saye a pitious wyll of herte, that setteth it in God, and expresseth by worde outwarde to remeue harmes, and to haue thynges spiritual and durable, and somtyme temporall thynges. Of which orisons, certes in the oryson of the pater noster: hath Jesu Chryst enclosed moost thynges. Certes it is priuileged of thre thinges in his dignitie, for whyche it is more digne than anye other prayer, for that Jesu Chryst hym selfe made it, and it is short, for it shuld be lerned ý more lyghtly, & to holde it the more easye in hert, and helpe hym selfe the ofter with that orison: And for a manne shulde be the lesse werye to saye it, & not excuse hym to lerne it, it is so shorte and easye: and for it comprehendeth in it selfe all good prayers. The exposition of this holy prayer that is so excellent and digne, I refere to the masters of theology, saue thus moche woll I saye, that whan thou prayest, that God shoulde forgeue the thyne offences, as thou forgeuest them that haue offended the. Be well ware that thou be not oute of charitye. This holy orison aminisheth also venial syn and therfore it appertayneth specyallye to penitence.

This prayer must be truly sayd and in parfyte fayth, and that men praye to God ordinatly, discretly, and deuoutly, and alwaye a man shall put his wyll to be subiecte to the wyll of God. This oryson muste also be sayd with great humblenesse and full pure & honestlye, and not to the auoyaunce of anye man or woman: It muste also be continued with the workes of charitie. It auayleth al so ayenst the vices of the soule: For as saith saynct Jerome: By fastyng ben saued the vices of the flesshe, and by prayer the vyces of the soule.

After this thou shalt vnderstond, that bodily prayer stont in waking. For Jesu christ sayth: wake ye and praye, that ye ne entre in to wycked temptation. Ye shul vnderstonde also, that fastyng stont in thre thynges: In forberyng of bodily mete and drinke, in forbering of wordly iolitie, and in forberynge of deedly syn: this is to say: that a man shall kepe hym fro deedly syn with all his myght

And thou shalt vnderstond also, that god ordayned fastynge, and to fastynge pertayneth four thynges. Largenesse to pore folke gladnesse of hert spiritual: not to be angrye ne anoyed, ne grutche for he fasteth and also resonable hour to eat by measure, that is to saye, a man shall not eate in vntyme, ne syt the lenger at the table, for he fasteth.

Than shalt thou vnderstonde, that bodily payne stont in disciplyne or teachynge by worde or wrytynge, or by example. Also in wearynge of heer or stamyn or of harbergions on her naked flesshe for Chrystes sake, and that suche maner penaunces, ne make nat thyne hert bytter or angrye, ne anoyed of thy selfe, for better is to cast awaye thyne heere, than to cast away the swetnesse of Jesu Chryst. And therfore sayth saynct Poule: Clothe you, as they that ben chosen of God in hert of misericorde, debonartie, suffraũce and suche maner of clothyng, of which Jesu Chryste is more pleased, than with heeres or habergions.

Than is disciplyne also, in knockynge of thy brest, in scourgyng with roddes, in knelyng, in tribulation, in suffrynge pacientlye wronges that ben do to the, & also in paciēt suffrynge of sycknesse, or lesyng of worldlye goodes or cattell, or wyfe, chylde, or other frendes.

Than shalt thou vnderstande which thinges distourbe penaunce, and that is in foure maners, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is desperation: And for to speake fyrste of drede for whiche he weneth that he maye suffre no penaunce. There ayenst is remedy for to thynke that bodilye penaunce is but shorte and lytle, at regarde of the payne of hell that is so cruell and so longe, that it lasteth without ende.

Nowe ayenst the shame that a man hath to shryue hym, and namely these ypocrytes that wold be hold so perfyte, that they haue no nede to shryue hem. Ayenste that shame shulde a man thynke that by way of reason, that he that hath not be ashamed to do foul thynges: certes hym ought not be ashamed for to do fayre thynges, and that is cōfessyons. A man shuld also thinke that god seeth and knoweth all his thoughtes and all hys werkes: To hym may nothyng be hyd ne couered. Men shoulde also remembre hem of the shame that is to com at the day of dome to hem that ben not penitent and shryuen in this present lyfe. For all the creatures in erth and in hell shall se apertly, all that they hydde in this present worlde. Nowe for to speake of the hope of hem that bene so negligent and slow to shryue them: that stondeth in two maners. That one is, that he hopeth for to lyue longe, and for to purchace moche rychesse for his delyte, and thā he wol shriue hym: And as he sayeth, hym semeth than tymely ynough to come to shryft.

An other is of surquidrie that he hath in christes mercy. Ayenst the fyrst vyce he shal thynke that our lyfe is in no sykerneke, and also that all the rychesses in this world ben in aduenture, and passe as a shadowe on the wall: And as sayth saynct Gregorye, that it appertayneth to the great ryghteousnesse of god, that neuer shal the payne stynte of hem that neuer wold withdrawe hem fro synne her thankes, but euer continued in synne: for that perpetuall wyll to do synne, shall they haue perpetuall payne. wanhope is in two maners. The fyrst wanhope is in the mercy of god. That other is that they thynke that they ne myght not longe perseuer in goodnesse. The fyrste wanhope commeth of that he demeth that he hath synned so greatlye & so oft and so longe lyen in synne, that he shal not be saued. Certes agaynst that cursed wā hope shuld he thynke that the passion of Jesu Christe is more stronge for to vnbynde, than synne is stronge for to bynde. Ayenste the seconde wanhope he shal thynke that as often as he falleth he maye rysse agayne by penitence: and though he neuer so long hath lyen in synne, the mercy of Christ is alway redy to receyue hym to mercye. Ayenste the wanhope that he deemeth, he shoulde not longe perseuer in goodnesse, he shall thynke, that the feblenesse of the deuyl may nothyng do but yf men woll suffre hym, and also he shall haue strēgth of the helpe of Jesu christ and of all holye churche, and the protection of angels yf hym lyst.

Than shal men vnderstande what is the fruyte of penaunce, and after the wordes of Jesu Christ, it is endlesse blesse of heauen. There ioye hath neuer ende, no contrariety of wo ne greuaunce: ther al harmes ben passed of this presēt lyfe, there as is ỳ sykernes fro the payne of hell, there as is the blysfull company that reioyse hem euermo, euerichе of others ioye: ther as the body of man, that somtyme was foule and dark, is more clere than the sunne: there as the body that somtyme was sycke, freyle, and feble, and mortall, is immortall, and so stronge and hole, that there ne maye nothyng appeyre it: ther as is neyther hungre, thurst ne colde, but euery soule replenysshed with the syght of the perfyte knowynge of God. This blysfull reygne may men purchace by pouertie espirituel, and the glory by lownesse, the plentie of ioye by hungre and thurst, and the rest by trauayle, and the lyf by deth and mortification of syn: to whiche lyfe he vs bryng that bought vs with his pecious bloude. AMEN.

Here endeth the persons tale.

Here begynneth the Plowmans Prologue.

THe Ploweman plucked vp his plowe.
whan mydsommer mone was comen in
And sayd his beestes shuld eate ynowe
And lyge in the grasse vp to the chynne
They ben feble both oxe and cowe
Of hem nys left but bone and skynne
He shoke of share and cultre of drowe
And honge his harneys on a pynne.

¶ He toke his tabarde and his staffe eke
And on his heed he set his hat
And sayde he wolde saynt Thomas seke
On pylgremage he goth forth platte
In scrippe he bare both breed and lekes
He was forswonke and all forswatte
Men might haue sene through both his eke
And euery wang toth and where it sat (kes

¶ Our hoste beheldé wele all about
And sawe this man was sunne ybrent
He knewe well by his senged snoute
And by his clothes that were to rent
He was a man wont to walke about
He nas nat alway in cloystre ypent
He coulde not religiouslyche loute
And therfore was he fully shent.

¶ Our host him axed, what man art thou.
Syr (quod he) I am an hyne
For I am wont to go to the plowe
And erne my meate yet that I dyne
To swete and swynke I make auowe
My wyfe and chyldren therwith to fynde
And serue God and I wyst howe
But we leude men bene full blynde.

¶ For clerkes saye we shullen be fayne
For her lyuelod swet and swynke
And they ryght nought vs gyue agayne
Neyther to eate ne yet to drinke
The mowe by lawe, as they sayne
Vs curse and dampne to hell brynke
Thus they putten vs to payne
with candles queynt and belles clynke.

¶ They make vs thralles at her lust
And sayne we mowe nat els be saued
They haue the corne and we the dust
who speaketh ther agayn they say he raued
¶ what man q̃ our host, canst thou preache
Come nere and tell vs some holy thynge
¶ Syr quod he, I herde ons teache
A prest in pulpyt a good preachynge

¶ Saye on quod our host, I the beseche.
Syr I am redy at your byddyng
I praye you that noman me reproche
whyle that I am my tale tellynge.

Thus endeth the prologue, and here foloweth the fyrst parte of the tale.

A sterne

Sterne stryke is stered newe
In many stedes in a stounde
Of sodry sedes that bene sewe
It semeth that som ben vnsounde
For some be great growen vngrounde
Some ben souble, symple and small
whether of hem is falser founde
The falser foule mote hym befall

¶ That one syde is that I of tell
Popes, cardynals and prelates
Parsons, monkes, and freers fell
Priours, abbottes of great estates
Of heuyn and hell they kepe the yates
And Peters successours they ben all
This is demed by olde dates
But falsched foule mought it befall

¶ The other syde ben poore and pale
And people put out of prease
And seme caytyffes fore a cale
And euer in one without encrease
I clepeth lollers and londlese
who toteth on hem they bene vntall
They ben arayed all for the peace,
But falsched foule mote it befall.

¶ Many a countrey haue I sought
To knowe the falser of these two
But euer my trauayle was for nought
All so ferre as I haue go
But as I wandred in a wro
In a wodde beside a wall
Two foules sawe I sytte tho
The falser foul mote hym befall.

¶ That one dyd plede on the Popes syde
A gryffon of a grymme stature
A Pellycane withouten pryde
To these lollers layde his lure
He mused his matter in measure
To counsayle Chryst euer gan he call
The gryffon shewed as sharpe as fyre
But falsched foule mote it befall.

¶ The Pellycan began to preache
Both of mercy and of mekenesse
And sayd that Chryst so gan vs teache
And meke and mercyable gan blesse
The Euangely beareth wytnesse
A lambe he lykeneth Christ ouer all
In tokenynge that he mekest was
Sith pryde was out of heuen fall.

¶ And so shulde euery Christned be
Preestes, Peters successours
Beth lowlyche and of lowe degree.
And vsen none erthly honours

Neythe

Neyther crowne, ne curious couetours
Ne pylloure, ne other proude pall
Ne nought to cofren vp great treasours
For falched foule mote it befall

¶ Preests shulde for no cattel plede.
But chasten hem in charite
Ne to no bateyle shulde men lede
For inhaunsyng of her owne degree
Nat wylne syttynges in hye see
Ne souerayntie in house ne hall
All worldly worshippe defye and flee
For who so wylleth highnes foule shall fall

¶ Alas who may suche sayntes call
That wylneth welde erthlye honour
As lowe as Lucifere suche shall fall
In baleful blacknesse ybuylden her boure
That eggeth the people to errour
And maketh them to hem thrall
To Chryst I holde suche one traytour
As lowe as Lucifer suche one shall fall.

¶ That wylleth to be kynges peeres
And hygher than the Emperour
Some that were but poore freers
Nowe wollen waxe a warryour
God is nat her gouernour.
That holdeth noman his permagall
whyle couetyse is her counsaylour
All suche falched mote nede fall.

¶ That hye on horse wylleth ryde
In glytterande golde of great araye
Ipaynted and portred all in pryde
No cõmen knyght maye go so gaye
Chaunge of clothyng euery daye
with golden gyrdles great and small
As boystous as is bere at baye
All suche falched mote nede fall.

¶ with pryde punyshed the poore
And some they sustayne with sale
Of holy churche maketh an hore
And fylleth her wombe with wyne and ale
with money fylleth many a male
And chaffren churches when they fall
And telleth the people a leude tale
Suche false faytours foule them befall.

¶ with chaunge of many maner meates
with songe and solace syttynge longe
And fylleth her wombe, and fast fretes
And from the meate to the gonge
And after meat with harpe and songe
And eche man mote hem lordes call
And hote spyces euer amonge
Suche false faytours foule hem fall

¶ And myters mo than one or two
Iperled as the quenes heed
A staffe of golde, and pyrey lo
As heuy as it were made of lead
with cloth of golde both newe and redde
with glytterande golde as grene as gall
By dome wyll dampne men to deed
All suche faytours foule hem fall.

¶ And Chrystes people proudly curse
with brode bokes, and braying bell
To putte pennyes in her purse
They woll sell both heuen and hel
And in her sentence and thou wylt dwell
They wyllen gesse in her gaye hall
And though the soth thou of hem tell
In great curlynge shalt thou fall.

¶ That is blessed, that they blesse
And cursed that they curse woll
And thus the people they oppresse
And haue their lordshyppes at full
And many be marchauntes of woll
And to purse penyes woll come thrall
The poore people they all to pull
Suche false faytours foule hem fall

¶ Lordes mote to hem loute
Obeysaunt to her brode blessyng
They ryden with her royall route
On a courser, as it were a kynge
with saddle of golde glyttryng
with curyous harneys quayntly crallyt
Stryoppes gaye of golde mastlyng
All suche falched foule befall it.

¶ Chrystes minysters clepen they bene
And rulen all in robberye
But Antichrist they seruen clene
Attyred all in tyrannye
wytnesse of Johns prophecye
That Antichriste is her admirall
Tyffelers attyred in trecherye
All suche faytours foule hem fall.
¶ who sayth that some of hem may synne

He shalbe done to be deed
Some of hem woll gladly wynne
All ayenst that whiche god forbed
All holyest they clepen her heed
That of her rule is regall
Alas that euer they eten breed
For all suche falshed woll foule fall

¶ Her heed loueth all honour
And to be worshypped in worde and dede
Kynges mote to hem knele and coure
To the Apostles, that chryst forbede
To Popes hestes suche taketh more hede
Than to kepe Chrystes cõmaundement
Of gold and syluer mote ben her wede
They holdeth hym hole omnipotent

¶ He ordayneth by his ordynaunce
To parysh preestes a powere
To another a greater auaunce
A greater poynt to his mystere
But for he is hyghest in erth here
To hym reserueth he many a poynt
But to Chryst that hath no pere
Reserueth he neyther opyn ne ioynt

¶ So semeth he aboue all
And Chryst abouen hym nothyng
whan he sytteth in his stall
Dampneth and saueth as hym thynke
Suche pryde tofore god doth stynke
An Angell bad John to hym nat knele
But only to god do his bowynge
Such wyllers of worship must nede euyll (fele.

¶ They ne clepen Chryst, but sctũs deus
And clepen her heed Sanctissimus
They that suche a sect sewys
I trowe they taken hem amysse
In erth here they haue her blysse
Her hye master is Belyal
Chrystes people from hem wysse
For all suche false wyll foule fall.

¶ They mowe both bynde and lose
And all is for her holy lyke
To saue or dampne they mowe chose
Betwene hem now is great stryke
Many a man is kylled with a knyke
To wete which of hem haue lordshyp shall
For suche Chryst suffred woundes fyue
For all suche falshed wyll foule fall.

¶ Chryst sayd: Qui gladio percutit
With swerde shall dye
He bad his preestes peace and gryth
And bade hem not drede for to dye
And bad them be both symple and slye
And carke not for no cattall
And trusteth on god that sytteth on hye
For all false shull foule fall.

¶ These wollen make men to swere
Ayenst Chrystes cõmaundement
And Chrystes membres all to tere
On roode, as he wer newe yrent
Suche lawes they make by cõmen assent
Echeon it choweth as a ball
Thus the poore be fully shent
But euer falshed foule it befall.

¶ They vsen no symonye
But sellen churches and priorys
Ne they vsen no enuye
But cursen all hem contrarys
And hyreth men by dayes and yeres
with strength to holde hem in her stall
And culleth all her aduersarys
Therfore falshed foule thou fall

¶ with purse they purchase personage
with purse they paynen hem to plede
And men of warre they woll wage
To bryngе her enemyes to the dede
And lordes lyues they woll lede
And moche take, and gyue but small
But he it so get, from it shall shede
And make suche false ryght foule fal

¶ They halowe nothyng but for hyre
Churche, font, ne vestement
And make orders in euery shyre
But preestes paye for the parchement
Of ryatours they taken rent
Therwith they smere the shyppes skall
For many churches ben ofte suspent
All suche falshed yet foule it fall.

Some lyueth nat in lecherye
But haunten wenches, widdowes & wyues
And punysheth the poore for putrye
Them selfe it vseth all theyr lyues
And but a man to them shryues
To heuen come neuer he shall
He shalbe cursed as be caytyues

To hell they sayne that he shall fall

¶There was more mercy in Maximyen
And in Nero, that neuer was good
Than is nowe in some of them
whan he hath on his furred hoode
They folowe Christ that shedde his blode
To heuen, as buckette in to the wall
Suche wreches ben worse than wode
And all suche faytours foule hem fall

¶They gyue her almesse to the ryche
To maynteynours, and to men of lawe
For to lordes they woll be lyche
An harlottes sonne nat worthe an hawe
Sothfastnesse suche han slawe
They kembe her crokettes with christall
And drede of god they haue downe drawe
All suche faytours foule hem fall

¶They maken parsons for the penny
And canons of her cardynals
Unnethes amongest hem all any
That he ne hath glosed the gospell fals
For Christ made neuer no cathedrals
Ne wyth hym was no cardynall
wyth a Redde hatte as vsyn mynstrals
But falsched foule mote it befall

¶Their tythyng, and her offryng both
They clemeth it by possessyon
Therof nyll they none forgo
But robben men as raunsome
The tythyng of Turpe lucrum
with these maisters is meynall
Tythyng of bribry, and larson
wyll make falsched full foule to fall

¶They taken to ferme her sompnours
To harme the people what they may
To pardoners, and false faytours
Sell her seales I dare well say
And all to holden great array
To multiply hem more metall
They drede full lytell domes day
whan all suche shall foule fall

¶Suche harlottes shull men dysclaunder
For they shullen make her gree
And ben as proude as Alexaunder
And sayne to the poore, wo be ye
By yere eche preeste shall paye hys fee
To encrease hys lemmans call
Suche heerdes shull well yuell the
And all suche false shull foule fall

¶And yf a man be falsely famed
And wolde make purgacioun
Than woll the offycers be agramed
And assigne hym fro towne to towne
So nede he must paye raunsome
Though he be clene, as is christall
And than haue an absolutioun
But all suche false shull foule fall

¶Though he be gyltie of the dede
And that he maye money pay
All the whyle his purse woll blede
He maye vse it fro day to day
These bysshoppes offycers gone full gay
And thys game they vsen ouer all
The poore to pyll is all theyr pray
All suche false shull foule fall

¶Alas, god ordayned neuer suche lawe
Ne no suche crafte of couetyse
He forbade it by hys sawe
Suche gouernours mowen of god agryse
For all his rules is ryghtwyse
These newe poyntes ben pure papall
And goddes lawe they dispyce
And all suche faytours shul foule fall

¶They sayne that Peter had the key
Of heuyn and hell, to haue and holde
I trowe Peter toke no money
For no synnes that he solde
Suche successours ben to bolde
In wynnyng all theyr wytte they wrall
Her conscience is waxen colde
And all suche faytours foule hem fall

¶Peter was neuer so great a fole
To leaue hys key with suche a lorell
Or to take suche cursed suche a tole
He was aduysed nothyng well
I trowe they haue the key of hell
Theyr maister is of that place marshall
For there they dressen hem to dwell
And with false Lucifere there to fall

¶They ben as proude as Lucifarre
As angry, and as enuyous
From good faythe they ben full farre

In couetyse they ben curyous
To catche catell as couytous
As houde, that for hungre woll yall
Ungoodly, and vngratious
And nedely suche falshed shal foule fall

¶ The pope and he were Peters heyre
Me thynke he erreth in this case
whan choyse of bysshoppes is in dispeyre
To chosen hem in dyuers place
A lorde shall write to hym for grace
For hys clerke anone pray he shall
So shall he spede hys purchase
And all suche false foule hem fall

¶ Though he can no more good
A lordes prayer shalbe spedde
Though he be wylde of wyll or wood
Nat vnderstandyng what men han redde
A leude boster, and that god forbede
As good a bysshoppe is my horse ball
Suche a Pope is foule be stedde
And at last woll foule fall

¶ He maketh bysshoppes for erthly thanke
And nothyng for Christes sake
Suche that ben full fatte and ranke
To soule heale none hede they take
All is well done what euer they make
For they shal answere at one fors all
For worldes thanke, suche worch and wake
And all suche false shall foule fall

¶ Suche that canne nat her Crede
wyth prayer shull be made prelates
Nother canne the gospell rede
Suche shull nowe welde hye estates
The hye goodes frendshyp hem makes
They toteth on her somme totall
Suche bere the keyes of hell yates
And all suche false shall foule fall

¶ They forsake for Christes loue
Traueyle, hungre, thurst, and colde
For they ben ordred euer all aboue
Out of youthe tyl they ben olde
By the dore they go, nat in to the folde
To helpe theyr shepe they nought trauall
Hyred men all suche I holde
And all suche false foule hem fall

¶ For Chryst her kyng they woll forsake
And knowe hym nought for hys pouerte
For Christes loue they woll wake
And drynke pyement ale aparte
Of god they seme nothyng a ferde
As lusty lyueth, as dyd Lamuall
And dryuen her shepe in to deserte
All suche faytours shull foule fall

¶ Christ hath .xij. Apostels here
Nowe say they, there may be but one
That may nat erre in no manere
who leueth nat this ben lost echone
Peter erred, so dyde nat John
why is he cleped the principall
Christ cleped hym Peter, but him selfȳ stone
All false faytours foule hem fall

¶ why cursen they the croysery
Christes christen creatures
For bytwene hem is nowe enuy
To be enhaunsed in honours
And christen lyuers with her labours
Fyr they leuyn on no man mortall
But do to dethe with dishonours
And all suche false foule hem fall

¶ what knoweth a tyllour at the plowe
The popes name, and what he hate
Hys crede suffyseth to hym ynowe
And knoweth a cardynall by hys hatte
Rough is the poore vnrightly latte
That knoweth Christ hys god royall
Suche maters be nat worth a gnatte
But suche false faytours foule hem fall

¶ A kyng shall knele and kysse hys showe
Chryst suffred a synfull to kysse his fete
Me thynketh he holdeth hym hye ynowe
So Lucifer dyd, that hye sette
Suche one me thynketh hym selfe forgete
Eyther to the trouth he was nat call
Chryst that suffred woundes wete
Shall make suche falshed foule fall

¶ They layeth out her large nettes
For to take syluer and golde
Fyllen coffers, and sackes fettes
There as they soules catche sholde
Her seruauntes be to them vnholde
But they can doublyn theyr rentall
To bygge hem castels, and bygge hem holde
And all suche false foule hem fall.

¶ Here

¶ Here endeth the fyrst parte of thys tale, and herafter foloweth the seconde parte

TO accorde with this worde fal
No more English can I fynde
Shewe another nowe I shall
For I haue moche to saye behynde
Howe preestes han the people pynde
As curteys Christ hath me kende
And putte thys matter in my mynde
To make thys maner men amende

¶ Shortly to shende hem, and shewe nowe
Howe wrongfully they worthe and walke
O hye god, nothyng they tell, ne howe
But in goddes worde, telleth many a balke
In hernes holde hem and in halke
And prechyn of tythes and offrende
And vntruely of the gospell talke
For hys mercy god it amende

¶ What is Antichrist to saye
But euyn Christes aduersary
Suche hathe nowe ben many a day
To Christes lyddyng full contrary
That from the trouthe clene varry
Out of the waye they ben wrende
And Christes people vntruely cary
God for hys pytie it amende

¶ That lyuen contrary to Christes lyfe
In hye pride agaynst mekenesse
Agaynst sufferaunce they vsen stryfe
And angre ayenst sobrenesse
Agaynst wysedome wylfulnesse
To Christes tales lytell tende
Agaynst measure outragyousnesse
But whan god woll it maye amende

¶ Lordly lyfe ayenst lowlynesse
And demyn all without mercy
And couetyse ayenst largesse
Agaynst trewth trechery
And agaynst almesse enuy
Agaynst Christ they comprehende
For chastyte they maynteyne lechery
God for hys grace thys amende

¶ Ayenst penaunce they vse delyghtes
Ayenst suffraunce stronge defence
Ayenst god they vsen yuel rightes
Agaynste pytie punishementes
Open yuell ayenst contynence
Her wycked wynnyng worse dispende
Sobrenesse they sette in to dispence
But god for hys goodnesse it amende

¶ Why cleymen they holy hys powere
And wranglen ayenst all hys hestes
Hys lyuyng folowen they nothyng here
But lyuen worse than wytlesse beestes
Of fyshe and fleshe they louen feestes
As lordes they ben brode ykende
Of goddes poore they haten gestes
God for hys mercy thys amende

¶ With Dyuers suche shall haue her dome
That sayne that they be Christes frendes
And do nothyng as they shulde done
All suche ben falser than ben fendes
On the people they ley suche bendes
As god is in erthe they han offende
Sucour for suche Christ nowe sende vs
And for hys mercy thys amende

¶ A token of Antichrist they be
Hys careckes ben nowe wyde yknowe
Receyued to prethe shall no man be
wythout token of hym I trowe
Eche christen preest, to prechyn owe
From god aboue they ben sende.
Goddes worde, to all folke for to showe
Synfull man for to amende

¶ Christ sente the poore for to preche
The royall ryche he dyd nat so
Nowe darr no poore the people teche
For Antichrist is ouer all her foe
Amonge the people he mote go
He hath bydden, all suche suspende
Some hath he hente, and thynketh yet mo
But all thys god may well amende

¶ All tho that han the worlde forsake
And lyuen loly, as god badde
In to her prison shullen be take
Betyn and bounden, and forthe ladde
Herof I trede no man be dradde
Christ sayd, hys shulde be shende
Eche man ought herof be gladde
For god full well it woll amende

¶ They take on hem royall powere
And saye they haue swerdes two
One curse to hell, one slee men here
For at hys takyng Christ had no mo
Yet Peter had one of tho
But Christ, to Peter smyte gan defende
And in to the sheth badde putte it tho
And all suche myscheues god amende

¶ Christ badde Peter kepe his shepe
And with his swerde forbade hym smyte
Swerde is no tole with shepe to kepe
But to sheperdes that shepe woll byte
Me thynketh suche sheperdes ben to wyte
Ayen her shepe with swerde that contende
They driue her shepe with great dispyte
But all thys god may well amende

¶ So successours to Peter be they nought
Whom Christ made chefe pastoure
Alwerde no sheperde vsen ought
But he wold slee, as a bochoure
For who so were Peters successour
Shulde bere hys shepe tyll hys backe bende
And shadowe hem from euery shoure
And all thys god maye wel amende

¶ Successours to Peter ben these
In that that Peter Christ forsoke
That had leuer the loue of god lese
Than a sheperde had to lese his hoke
He culleth the shepe as dothe the coke
Of hem taken the woll vntrende
And falsely glose the gospell boke
God for his mercy them amende

¶ After Christ had take Peter the kay
Christ sayd, he muste dye for man
That Peter to Christ gan withsay
Christ badde hym go behynde Sathan
Suche coũsaylours many of these men han
For worldes wele, god to offende
Peters successours they ben for than
But all suche god may well amende

¶ For Sathan is to say no more
But he that contrary to Christ is
In thys they lerne Peters lore
They sewen hym whan he dyd mysse
They folowe Peter forsothe in thys
In al that Christ wolde Peter reprehende
But nat in that that longeth to heuyn blysse
God for hys mercy hem amende

¶ Some of the Apostels they sewen in case
Of ought that I can vnderstonde
Hym that betrayed Christ, Judas
That bare the purse in euery londe
And al that he myght sette on honde
He hydde and stale, and myspende
His rule these traytours han in honde
Almighty God hem amende

¶ And at last hys lorde gan tray
Cursedly through hys false couetyse
So wolde these, trayen hym for money
And they wysten in what wyse
They be seker of the selfe ensyse
From all sothnesse they ben frende
And couetyse chaungen with queyntyse
Almighty God all suche amende

¶ Were Christ on erthe here ekte sone
These wolde dampne hym to dye
All hys hestes they han fordone
And sayne his sawes ben heresy
And ayenst his commaundementes they aye
And dampne all hys to be brende
For it lyketh nat hem suche losengery
God almighty hem amende

¶ These han more myght in Englande here
Than hath the kynge and all hys lawe
They han purchased hem suche powere
To taken hem whom lyste nat knawe
And say that heresy is her sawe
And so to prysone woll hem sende
It was nat so by elder dawe
God for hys mercy it amende

¶ The kynges lawe wol no man deme
Angerlyche withouten answere
But yf any man these mysqueme
He shalbe bayghted as a bere
And yet wel worse they woll hym tere
And in prysone woll hem pende
In gyues, and in other gere
Whan God woll, it maye mende

¶ The kyng taxeth nat hys men
But by assente of the commynalte
But these eche yere woll raunsom hem
Maysterfully, more than doth he
Her seales by yere better be

Than

Than is the kynges in extende
Her officers han gretter fee
But thys mischefe god amende

¶ For who so woll proue a testament
That is natt all worthe tenne pounde
He shall paye for the parchement
The thyrde parte of the money all rounde
Thus the people is raunsounde
They saye suche parte to hem shulde apende
There as they grypen it gothe to grounde
God for hys mercy it amende

¶ A symple fornycatioun
Twenty shyllynges he shall paye
And than haue an absolution
And all the yere vsen it forthe he maye
Thus they letten hem go a stray
They recke nat though the soule be brende
These keppn yuell Peters key
And all suche sheperdes God amende

¶ Wonder is, that the parlyament
And all the lordes of thys londe
Here to taken so lytell entent
To helpe the people out of her honde
For they ben harder in theyr bonde
Worse beate, and bytter brende
Than to the kyng is vnderstande
God hym helpe thys to amende

¶ What bysshoppes, what relygions
Han in thys lande as moche laye fee
Lorshyppes, and possessyons
More than the lordes, it semeth me
That maketh hem lese charyte
They mowe nat to God attende
In erthe they haue so hyghe degree
God for hys mercy it amende

¶ The Emperour yaf the pope somtyme
So hyghe lordshyp hym aboute
That at laste the sely kyme
The proude Pope putte hym out
So of thys realme is in doute
But lordes be ware and them defende
For nowe these folke be wonder stoute
The kynge and lordes nowe thys amende.

¶ Thus endeth the seconde parte of this tale, and herafter folowe-eth the thyrde.

Moyses lawe forbode it tho
That preestes shulde no lordshyppes welde
Christes Gospel byddeth also
That they shulde no lordshyppe helde
Ne Christes Apostels were neuer so bolde
No suche lordeshyppes to them enbrace
But smeren her shepe and kepe her folde
God amende hem for hys grace

¶ For they ne ben but countrefete
Men may knowe hem by her fruite
Her gretnesse maketh hem god forpete
And take hys mekenesse in dispyte
And they were poore and had but lyte
They nolde nat demen after the face
But norysshe her shepe, and hem nat byte
God amende hem for hys grace

¶ Gyson.

¶ What canst thou preche ayenst chanons
That men clepen seculere?
Pely. They ben curates of many towns
On erthe they haue great powere
They han great prebendes and dere
Some two or thre, and some mo
A personage to ben a playeng fere
And yet they serue the kynge also

¶ And lette to ferme all that fare
To whom that woll most gyue therfore
Some woll spende, and some woll spare
And some woll laye it vp in store
A cure of soule they care nat fore
So they mowe money take
whether her soules be wonne or lore
Her prokytes they woll nat forsake

¶ They haue a gederyng procuratour
That can the poore people enplede
And robben hem as a raynour
And to hys lorde the money lede
And catche of quicke and eke of dede
And richen hym and hys lorde eke
And to robbe the poore can gyue good rede
Of olde and yonge, of hole and syke

¶ Therwith they purchase hem lay fee
In londe, there hem lyketh best
And buylde also brode as a cyte

Bothe in the Est, and eke in the west
To purchase thus they ben ful prest
But on the poore they woll nought spende
Ne no good gyue to goddes gest
Ne sende hym some that all hath sende

¶By her seruyce suche woll lyue
And trusse that other in to treasour
Though all her paryshe dye vnshriue
They woll nat gyue a rose floure
Her lyke shulde be as a myrrour
Bothe to lered and to leude also
And teche the people her lele labour
Suche myster men ben all mysgo.

¶Some of hem ben harde nygges
And some of hem ben proude and gay
Some spende her good vpon gygges
And kynden hem of great aray
Alas, what thynke these men to say
That thus dispenden goddis good
At the dredefull domes daye
Suche wretches shulbe worse than wood

¶Some her churces neuer ne sye
Ne neuer o peny thyder ne sende
Though the poore parishens for hungre dye
O peny on hem wyl they nat spende
Haue they receyuynge of the rente
They recke neuer of the remenant
Alas the deuyll hath clene hem blent
Suche one is Sathanas soiournant

¶And vsen horedome and harlotry
Couetyse, pompe, and pride
Slouthe, wrathe, and eke enuy
And sewen synne by euery syde
Alas, where thynke suche tabyde
Howe woll they accomptes yelde
From hye God they mowe hem nat hyde
Suche wyllers wytte is nat worth a nelde

¶They ben so roted in richesse
That Christes pouert is forget
Serued wyth so many messe
Hem thynketh that Manna is no mete
All is good that they mowe gete
They wene to lyue euermore
But whan god at dome is sette
Suche treasour is a feble store

¶Unneth mote they matyns saye
For countyng and for court holdynge
And yet he iangleth as a taye
And vnderstont hym selfe nothynge
He woll serue bothe erle and kynge
For hys kyndyng and hys fee
And hyde hys tythynge and hys offrynge
This is a feble charite

¶Other they ben proude, or coueytous
Or they ben harde, or hungry
Or they ben lyberall or lecherous
Or els medlers wyth marchandry
Or maynteyners of men wyth maistry
Or stewardes, countours, or pledours
And serue God in hypocrisy
Such preestes ben Christes false traytours

¶They ben false, they ben vengeable
And begylen men in Christes name
They ben vnstedfast and vnstable
To tray her lorde, hem thynketh no shame
To serue God they ben full lame
Goddes theues, and falsly stele
And falsely goddes worde defame
In wynnyng is her worldes wele

¶Antichryst these seruen all
I pray the who may say nay
Wyth Antichryst suche shull fall
They folowen hym in dede and fay
They seruyn hym in ryche array
To serue Chryst suche falsely fayne
Why, at the dredeful domes day
Shull they not folowe hym to payne

¶That knowen hem selfe that they done yll
Ayenst Christes commaundement
And amende hem neuer ne wyll
But serue Sathan by one assent
Who sayth sothe he shalbe shent
Or speketh ayenst her false lyuyng
who so well lyueth shalbe brent
For suche ben gretter than the kyng

¶Pope, Bysshoppes, and Cardynals
Chanons, Persons, and Vycaire
In goddes seruyce I trowe ben false
That sacramentes sellen here
And ben as proude as Lucifere
Eche man loke whether that I lye
Who so speketh ayenst her powere
It shall be holden heresy

¶Loke

¶ Loke howe many orders take
Onely of Christe, for hys seruyce
That the worldes goodes forsake
Who so taketh orders, or other wyse
I trowe that they shall sore agryse
For all the glose that they conne
All sewen not thys assyse
In yuell tyme they thus begonne

¶ Loke howe many amonge hem all
Holden not thys hye waye
Wyth Antichrist they shullen fall
For they wolden God betraye
God amende hem that best maye
For many men they maken shende
They weten well the sothe I saye
But the dyuell hath foule hem blende

¶ Some on her churches dwell
Apparayled poorely, proude of porte
The seuen sacramentes they done sell
In cattel catchynge is her comforte
Of eche matter they wollen mell
And done hem wronge is her dysporte
To afray the people they ben fell
And holde hem lower then doth the lorde

¶ For the tythynge of a ducke
Or of an apple, or an aye
They make men sweare vpon a boke
Thus they foulen Christes kay
Suche bearen yuell heauen kay
They mowen assoyle, they mowe shryue
Wyth mennes wyues strongly play
Wyth true tyllers sturte and stryue

¶ At the wrestlynge, and at the wake
And chefe chauntours at the nale
Markette beaters, and medlynge make
Hoppen and houten wyth heue and hale
At fayre freshe, and at wyne stale
Dyne and drynke, and make debate
The seuen sacramentes set at sayle
Howe kepe suche the kayes of heuen gate

¶ Mennes wyues they wollen holde
And though that they ben ryght sory
To speake they shull not be so bolde
For sompnynge to the consystory
And make hem saye mouth I lye
Though they it sawe wyth her eye
Hys lemman holden openly
No man so hardy to axe why

¶ He woll haue tythynge and offrynge
Maugre who so euer it gruche
And twyse on the daye he woll synge
Goddes prestes nere none suche
He mote on huntyng wyth dogge and byche
And blowen hys horne, and cryen hey
And sorcery vsen as a wytche
Suche kepen yuell Peters key

¶ Yet they mote haue some stocke or stone
Gayly paynted, and proudly dyght
To maken men lyuen vpon
And saye that it is full of myght
Aboute suche, men sette vp great lyght
Other suche stockes shull stande therby
As darke as it were mydnyght
For it maye make no mastry

¶ That it leude people se mowe
Thou Mary, thou worchest wōder thynges
Aboute that, that men offren to nowe
Hongen broches, ouches, and rynges
The preest purchaseth the offrynges
But he nyll offre to none ymage
Wo is the soule that he for synges
That precheth for suche a pylgrimage

¶ To men and women that ben poore
That ben Christes owne lykenesse
Yen shullen offre at her dore
That suffren honger and dystresse
And to suche ymages offre lesse
That mowe not fele thurst ne colde
The poore in sprete gan Christe blesse
Therfore offreth to feble and olde

¶ Buckelers brode, and sweardes longe
Baudryke, wyth baselardes kene
Suche toles about her necke they honge
Wyth Antichrist suche preestes bene
Vpon her dedes it is well sene
Whome they seruen, whome they honoren
Antichristes they bene clene
And goddes goodes fasly deuouren

¶ Of scarlet and grene gay gownes
That mote be shape for the newe
To clyppen & kyssen counten in townes
The damoseles that to the daunce sewe
Cutted clothes to sewe her hewe

wyth longe pykes on her shone
Our goddes gospell is not trewe
Eyther they seruen the dyuell or none

¶Nowe ben prestes pokes so wyde
That men must enlarge the vestement
The holy gospell they done hyde
For they contraryen in rayment
Suche preestes of Lucifer ben sent
Lyke conquetours they ben arayde
The proude pendauntes at her ars ypent
Falsely the truthe they han betrayde

¶Shryfte syluer suche wollen aske is
And woll men crepe to the crouche
None of the sacramentes saue askes
wythout mede shall no man touche
On her bysshoppe theyr warant bouche
That is lawe of the decre
wyth mede and money thus they mouche
And thus they sayne is charite

¶In the myddes of her masse
They nyll haue no man but for hyre
And full shortly let forth passe
Suche shull men fynde in eche shyre
That personages for profyte desyre
To lyue in lykynge and in lustes
I dare not sayne, Sans ose ieo dyre
That suche ben Antichristes preestes

¶Or they yek the bysshoppes why
Or they mote ben in hys seruyce
And holden forth her harlotry
Suche prelates ben of feble empryse
Of Goddes grame suche men agryse
For suche matters that taken mede
Howe they excuse hem, and in what wyse
Me thynketh they ought greatly drede

¶They sayne that it to no man longeth
To reproue them though they erre
But falsely goddes goodesse they fongeth
And therwyth maynteyne wo and werre
Her dedes shulde be as bryght as sterre
Her lyuynge, leude mannes lyght
They saye the pope maye not erre
Nede muste that passe mannes myght

¶Though a prest lye wo his lēman al nyght
And tellen hys felowe, and he hym
He goth to masse anone ryght
And sayeth he syngeth out of synne
Hys byrde abydeth hym at hys ynne
And dyghteth hys dyner the meane whyle
He syngeth hys masse for he wolde wynne
And so he weneth God begyle

¶Hem thynketh longe tyll they be mette
And that they vsen forth all the yere
Amonge the folke when he is sette
He holdeth no man halfe hys pere
Of the bysshoppe he hath powere
To soyle men, or els they ben lore
Hys absolution maye make them skere
And wo is the soule that he syngeth fore

¶The Gryffon began for to threte
And sayd, of monkes canst thou ought
The Pellycan sayd, they ben full grete
And in thys world moch wo hath wrought
Saynt benet, that her order brought
Ne made hem neuer on suche manere
I trowe it came neuer in hys thought
That they shulde vse so great power

¶That a man shulde a monke lorde cal
Ne serue on knees, as a kynge
He is as proude as prynce in pall
In meate, and drynke, and all thynge
Some wearen myter and rynge
wyth double worsted well ydyght
wyth royall meate and ryche drynke
And rydeth on a courser as a knyght

¶Wyth hauke and wyth houndes eke
wyth broches or ouches on hys hode
Some saye no masse in all a weke
Of deynties is her moste foode
wyth lordshyppes and wyth bondmen
Thys is a royall religion
Saynt Benet made neuer none of hem
To haue lordshyppe of man ne towne

¶Nowe they ben queynte and curious
wyth fyne clothe cladde and serued clene
Proude angry, and enuyous
Malyce is moche that they meane
In catchynge crafty and couetous
Lordly lyuen in great lykynge
Thys lyuynge is not religious
Accordynge to Benette in hys lyuynge

¶They ben clerkes, her courtes they ouer se

Her

Her poore tenaunce fully they flyte
The hyre that a man amerced be
The gladlyer they woll it wryte
Thys is farre from Christes pouerte
For all wyth couetyse they endyte
On the poore they haue no pyte
Ne neuer hem cherysche but euer hem byte

¶And cõmenly suche ben comen
Of poore people, and of hem begete
That thys perfection han ynomen
Her fathers ryden not but on her fete
And trauaylen sore for that they ete
In pouert lyueth yonge and olde
Her fathers suffreth drought and wete
Many hongry meles, thurst, and colde

¶And all thys the monkes han forsake
For Christes loue and saynt Benette
To pryde and ease haue hem take
Thys religion is yuell besette
Had they ben out of religioun
They must haue honged at the plowe
Threschynge & dykynge fro towne to towne
wyth sory mete, and not halfe ynowe

¶Therfore they han thys all forsake
And taken to ryches, pryde, and ease
Full fewe for God woll monkes hem make
Lytell is suche order for to prayse
Saynt Benet ordayned it not so
But badde hem be cherelyche
In churlyche maner lyue and go
Boystous in earth, and not lordlych

¶They dysclaunder saynt Benette
Therfore they haue hys holy curse
Saynt Benet wyth hem neuer mette
But yf they thought to robbe hys purse
I can no more herof tell
But they ben lyke tho before
And clene serue the dyuell of hell
And ben hys treasoure and hys store

¶And all suche other counterfaytours
Chanons, Canons, and suche dysgysed
Ben goddes enemyes and traytours
Hys true religion han foule dyspysed
Of Freres I haue tolde before
In a makynge of a Crede
And yet I coulde tell worse and more
But men wolde weryen it to rede

¶As goddes goodnesse no man tell myght
wryte ne speake, ne thynke in thought
So her falsched, and her vnryght
Nay no man tell that euer god wrought
The Gryffon sayd, thou canst no good
Thou came neuer of no gentyll kynde
Other I trowe thou waxest wood
Or els thou hast loste thy mynde

¶Shulde holy churche haue no heed:
who shulde be her gouernayle
who shulde her rule, who shulde her reed
who shulde her forthren, who shulde auayle
Eche man shall lyue by hys trauayle
who best doth, shall haue moste mede
wyth strength yf men the churche assayle
wyth strength men must defende her nede

¶And the pope were purely poore
Nedy, and nothynge ne hadde
He shulde be dryuen from dore to dore
The wycked of hym nolde not be dradde
Of suche an heed men wolde be sadde
And synfully lyuen as hem lust
wyth strength, amendes suche be made
wyth wepen wolues from shepe be wust

¶Yf the pope and prelates wolde
So begge, and bydde, bowe and borowe
Holy churche shulde stande full colde
Her seruauntes sytte and soupe sorowe
And they were noughty foule and horowe
To worschyppe god men wolde wlate
Bothe on euen and on morowe
Suche harlotry men wolde hate

¶Therfore men of holy churche
Shulde ben honest in all thynge
worschypfully goddes workes werche
So semeth it to serue Christ her kynge
In honest and in clene clothynge
wyth vessels of golde and clothes ryche
To God honestly to make offrynge
To hys lordschypppe none is lyche

¶The Pellican caste an houge crye
And sayd alas, why sayest thou so
Christ is our heed that sytteth on hye
Heddes ne ought we haue no mo
we ben hys membres both also
And father he taught vs to cal hym als
Maysters to be called defended he tho

All other maysters ben wycked and fals

¶ That taketh maystry in hys name
Goostly, and for earthly good
Kynges and lordes shulde lordshyp hane
And rule the people wyth mylde mode
Christ for vs that shedde hys blode
Badde hys preestes no maystershyp haue
Ne carke nat for cloth ne fode
From euery myschefe he wyll hem saue

¶ Her ryche clothynge shalbe ryghtwysnesse
Her treasoure, trewe lyfe shalbe
Charite shalbe her rychesse
Her lordshyppe shalbe vnite
Hope in God, her honeste
Her vessell clene conscience
Poore in spirite, and humilite
Shalbe holy churches defence

¶ What sayd the Gryffon may the greue
That other folkes faren wele
What haste thou to done wyth her lyue
Thy falsheed eche man may fele
For thou canst no catell gete
But lyuest in londe as a lorell
wyth glosynge gettest thou thy mete
So fareth the deuell that wonneth in hell

¶ Ye wolde that eche mã there shulde dwell
For he lyueth in clene enuye
So wyth the tales that thou doest tell
Thou woldest other people dystry
wyth your glose, and your heresy
For ye can lyue no better lyfe
But clene in hypocrisy
And bryngest the in wo and stryfe

¶ And therwyth haue not to done
For yeme haue here no cure
Ye serue the dyuell, neyther God ne man
And he shall paye you your hyre
For ye woll fare well at feestes
And warme clothed for the colde
Therfore ye glose goddes hestes
And begyle the people yonge and olde

¶ And all the seuen sacramentes
Ye speake ayenst, as ye were slye
Ayenst tythynges, offeinges, w̃ your entẽtes
And on our lordes body falsly lye
And all thys ye done to lyue in case
As who sayeth, there ben none suche
And sayne the pope is not worth a pease
To make the people ayen hym gruche

¶ And thys cõmeth in by fendes
To bryngc the christen in dystaunce
For they wolde that no man were frendes
Leaue thy chattrynge wyth myschaunce
yf thou lyue well, what wylt thou more
Let other men lyue as hem lyst
Spende in good, or kepe in store
Other mennes conscience neuer thou nyst

¶ Ye han no cure to answere fore
what meddell ye, that han not to done
Let men lyue as they han done yore
For thou shalte answere for no man
The Pellican sayd, Syr, nay
I dispyse not the pope
Ne no sacramente, soth to say
But speake in charite and good hope

¶ But I dyspyse her hye pryde
Her rychesse, that shulde be poore in spirite
Her wyckednesse is knowe so wyde
They serue god in false habyte
And turnen mekenesse in to pryde
And lowlynesse in to hye degre
And goddes wordes turne and hyde
And that am I moued by charite

¶ To lette men to lyue so
wyth all my connynge and al my myght
And to warne men of her wo
And to tell hem trouth and ryght
The sacramentes be soule hele
yf they ben vsed in good vse
Ayenst that speake I neuer a dele
For then were I nothynge wyse

¶ But they that vsen hem in mysse manere
Or sette hem vp to any sale
I trowe they shall abye hem dere
Thys is my reason, thys is my tale
who so taketh hem vnryghtfully
Ayenst the ten cõmaundementes
Or by glose wrecheddlyche
Sellethany of the sacramentes

¶ I trowe they do the deuell homage
In that they weren they do wronge
And therto I dare well wage

They

They seruen Satan for al her songe
To tythen and offren is holsome lyke
So it be done in dewe manere
A man to houselyn and to shryue
weddynge, and all the other in fere

¶So it be nother solde ne bought
Ne take ne gyue for couetyse
And it be so taken it is nought
who selleth hem so, maye sore agryse
On our Lordes body I do not lye
I saye soth thorowe trewe rede
Hys flesche and blode through hys mystrye
Is there, in the forme of brede

¶Howe it is there, it nedeth not stryue
whether it be subgette or accydent
But as Christ was, when he was on lyue
So is he there verament
Yf pope or cardynall lyue good lyue
As Christ commaunded in hys gospell
Ayenst that woll I not stryue
But me thynketh they lyue not well

¶For yf the pope lyued as god bede
Pryde and hyghnesse he shulde dyspyse
Rychesse, couetyse, and crowne on hede
Mekenesse and pouerte he shulde vse
The Gryffon sayd he shulde abye
Thou shalbe brent in balefull fyre
And all thy secte I shall dystrye
Ye shalbe hanged by the swyre

¶Ye shullen be hanged and to drawe
who gyueth you leaue for to preache
Or speake agaynst goddes lawe
And the people thus falsely teache
Thou shalt be cursed wyth boke and bell
And dysseuered from holy churche
And clene ydampned into hell
Otherwyse but ye woll worche

¶The Pellycan sayd that I ne drede
Your cursynge is of lytell value
Of god I hope to haue my mede
For it is falshede that ye shewe
For ye ben out of charite
And wylneth vengeaunce, as dyd Nero
To suffren I woll redy be
I drede not that thou canst do

¶Christ badde ones suffre for hys loue
And so he taught all hys seruauntes
And but thou amende for hys sake aboue
I drede not all thy mayntenaunce
For yf I drede the worldes hate
Ye thynketh I were lytell to prayse
I drede nothynge your hye estate
Ne I drede not your dysease

¶Wolde ye turne and leaue your pryde
Your hye porte, and your rychesse
Your cursynge shulde not go so wyde
God bryngeyou into ryghtwysnesse
For I drede not your tyranny
For nothynge that ye can done
To suffre I am all redy
Syker I recke neuer howe soone

¶The Gryffon grynned as he were wode
And loked louely as an owle
And swore by cockes herte bloode
He wolde hym tere euery doule
Holy churche thou dysclaundrest foule
For thy reasons I woll the all to race
And make thy flesche to rote and moule
Losell, thou shalte haue harde grace

¶The Gryffon flewe forth on hys waye
The Pellycane dyd sytte and wepe
And to hym selfe he gan saye
God wolde that any of Christes shepe
Had herde, and ytake kepe
Eche a worde that here sayd was
And wolde it wrytte and well it kepe
God wolde it were all for hys grace

Plowman.

¶I answerde, and sayd I wolde
Yf for my trauayle any man wolde pay
Pelycã. He sayd yes, these ẏ god han solde
For they han store of money
Plowmã. I sayd, tell me and thou may
why tellest thou mennes trespace.
Pelycan. He said, to amende hem in good fay
Yf God woll gyue me any grace

¶For Christ hym selfe is lykened to me
That for hys people dyed on rode
As fare I, ryght so fareth he
He fedeth hys brydes wyth hys blode
But these done yuell ayenst gode
And ben hys fone vnder frendes face
I tolde hem howe her lyuynge stode
God amende hem for hys grace

Plowman

Plowmã. what ayleth ý Gryffon, tell why
That he holdeth on that other syde
For they two ben lykely
And wyth kyndes robben wyde
Pellicã. The foule betokeneth pryde
As Lucifer, that hygh flewe was
And syth he dyd hym in euell hyde
For he agylted goddes grace

¶As byrde flyeth vp in the ayre
And lyueth by byrdes that ben meke
So these be flowe vp into dyspayre
And shenden sely soules eke
The soules that ben in synnes seke
He culleth hem, knele therfore alas
For brybry goddes forbode breke
God amende it for hys grace

¶The hynder parte is a lyoun
A robber and a raynere
That robbeth the people in earth a downe
And in erth holdeth none hys pere
So fareth thys foule both ferre and nere
And wyth tẽporel strength they people chase
As a lyon proude in earth here
God amende hem for hys grace

Pellican.

¶He flewe forth wyth hys wynges twayne
All droupynge, dased, and dull
But soone the Gryffon came agayne
Of hys foules the earth was full
The Pellican he had cast to pull
So great a nombre neuer sene there was
what maner of foules tellen I woll
Yf God woll gyue me of hys grace,

¶Wyth the Gryffon comen foules fele
Rauyns, rokes, crowes, and pye
Grayfoules, agadred wele
Igurde aboue they wolde hye
Gledes and bosardes weren hem by
whyte molles and puttockes token her place
And lapwynges, that well cõneth lye
Thys felowshyp han for gerde her grace

¶Longe the Pellican was out
But at laste he cometh agayne
And brought wyth hym the Phenix stoute
The Gryffon wolde haue flowe ful fayne
Hys foules that flewen as thycke as rayne
The Phenix tho began hem chace
To flye from hym it was in bayne
For he dyd vengeaunce and no grace

¶He flewe hem downe wythout mercy
There astarte neyther free ne thrall
On hym they cast a rufull crye
when the Gryffon downe was fall
He bete hem not, but flewe hem all
whyther he hem droue no man may trace
Under the erthe me thought they yall
Alas they had a feble grace

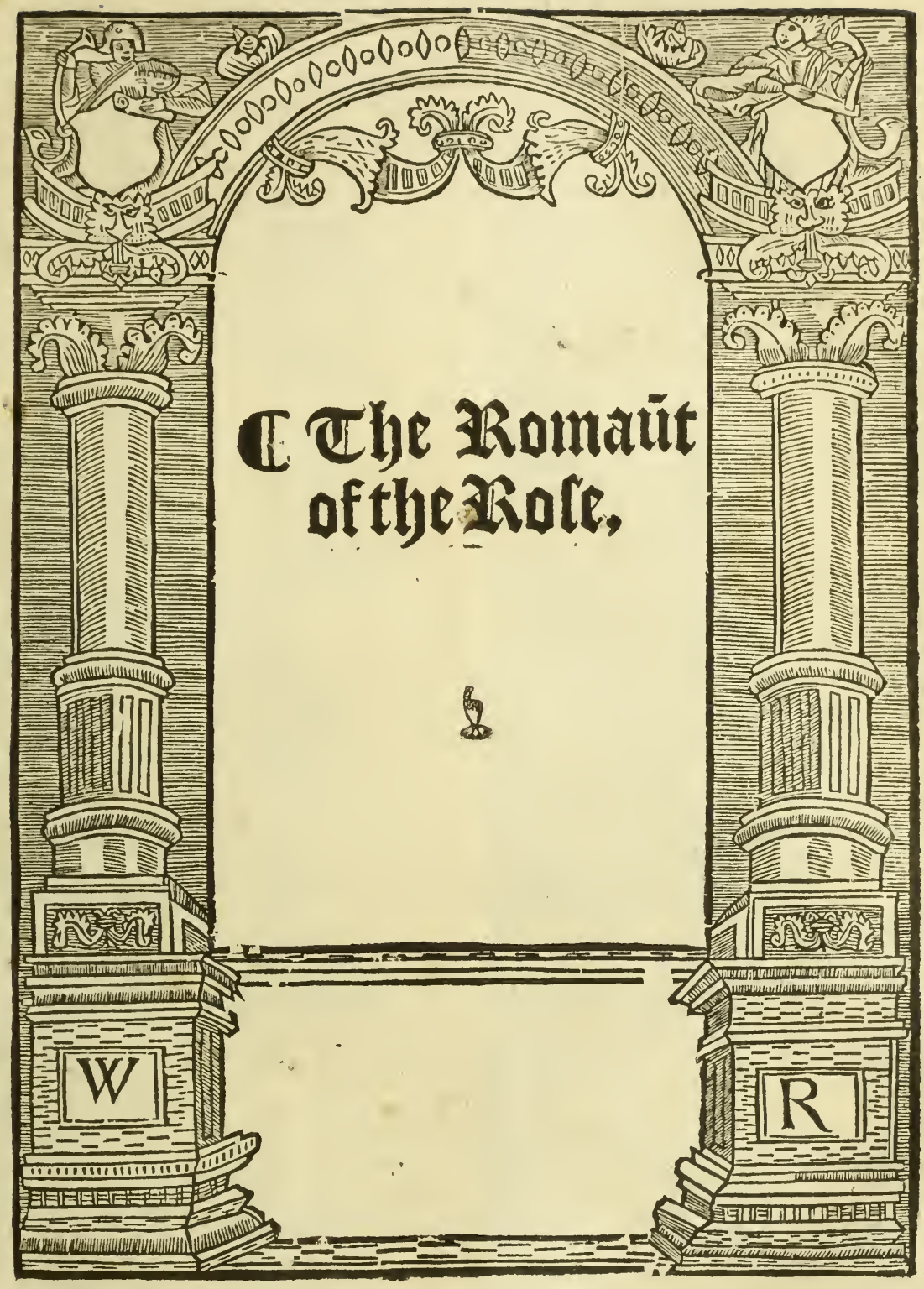
¶The Pellican then ared ryght
For my wrytynge yf I haue blame
who woll for me fyght of flyght:
who shall shelde me from shame
He that had a mayde to dame
And the lambe that slayne was
Shall shelde me from gostly blame
For erthely harme is goddes grace

¶Therfore I praye euery man
Of my wrytynge haue me excused
Thys wrytynge wryteth the Pellican
That thus these people hath dyspysed
For I am fresche fully aduysed
I nyll not maynteyne hys manace
For the deuell is often dysguysed
To bryngе a man to yuell grace

¶Wyteth the Pellican and not me
For herof I nyl not auowe
In hye ne in lowe, ne in no degre
But as a fable take it ye mowe
To holy churche I wyll me bowe
Eche man to amende hym Christ sende space
And for my wrytynge me alowe
He that is almyghty for hys grace

FINIS.

¶Thus endeth the boke of Canterbury tales. And here after folowyeth the Romaunt of the Rose.


¶ The Romaūt
of the Rose,
W
R

Anye man sayen, that in
sweuenynges
There nys but fables & lesynges
But men may some sweuen sene
which hardiye that false ne bene
But afterwarde ben apparaunt
This maye I drawe to warraunt
In author that hyght Macrobes
That halte nat dreames false ne lees
But vndoth vs the auysyoun
That whylom mette kyng Cipioun
And whoso sayth, or weneth it be
A iape, or els nycetie
To wene that dremes after fall
Lette whoso lyst a foole me call
For this trowe I, and saye for me
That dremes signifiaunce be
Of good and harme to many wightes
That dremen in her slepe a nyghtes
Full many thynges couertly
That fallen after all openly
within my twenty yere of age
whan that loue taketh his corage
Of yonge folke, I went soone
To bed as I was wont to done
And fast I slept, and in slepyng
Me met suche a swenyng
That lyke me wonders wele
But in that sweue is neuer a dele
That it nys afterwarde befal
Rygh as this dreame wol tell vs all
Now this dreme wol I ryme aryght
To make your hertes gaye and lyght
For loue it prayeth, and also
Cõmaundeth me that it be so
And yf there any aske me
whether that it be, he or she
How this boke, which is here
Shall hate that I rede here
It is the Romaunce of the Rose
In which all the arte of loue I glose.
¶ The matter fayre is of to make
God graunt me in gre that she it take
For whome that it begone is
And that is she, that hath ywys
So mokel pryse, and therto she
So worthy is beloued to be
That she well ought of pryse and ryght
Be cleped Rose of euery wyght
That it was May me thought tho
It is fyue yere or more ago
That it was May, thus dremed me
In tyme of loue and iolitie
That all thyng gynneth waxen gay
For there is neyther buske nor haye
In May, that it nyl shrouded bene
And it with newe leues wrene
These woddes eke recoueren grene
That drye in wynter ben to sene
And the erth wexeth proude withall
For swote dewes that on it fall
And the pore estate forgette
In which that wynter had it sette
And than becõmeth the ground so proude
That it woll haue a newe shroude
And maketh so queynt his robe and fayre
That it had hewes an hundred payre
Of grasse and floures, ynde and Pers
And many hewes full dyuers
That is the robe I mene ywys
Through which the grounde to praysen is
The bydes that han lefft her songe
whyle they han suffred colde full stronge
In wethers grylle, and derke to syght
Ben in may, for the sunne bryght
So glad, that they shewe in syngyng
That in her herte is suche lykyng
That they mote syngen and ben lyght
Than doth the nyghtyngale her myght
To maken noyse, and syngen blythe
Than is blyssfull many a sythe
The chelaundre, and the popyngay
Than yonge folke entenden aye
For to ben gay and amarous
The tyme is than so sauorious
Harde is his hert that loueth nought
In May whan al this myth is wrought
whan he may on these braunches here
The small bydes syngen clere
Her blyssfull swete swete songe pitions
And in this seson delytious
whan loue affiometh all thynge
Me thought one nyght in my slepyng
Ryght in my bedde full redely
That it was by the morowe erly
And vp I rose and gan me clothe
Anon I wyth myne hondes both
A syluer nedle forth I drowe
Out of an aguyler queynt ynowe
And gan this nedle threde anon
For out of towne me lyst to gone

The sowne of bryddes for to heare
That on these buskes syngen cleare
That in the swete season that lefe is
With a threde bastyng my sleues
Alone I went in my playing
The small foules songe herkenyng
That payned hem full many a payre
To synge on bowes blossomed fayre
Jolyfe and gaye, full of gladnesse
Towarde a ryuer gan I me dresse
That I herde renne fast by
For fayrer playing none sawe I
Than playen me by that ryuere
For from an hyll that stode there nere
Come downe the streme full stysse & bolde
Clere was the water, and as colde
As any weil is soth to sayne
And somdele lasse it was than Sayne
But it was strayter, wele awaye
And neuer saugh I er that daye
The water that so wele lyked me
And wonder gladde was I to se
That lusty place, and that ryuere
And with that water that ran so clere
My face I wysh, tho sawe I wele
The botome ypaued euery dele
With grauell, full of stones shene
The medowes softe, sote and grene
Beet ryght on the water syde
Ful clere was than the morowe tyde
And full attempre out of drede
Tho gan I walken thorowe the mede
Downwarde aye, in my playing
The ryuers syde coostyng.
And when I had a whyle ygone
I sawe a Garden ryght anon
Full longe and brode, and euery dele
Enclosed was, and walled wele
With hye walles enbatayled
Portrayed without and wel entayled
With many ryche portreytures
And both the ymages and peyntures
Gan I beholde besely
And I woll tell you redely
Of thilke ymages the semblaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce.
A mydde sawe I hate stonde
That for her wrath and yre, and onde
Semed to be a mynoresse
And angry with a chyderesse
And full of gyle, and fell corage
By semblaunt was that ylke ymage
And she was nothyng wele arayed
But lyke a wode woman afrayed
Yfrounced foule was her vysage
And grynnyng for disputous rage
Her nose snorted vp for tene
Full hydous was she for to sene
Ful foule and rusty was she thig
Her heed ywrythyn was ywys
Full grymly with a great towayle.
¶ An ymage of an other entayle
A lyste halfe was her fast by
Her name aboue her heed sawe I
And she was called Felony
¶ An other ymage that vyllany
Ycleped was sawe I and fonde
Upon the wall on her right honde
Vyllany was lyke somdele
That other ymage, and trusteth wele
She semed a wicked creature
By countenaunce in portreture
She semed be full dispytous
And eke full proude, and outragious
wel coulde he paynt I vndertake
That suche an ymage coulde make
Full foule and chorlysh semed she
And eke vyllanous for to be
And lytle coulde of norture
To worshyppe any creature.
¶ And next was paynted Couetyse
That eggeth folke in many a gyse
To take and yeue ryght nought agayne
And great treasures vp to layne
And that is she that for vsure
Leneth to many a creature
The lasse for the more wynnyng
So couetous is her brennyng
And that is she for pennes feele
That teacheth for to robbe and steele
These theues and these small harlotes
And that is routh, for by her throtes
Full many one hongeth at the last
She maketh folke compasse and cast
To taken other folkes thynge
Through robbery and myscouetyng
And that is she that maketh trechours
And she maketh false pledours
That with her termes and her domes
Done maydens, chyldren, and eke gromes
Her herytage to forgo
Full croked were her hondes two
For couetyse is euer wode
To grypen other folkes good

Couetyse

Couetyse, for her wynnyng
Full lefe hath other mens thyng
¶ An other ymage sette saugh I
Next Couetise fast by
And she was cleped Auarye
Ful foule in payntyng was that vyce
Full sad and caytyfe was she eke
And also grene as any leke
So euyll hewed was her coloure
Her semed to haue lyued in langour
She was lyke thyng for hungre deed
That lad her lyfe onely by breed
Kneden with eysell stronge and egre
And therto she was leane and megre
And she was clad full poorely
All in a forne courtpy
As she were al with dogges torne
And both behynde and eke before
Clouted was she beggarly
A mantell honge her fast by
Upon a benche weke and small
A burnyt cote honge there withall
Furred with no menyuere
But with a furre rough of heere
Of lambe skynnes heuy and blake
It was ful olde I vndertake
For Auarice to cloth her wele
Ne hasteth her neuer adele
For certaynly it were her lothe
To wearren oft that ylke clothe
And yf it were forweared, she
wolde haue full great nycetie
Of clothyng, er she bought her newe
All were it bad of woll and hewe
This Auarice helde in her hande
A purse that honge by a bande
And that she hydde and bonde so stronge
Men must abyde wonder longe
Out of the purse or there come ought
For that ne cõmeth in her thought
It was not certayne her entent
That fro that purse a peny went
And by that ymage nygh ynough
was paynted Enuy that neuer lough
Nor neuer wel in her herte ferde
But yf she eyther sawe or herde
Some great myschannce, or great disese
Nothyng may so moche her plese
As myschese and mysaduenture
Or whan she seeth discomfyture
Upon any worthy man fall
Than lyketh her well withall
She is full glad in her corage
yf she se any great lynage
Be brought to nought in shameful wyse
And yf a man in honour ryse
Or by his wyt, or by his prowesse
Of that hath she great heuynesse
For trusteth well she goth nye wood
whan any chaunce happeth good
Enuye is of suche crueltie
That fayth ne trouth holdeth she
To frende ne felowe, badde or good
Ne she hath kynne none of her blood
That she nys full her enemy
She nolde, I dare sayne hardely
Her owne father fared wele
And sore abydeth she euery dele
Her malyce, and her male talent
For she is in so great turment
And hate suche, when folke doth good
That nygh she melteth for pure wood
Her herte kerueth and so breaketh
That god the people well awreketh
Enuy ywys shall neuer let
Some blame vpon the folke to set
I trowe that yf Enuy ywys
knewe the best man that is
On this syde or beyonde the see
Yet somwhat lacken hym wolde she
And yf he were so hende and wyse
That she ne myght al abate his pryse
Yet wolde she blame his worthynesse
Or by her wordes make it lesse
I sawe Enuy in that payntyng
Had a wonderfull lokyng
For she ne loked but awry
Or ouetwharte, all baggyngly
And she had a foule vsage
She myght loke in no vysage
Of man ne woman, forth ryght playne
But shutte her one eye for disdayne
So for enuy brenned she
whan she myght any man se
That fayre or worthy were, or wyse
Or els stode in folkes pryse
¶ Sorowe was paynted next Enuy
Upon that wall of masonrye
But well was sene in her colour
That she had lyued in langour
Her semed to haue the iaundice
Not halfe so pale was Auarye
Ne nothynge lyke of leanesse
For sorowe, thought, and great distresse

That she had suffred daye and nyght
Made her yelowe, and nothyng bryght
Ful fade, pale, and megre also
Was neuer wight yet halfe so wo
As that her semed for to be
Nor so fulfylled with yre, as she
I trowe that no wyght myght her plese
Nor do that thyng that myght her ese
Nor she ne wolde her sorowe slake
Nor comfort none vnto her take
So depe was her wo begon
And eke her hert in angre ronne
A sorowfull thyng wel semed she
Nor she had nothyng slowe be
For to cratchen all her face
And for to rent in many place
Her clothes, and for to tere her swyre
As she that was fulfylled of yre
And all to torne laye eke her heere
About her shulders here and there
As she that had it all to rent
For angre and for male talent
And eke I tell you certaynly
How that she wept full tenderly
In worlde nys wyght so harde of hert
That had sene her sorowes smerte
That nolde haue had of her pytye
So wo begonne a thynge was she
She al to dasht her selfe for wo
And smote togyther her hondes two
To sorowe was she full intentyfe
That wofull recheleſſe caytyfe
Her rought lytle of playing
Or of clyppynge or kyssynge
For whoso sorowful is in herte
Hym lust not to playe ne sterte
Ne for to dauncen, ne to synge
Ne may his hert in tempre brynge
To make ioye on euen or morowe
For ioye is contrary vnto sorowe.
Elde was paynted after this
That shorter was a fote iwys
Than she was wont in her yonghede
Unneth her selfe she myght fede
So feble and eke so olde was she
That faded was all her beautye
Ful salowe waxen her colour
Her heed for hore was whyte as floure.
Iwys great qualme ne were it none
Ne synne, although her lyfe were gone
All woxen was her body vnwelde
And drye and dwyned al for elde
A foule forwelked thynge was she
That whylom rounde and soft had be
Her eares shoken fast withall
As from her heed they wolde fall
Her face frounced and forpyned
And both her hondes iorne forwyned
So olde she was, that she ne went
A fote, but it were by potent
The tyme that passeth nyght and daye
And restlesse trauayleth aye
And steleth from vs so priuely
That to vs semeth sekerly
That it in one poynt dwelleth euer
And certes it ne resteth neuer
But goth so fast, and passeth aye
That there nys man that thynke may
What tyme that nowe present is
Asketh at these clerkes this
For men thynke it redely
Thre tymes bene passed by
The tyme that maye not soiourne
But goth, and may neuer returne
As water that downe renneth aye
But neuer droppe returne maye
There maye nothynge as tyme endure
Metall, nor erthly creature
For all thyng it frette and shall
The tyme eke that chaungeth all
And all doth waxe, and fostred be
And all thynge destroyeth he
The tyme that eldeth our auncestours
And eldeth kynges and emperours
And that vs all shall ouercomen
Er that deth vs shal haue nomen
The tyme that hath all in weide
To elden folke had made her elde
So inly, that to my wetyng
She myght helpe her selfe nothyng
But turned ayen vnto chyldheed
She had nothyng her selfe to lede
Ne wytte ne pythe in her holde
More than a chylde of two yere olde
But natheleſſe I trowe that she
was fayre sometyme, and fresh to se
whan she was in her ryght full age
But she was past all that passage
And was a doted thyng becomen
A furred cappe on had she nummen
weil had she clad her selfe and warme
For colde myght els done her harme
These olde folke haue alwaye colde
Her kynde is suche when they ben olde.

¶ Another thynge was done there writ
That semed lyke an Ipocryt
And it was cleped Pope holy
That ylke is she, that priuely
Ne spareth neuer a wycked dede.
whan men of her take none hede
And maketh her outwarde precious
wyth pale vysage and pytous
And semeth a simple creature
But there nys no misauenture
That she ne thynketh in her corage
Ful lyke to her was thylke ymage
That maked was lyke her semblaunce
She was ful symple of countenaunce
And she was clothed and eke shod
As she were for the loue of God
Yolden to religion
Such semed her deuocion
A psauter helde she fast in honde
And besyly she gan to fonde
To make many a faynt prayere
To god, and to hys sayntes dere
Ne she was gaye, freshe, ne iolyse
But semed to be ful ententyse
To good werkes, and to fayre
And therto she had on an hayre
Ne certes she was fatte nothyng
But semed wery for fastyng
Of colour pale and deed was she
From her the gates aye werned be
Of paradyse, that blysful place
For such folke maken leane her grace
As Christ sayeth in hys Euangyle
To gette hem prise in towne a whyle
And for a lytle glory veigne
They lesen god and eke hys reigne
¶ And alderlaste of euerychone
was paynted Pouert al alone
That nat a peny had in holde
Although she her clothes solde
And though she shulde an honged be
For naked as a worme was she
And yf the wether stormy were
For colde she myght haue dyed there.
She ne had on but a strayte olde sacke.
And many a cloute on it there stacke
Thys was her cote, and her mantele
No more was there neuer adele
To cloth her wyth, I vndertake
Great leyser had she to quake
And she was put, that I of talke
Ferre fro these other, vp in an halke
There lurked, and there coured she
For poore thyng where so it be
Is shamefaste, and dispised aye
Acursed may well be that daye
That poore man conceyued is
For god wot al to selde iwys
Is any pore man well yfedde
Or well arayed or ycledde
Or well beloued, in such wyse
In honour, that he maye aryse.
¶ All these thynges wel auysed
As I haue you er thys deuysed
wyth golde and assure ouer all
Depaynted were on the wall
Square was the wall, and hygh somdele
Enclosed, and ybarred wele
In stede of hegge, was that gardyn
Come neuer shepherde therin
In to that gardyn, wel wrought
who so that me coulde haue brought
By ladders, or els by degre
It wolde wel haue lyked me
For such solace, such ioy, and pley
I trowe that neuer man ne sey
As was in that place delicious
The gardyn was not daungerous
To herberowe byrdes many one
So ryche a yere was neuer none
Of byrdes songe, and braunches grene
Therin were byrdes mo I wene
Then bene in al the realme of Fraunce
Ful blisful was the accordaunce
Of swete pytous songe they made
For al thys worlde it ought glade.
And I my selfe so mery ferde.
whan I her blysful songes herde
That for an hundred pounde wolde I
If that the passeage openly
Had be vnto me free
That I nolde entren for to se
Thassemble, god kepe it fro care
Of byrdes, whych therin ware
That songen through her mery throtes
Daunces of loue, and mery notes.

whan I thus herde foules synge
I fell fast in a waymentyng
By whych arte, or by what engyn
I myght come in to that gardyn
But way I couthe fynde none
In to that gardayn for to gone
Ne nought wyst I yf that there were

Eyther hole or place where
By whych I might haue entre
Ne there was none to teache me
For I was al a lone I wys
For wo and anguyshe of thys
Tyl at laste bethought I me
That by no waye ne myght it be
That there nas ladder ne way to pace
Or hole, in to so fayre a place
Tho gan I go a ful great paas
Enuyron, euen in compas
The closyng of the square wall
Tyl that I founde a wicket small
So shette, that I ne might in gone
And other entre was there none

Upon the dore I gan to smyte
That was fetys, and so lyte
For other way coulde I not seke
Ful longe I shoke, and knocked eke
And stode full longe al herkenynge
If that I herde any wyght comynge
Tyl that the dore of thylke entre
A mayden curteys opened me
Her heer was as yelowe of hewe
As any basen scoured newe
Her flesche tender as is a chycke
With bent browes, smoth and slycke
And by measure large were
The openyng of her eyen clere
Her nose of good proporcion
Her eyen gray, as is a faucon
With swete breth, and wel sauoured
Her face white, and wel coloured
With lytle mouth and rounde to se
A cloue chynne eke had she
Her necke was of good fassyon
In length and greatnesse by reason
Without bleyne, scabbe, or royne
Fro Hierusalem vnto Burgoyne
There nys a fayre necke ywys
To fele howe smoth and softe it is
Her throte also white of hewe
As snowe on braunche snowed newe
Of body ful wel wrought was she
Men neden not in no countre
A fayrer body for to seke
And of fyne Orfrays had she eke
A chapelet, so semely on
Ne wered neuer mayde vpon
And fayre aboue that chapelet
A rose garlande had she set
She had a gay mirrour
And wyth a rych golde tresour
Her heed was tressed queyntly
Her sleues sewed fetously
And for to kepe her handes fayre
Of gloues white she had a payre
And she had on a cote of grene
Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene
Wel semed by her apparayle
She was not wont to great trauayle
For whan she kempt was fetously
And wel arayed and rychly
Than had she done al her iournee
For mery and wel begone was she
She ladde a lusty lyfe in Maye
She had no thought, by nyght ne daye
Of nothyng, but yf it were onely
To grayth her well and vncouthly.

Whan that thys dore had opened me
Thys May, semely for to se
I thanked her as I best might
And asked her howe that she hight
And what she was, I asked eke
And she to me was nought vnmeke
Ne of her answere daungerous
But fayre answerde, and sayd thus
Lo sir, my name is ydelnesse
So clepe men me, more and lesse
Ful myghty and ful ryche am I
And that of one thyng namely
For I entende to nothyng
But to my ioye, and my playeng
And for to kembe and trysse me
Aquaynted am I and priue
Wyth myrth, lorde of thys gardyne
That fro the lande of Alexandryne
Made the trees hyther to be fette
That in thys garden bene ysette
And whan the trees were waxen on hyght
Thys wall, that stant here in thy syght
Dyd myrth enclosen al aboute
And these ymages al without
He dyd hem both entayle and peynte
That neyther bene iolyfe ne queynte
But they bene full of sorow and wo
As thou haste sene a whyle ago
And ofte tyme hym to solace
Sir myrth commeth in to this place

And

And eke wyth hym cometh his meyne
That lyuen in lust and ioylyte
And now is myrth therin, to here
The byrdes howe they syngen clere
The mauys and the nyghtyngale
And other ioly byrdes smale
And thus he walketh to solace
Hym and hys folke, for sweter place
To playen in, he may not fynde
Although he sought one in tyl Inde
The alther fayrest folke to se
That in thys worlde may founde be
Hath myrth wyth hym in hys route
That folowen hym alwayes aboute.

whan ydelnesse had tolde all thys
And I had herkened wel ywys
Than sayde I to dame ydelnesse
Nowe also wysly god me blesse
Syth myrth, that is so fayre and fre
Is in thys yerde, wyth his meyne
Fro thylke assemble, yf I may
Shal no man werne me to day
That I thys nyght ne mote it se
For wel wene I there wyth him be
A fayre and ioly companye
Fulfylled of al curtesye
And forth without wordes mo
In at the wycket went I tho
That Idelnesse had opened me
In to that garden fayre to se

And whan I was in ywys
myne herte was ful glad of thys
For wel wende I ful sykerly
Haue bene in paradyse erthly
So fayre it was, that trusteth well
It semed a place espirituell
For certes as at my deuyse
There is no place in paradyse
So good in for to dwel or be
As in that garden thought me
For there was many a byrde syngyng
Throughout the yerde al thryngyng
In many places were nyghtyngales
Alpes, fynches, and wodwales
That in her swete songe delyten
In thylke places as they habyten
There might men se many flockes
Of turtles and lauerockes
Chalaundres fele sawe I there
That wery nygh forsongen were
And thrustels, teryns, and mauyse
That songen for to wyne hem pryse
And eke to surmount in her songe
That other birdes hem amonge
By note made fayre seruise
These byrdes, that I you deuise
They songe her songe, as fayre and well
As angels done espirituell
And trusteth me, whan I hem herde
Ful lusty and well I ferde
For neuer yet such melodye
was herde, of man that myght dye
Such swete songe was hem amonge
That me thought it no byrdes songe
But it was wonder lyke to be
Songe of Meremaydens of the see
That for her syngyng is so clere
Though we Meremaydens clepe hem here
In Englyshe, as is our vsaunce
Men clepe hem Sereyns in Fraunce

Atentyke weren for to
synge
These byrdes, that not vn-
konnynge
were of her craft, and aprent-
tyse
But of songe subtyl and wyse
And certes, whan I herde her songe
And sawe the grene place amonge
In herte I wext so wonder gay
That I was neuer erst, er that day
So iolyke, nor so wel bygo
Ne mery in herte, as I was tho
And than wyst I, and sawe ful well
That ydelnesse me serued well
That me put in such iolyte
Her frende wel ought I for to be
Syth she the dore of that gardyn
Had opened, and me let in.

From hence forth, how that I wrought
I shal you tell, as me thought
Fyrst wherof myrth serued there
And eke what folke there wyth hym were
wythout fable I wyl discriue
And of that garden eke as bliue
I wol you tellen after thys
The fayre fassyon al ywys
That well wrought was for the nones
I may not tel you al atones
But as I may and can, I shall

By

By ordure tellen you all.
Ful fayre seruice, and eke ful swete
These byrdes maden as they sete
Layes of loue, ful wel sownyng
they songen in her iargonyng
Some hye, and some lowe songe
Upon the braunches grene isprongе
The swetnesse of her melodye
Made al my hert in reuelrye
And whan that I had herde I trowe
These byrdes syngyng on a rowe
Than myght I not wyth holde me
That I ne went in for to se
Her myrth, for my desyryng
was hym to sene ouer all thyng
His countenaunce and hys manere
That syght was to me full dere.


Ho wēt I forth on my ryght hande
Downe by a lytell pathe I founde
Of myntes full, and fenell grene.
And fast by wythout wene
Her myrth I founde, and ryghte anon
Unto her Myrth gan I gon
There as he was hym to solace
And wyth hym in that lusty place
So fayre folke and so freshe had he
That whan I sawe, I woundred me
Fro whence such folke myght come
So fayre they weren all and some
For they were lyke, as to my syght
To angels, that bene fethered bryght
These folke, of whych I tell you so
Upon a karole wenten tho
A lady karoled hem, that hyght
Gladnesse, blysful and lyght
well coulde she syng and lustely
None halfe so wel and semely
And couth make in songe suche refraynyng
It sate her wonder wel to syng
Her voice ful clere was and ful swete
She was not rude ne vnmete
But couth ynough of such doyng
As longeth vnto karollyng
For she was wont in euery place
To syngen fyrst, folke to solace
For syngyng moost she gaue her to
No craft had she so lefe to do.


Ho myghteste thou karolles sene
And folke daunce and mery bene
And many a fayre turnyng
Upon the grene grasse syngyng
There myghtest thou se these flutours
Mynstrales and eke ioglours
That wel to synge dyd her payne
Some songe longes of Lorayne
For in Loreyne her notes be
Ful sweter than in thys countre
There was many a tymbestere
And saylours, that I dare wel swere
Couth her craft ful parfetly
The tymbres vp ful subtelly
They cast, and hente ful ofte
Upon a fynger fayre and softe
That they fayled neuer mo.
Ful fetys damosels two
Ryght yonge, and ful of semelyhede
In kyrtels, and none other wede
And fayre tressed euery tresse
Had myrth done for hys noblenesse
Amydde the carole for to daunce
But therof lyeth no remembraunce
Howe that they daunced queyntly
That one wolde come al priuely
Agayne that other, and when they were
Togyther almoost, they threwe yfere
Her mouthes so, that through her play
It semed as they kyst alway
To dauncen well couthe they the gyse
what shulde I more to you deuyse
Ne bode I neuer thence go
whyles that I sawe hem daunce so
Upon the karole wonder faste
I gan beholde, tyl at last
A lady gan me for to espye
And she was cleped curtesye
The worshypfull, the debonayre
I praye to god euer fal her fayre
Ful curteysly she called me
what do ye there Beau sire (qꝯ she)
Come, and yf it lyke you
To dauncen, daunceth wyth vs now
And I wythout taryeng
went in to the carollyng
I was abashed neuer a dele
But it to me lyked ryght wele
That curtesye me cleped so
And bade me on the daunce go

For

For yf I had durst certayne
I wolde haue karoled ryght fayne
As man that was to daunce right blyth
Than gan I loke ofte syth
The shap, the bodyes, and the cheres
The countenaunce and the maneres
Of all the folke that daunced there
And I shall tell what they were.

Ful fayre was myth, ful longe and high
A fayrer man I neuer sigh
As rounde as appel was his face
Full roddy and whyte in euery place
Fetys he was and well besey
with metely mouthe, and eyen grey
Hys nose by mesure wrought full ryght
Cryspe was his heere, and eke full bryght
His shulders of large brede
And smallyshe in the gyrdelstede
He semed lyke a purtreyture
So noble he was of hys stature
So fayre, so ioly, and so fetyse
with lymmes wrought at poynt deuyse
Delyuer, smerte, and of great myght
Ne sawe thou neuer man so lyght
Of berde vnneth had he nothyng
For it was in the fyrst spryng
Full yonge he was, and mery of thought
And in samette, wyth byrdes wrought
And wyth golde beten full fetously
Hys bodye was clad full rychly
wrought was hys robe in straunge gyse
And all to slyttered for queyntyse
In many a place, lowe and hye
And shode he was with great maystrye
wyth shone decoped, and wyth lace
By drury, and by solace
Hys leefe a rosen chapelet
Had made, and on hys heed it set
And wete ye who was hys sefe
Dame gladnesse there was hym so lefe
That syngeth so well wyth glad corage
That from she was twelue yere of age
She of her loue graunt hym made
Sir myth her by the fynger hade
Daunsynge, and she hym also
Greate loue was a twixt hem two
Both were they fayre and bryght of hewe
She semed lyke a rose newe
Of colours, and her flesche so tendre
That wyth a brere smalle and tendre
Men myght it cleue, I dare well sey
Her forheed frouncels al pley
Bent were her browes two
Her eyen gray, and glad also
That laugheden aye in her semblaunt
Fyrst or the mouthe by couenaunt
I wot not what of her nose I shal discryue
So fayre hath no woman a lyue
Her heere was yelowe, and clere shynyng
I wot no lady so lykyng
Ofrayes freshe, was her garlande
I whiche haue sene a thousande
Sawe neuer ywys no garlande yet
So well wrought of sylke as it
And in an ouergylte samyte
Cladde she was, by greate delyte
Of whiche her leefe a robe werde
The meryer she in her herte ferde
And next her went, on her other syde
The god of loue, that can deuyde
Loue, and as hym lyketh it be
But he can cherles daunten, he
And maken folkes pride fallen
And he can well these lordes thrallen
And ladyes put at lowe degre
whan he maye hem to proude se.

Thys god of loue of hys fassyoun
was lyke no knaue, ne quystroun
Hys beautie greatly was to prise
But of his robe to deuyse
I drede encombred for to be
For not ycladde in sylke was he
But all in floures and flourettes
Ipaynted all wyth amorettes
And wyth losenges and scochons
wyth byrdes, lyberdes, and lyons
And other beastes wrought full weie
Hys garment was euerydele
Ypurtrayed and ywrought wyth flours
By diuers medelynge of colours
Floures there were of many gyse
Yset by compace in a syse
There lacked no floure to my dome
Ne not so muche as floure of brome
Ne vyolet, ne eke peruynke
Ne floure none, that men can on thynke
And many a rose lefe full longe
was entermedled there amonge
And also on hys heed was set
Of roses reed a chapelet
But nyghtyngales a full greate route
That flyen ouer hys heede aboute

The leaues felden as they flyen
And he was al with byrdes wrien
with popingay, with nyghtyngale
with chaulaundre, and with wodewale
wyth fynche, with larke, and with archãgel
He semed as he were an angel
That downe were comen fro heuen clere
Loue had wyth hym a bachelere
That he made alwayes wyth hym be
Swete lokynge, clepyng was he
Thys bacheler stode beholdyng
The daunce, and in hys hande holdyng
Turke bowes two, full wel deuysed had he
That one of hem was of a tree
That beareth a fruite of sauoure wicke
Ful croked was that foule stycke
And knotty here and there also
And blacke as bery, or any slo
That other bowe was of a plante
without wemme, I dare warrante
Ful euen and by proporcion
Trectes and longe, of ful good fassyon
And it was paynted well and twhitten
And ouer al diapred and written
wyth ladyes and with bacheleres
Ful lyghtsome and glad of cheres
These bowes two helde swete lokyng
That semed lyke no gadlyng
And ten brode arowes helde he there
Of whych fyue in hys ryghthande were
But they were shauen well and dyght
Nocked, and fethered aryght
And al they were wyth golde begon
And stronge poynted euerychon
And sharpe for to keruen wele
But yron was there none ne stele
For al was golde, men myght se
Out take the fethers and the tree.


The swyftestе of these arowes fyue
Out of a bowe for to dryue
And best fethered for to flye
And fayrest eke, was cleped beautie
That other arowe, that hurteth lesse
was cleped (as I trowe) Sympplesse
the thyrde cleped was Fraunchyse
That fethered was in noble wyse
wyth valour and wyth curtesye
The fourth was cleped companie
That heuy for to shoten is
But who so shoteth ryght ywys
May therwith done great harme and wo
The fyfth of these, and last also
Fayre Semblaunt men that arowe cal
The leest greuous of hem al
yet can it make a full greate wounde
But he maye hope hys sores sounde
That hurt is wyth that arowe ywys
Hys wo the better bestowed is
For he maye soner haue gladnesse
His langour ought to be the lesse


Fiue arowes were of other gyse
That bene full foule to deuyse
For shaft & end, soth for to tel
were also black as fend in hel
The fyrst of hem is called pride
That other arowe next hym besyde
It was cleped vyllanye
That arowe was, as with felonye
Enuenymed, and wyth spitous blame
The thyrde of hem was cleped shame
The fourth wanhope cleped is
The fyfth the newe thought ywys

These arowes that I speke of here
were all fyue on one manere
And all were they resemblable
To hem was wel syttyng and able
The foule croked bowe hydous
That knotty was, and all roynous
That bowe semed wel to shete
These arowes fyue, that bene vnmete
And contrarye to that other fyue
But though I tell not as blyue
Of her power, ne of her myght
Hereafter shall I tellen ryght
The soth, and eke signyfyaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce
All shall be sayd I vndertake
Er of thys boke an ende I make

Nowe come I to my tale agayne
But alderfyrst, I woll you sayne
The fassyon and the countenaunces
Of al the folke that on the daunce is
The god of loue iolyte and lyght
Ladde on his hande a lady bryght
Of hygh prise, and of great degre
Thys lady was called beaute

And

And an arowe, of whych I tolde
Full well thewed was the holde
Ne she was darke ne browne, but bryght
And clere as the moone lyght
Agayne whome all the sterres semen
But smale candels, as we demen
Her flesche was tender as dewe of floure
Her chere was symple as byrde in boure
As whyte as lylye or rose in ryse
Her face gentyll and treatyse
Fetys she was, and smale to se
No wyntred browes had she
Ne popped her, for it neded nought
To wyndre her, or to paynt her ought
Her tresses yelowe, and longe straughten
Unto her heles downe they raughten
Her nose, her mouth, and eye and cheke
Well wrought, and all the remenaunt eke
A full great sauour and a swote
Me thought in myne herte rote
As helpe me God, when I remembre
Of the fassyon of euery membre
In worlde is none so fayre a wyght
For yonge she was, and hewed bryght
Sore pleasaunt, and fetyse wyth all
Gent, and in her myddell small
Besyde Beaute yede Rychesse
And hyght lady of great noblesse
And great of price in euery place
But who so durst to her trespace
Or tyll her folke, in werke or dede
He were full hardy out of drede
For both she helpe and hyndre may
And that is not of yesterday
That ryche folke haue full great myght
To helpe, and eke to greue a wyght
The best and greatest of valoure
Dydden Rychesse full great honoure
And besy weren her to serue
For that they wolde her loue deserue
They cleped her Lady great and small
Thys wyde worlde her dredeth all
Thys worlde is all in her daungere
Her courte hath many a losengere
And many a traytour enuyous
That ben full besy and curious
For to dysprayse, and to blame
That best deseruen loue and name
To forne the folke hem to begylen
These losyngeours hem prayse and smylen
And thus the worlde wo worde anoynten
But afterwarde they pryll and poynten
The folke, ryght to the bare bone
Behynde her backe when they ben gone
And foule abaten folkes pryse
Full many a worthy man and wyse
Han hyndred, and ydon to dye
These losyngeours wyth her flaterye
And maketh folke full straunge be
There as hem ought ben pryue
Well yuell mote they thryue and thee
And yuell aryued mote they be
These losengeours full of enuye
No good man loueth her companye.

Rychesse a robe of purple on hadde
Ne trowe not that I lye or madde
For in thys worlde is none it lyche
Ne by a thousande dele so ryche
Ne none so fayre, for it full wele
wyth Orfreyes leyde was euerydele
And purtrayde in the rybanynges
Of dukes stories, and of kynges
And wyth a bende of golde taffyled
And knoppes fyne of golde amyled
Aboute her necke of gentyll entayle
was shette the ryche Cheuesayle
In whych there was full great plente
Of stones clere, and fayre to se.
¶ Rychesse a gyrdell had vpon
The bokell of it was of ston
Of vertue great, and mokell of myght
For who so bare the stone so bryght
Of venyme durste hym nothynge dout
whyle he the stone had hym about
That stone was greatly for to loue
And tyll a ryche mans behoue
worth all the golde in Rome, and Fryse
The Mourdant wrought in noble gyse
was of a stone full precious
That was so fyne and vertuous
That whole a man it couth make
Of palsye, and of toth ake
And yet the stone had suche a grace
That he was seker in euery place
All thylke daye not blynde to bene
That fastynge myght that stone sene
The barres were of golde full fyne
Upon a tyssue of Satyne
Full heuy, great, and nothynge lyght
In euerych was a besaunt wyght
Upon the tresses of rychesse
was set a cercle for noblesse
Of brende golde, that full lyght shone

So fayre trowe I was neuer none
But he were konnynge for the nones
That coulde deuyse all the stones
That in that cercle shewen clere
It is a wonder thynge to here
For no man coulde prayse or gesse
Of hem the value or rychesse
Rubyes there were, Saphyrs, Ragounces
And Emeraudes, more then two ounces
But all before full subtelly
A fyne Charboncle sette sawe I
The stone so clere was and so bryght
That all so soone as it was nyght
Men myght sene to go for nede
A myle or two, in length and brede
Such lyght sprange out of the stone
That Rychesse wonder bryght shone
Both her heed, and all her face
And eke aboute her all her place
Dame rychesse on her honde gan lede
A yonge man full of semelyhede
That she best loued of any thynge
Hys lust was moche in housholdynge
In clothynge was he full fetyse
And loued well to haue horse of pryse
He wende to haue reproued be
Of thefte or murdre, yf that he
Had in hys stable an hackenay
And therfore he desyred aye
To ben acqueynted wyth Rychesse
For all hys purpose, as I gesse
was for to make great dyspence
wythouten warnynge or defence
And Rychesse myght it well sustene
And her dyspences wel mayntene
And hym alwaye suche plentye sende
Of golde and syluer for to spende
wythout lackynge or daungere
As it were pourde in a garnere.

And after on the daunce went
Largesse, that set all her entent
For to ben honorable and free
Of Alexanders kynne was she
Her moste ioye was ywys
when that she yake, and sayd: haue thys
Not auaryce the foule caytyfe
was halfe to grype so ententyfe
As Largesse is, to yeue and spende
And God alwaye ynowe her sende
So that the more she yaue awaye
The more ywys she had alwaye
Great loos hath Largesse, and great pryse
For both wyse folke and vnwyse
were wholy to her bandon brought
So well wyth yeftes hath she wrought
And yf she had an enemy
I trowe that she couth craftely
Make hym full sone her frende to be
So large of yeftes, and wyse was she
Therfore she stode in loue and grace
Of ryche and poore in euery place
A full great foole is he ywys
That both ryche and poore, and nygarde is
A lorde maye haue no maner vyce
That greueth more then auaryce
For nygarde neuer wyth strength of hande
May wynne hym great lordshyp or lande
For frendes all to fewe hath he
To done hys wyll performed be
And who so woll haue frendes here
He maye not holde hys treasour dere
For by ensample tell I thys
Ryght as an adamant ywys
Can drawen to hym subtelly
The yron, that is layde therby
So draweth folkes hertes ywys
Syluer and golde that yeuen is
Largesse had on a robe freshe
Of ryche purpure Sarlynyshe
well fourmed was her face and clere
And opened had she her colere
For she ryght there had in present
Unto a lady made present
Of a golde broche, full well wrought
And certes it myssate her nought
For through her smocke wrought with sylke
The flesche was sene as whyte as mylke
Largesse, that worthy was and wyse
Helde by the honde a knyght of pryse
was sybbe to Arthour of Breteygne
And that was he that bare the enseygne
Of worshyp, and the Gouffaucoun
And yet he is of suche renoun
That men of hym saye fayre thynges
Before barons, erles, and kynges
Thys knyght was comen all newly
Fro tourneynge faste by
There had he done great chyualrye
Through hys vertue and hys maystrye
And for the loue of hys lemman
He caste downe many a doughty man
And nexte hym daunced dame Fraũchyse
Arayed in full noble gyse

She

She nas not browne ne dunne of hewe
But whyt as snowe yfallen newe
Her nose was wrought at poynt deuyse
For it was gentyll and tretyse
wyth eyen glad, and browes bent
Her heer downe to her heles went
And she was symple as downe on tree
Full debonayre of herte was she
She durst neyther saye ne do
But that, that hyr longeth to
And yf a man were in dystresse
And for her loue in heuynesse
Her herte wolde haue full great pyte
She was so amyable and free
For were a man for her bestadde
She wolde ben ryght sore adradde
That she dyd ouer great outrage
But she hym holpe hys harme taswage
Her thought it all a vylanye
And she had on a suckeny
That not of hempe heerdes was
So fayre was none in all Arras
Lorde it was ryddeled fetysly
There nas not a poynt truely
That it nas in hys ryght assyse
Full well yclothed was Fraunchyse
For there nys no cloth sytteth bette
On damosell, then doth rokette
A woman well more fetyse is
In rokette, then in cote ywys
The whyte rokette ryddeled fayre
Betokeneth that full debonayre
And swete was she that it bere
By her daunced a Bachelere
I can not tellen you what he hyght
But fayre he was and of good hyght
All had he ben, I saye no more
The lordes sonne of wyndesore.
And next that daunced Curtesye
That prayised was of lowe and hye
For neyther proude ne fole was she
She for to daunce called me
I praye God gyue her good grace
For when I come fyrst into the place
She nas not nyce, ne outrageous
But wyse and ware, and vertuous
Of fayre speche, and fayre answere
was neuer wyght myssayde of here
She bare no rauncour to no wyght
Clere browne she was, and therto bryght
Of face and body auenaunt
I wotte no lady so pleasaunt
She were worthy for to bene
An emperesse or crowned quene.
And by her went a knyght dauncynge
That worthy was and well speakynge
And full well coude he done honour
The knyght was fayre and styffe in stour
And in armure a semely man
And welbeloued of hys lemman.
Fayre Idelnesse then saugh I
That alwaye was me fast by
Of her haue I wythout fayle
Tolde you the shappe and appareyle
For (as I sayd) Lo, that was she
That dyd to me so great bounte
She the gate of that garden
Undyd, and let me passen in
And after daunced as I gesse
And she fulfylled of lustynesse
That nas not yet. xij. yere of age
wyth herte wylde, and thought volage
Nyce she was, but she ne mente
None harme ne sleyght in her entente
But onely lust and iolyte
For yonge folke, well weten ye
Haue lytell thought, but on her playe
Her lemman was besyde alwaye
In suche a gyse that he her kyste
At all tymes that hym lyste
That all the daunce myght it se
They make no force of preuyte
For who so spake of hem yuell or wele
They were ashamed neuer a dele
But men myght sene hem kysse there
As it two yonge douues were
For yonge was thylke bachelere
Of beaute wote I none hys pere
And he was ryght of suche an age
As youth hys lefe, and suche corage
The lusty folke that daunced there
And also other that wyth hem were
That weren all of her meyne
Full hende folke, wyse, and free
And folke of fayre porte truely
There were all comenly
when I had sene the countenaunces
Of hem that ladden thus these daunces
Then had I wyll to gone and se
The garden that so lyked me
And loken on these fayre Laurelles
On Pyne trees, Cedres, and Olmeres
The daunces then ended were
For many of hem that daunced there

where wyth her loues went away
Under the trees to haue her playe.

ALorde they lyued lustely
A Great foole were he sekerly
That nolde hys thākes such lyke lede
For thys dare I sayne out of drede
That who so myght so well fare
For better lyfe durst hym not care
For there nys so good paradyse
As to haue a loue at hys deuyse
Out of that place went I tho
And in that gardyn gan I go
Playenge alonge full merely
The god of Loue full hastely
Unto hym Swete lokynge clepte
No lenger wolde he that she kepte
Hys bowe of golde, that shone so bryght
He had hem bent anone ryght
And he full sone sette an ende
And at a brayde he gan it bende
And toke hym of hys arowes fyue
Full sharpe and ready for to dryue
Nowe God that sytteth in maieste
Fro deedly woundes he kepe me
yf so be that he had me shete
For yf I wyth hys arowe mete
It had me greued sore ywys
But I that nothynge wyst of thys
went vp and downe, full many a waye
And he me folowed fast alwaye
But no where wolde I reste me
Tyll I had in all the garden be.

THe garden was by measurynge
Ryght euen and square in compasynge
It as longe was as it was large
Of fruyte had euery tre hys charge
But it were any hydous tree
Of whych there were two or thre
There were, and that wote I full wele
Of Pome garnettes a full great dele
That is a frute full well to lyke
Namely to folke when they be syke
And trees there were, great foyson
That baren nuttes in her season
Suche as men nutmygges call
That swote of sauour ben wythall
And Almandres great plente
Fygges, and many a date tre
There weren, yf men had nede
Through the gardyn, in length and brede
There was eke werynge many a spyce
As clowe, gylofre, and lycorice
Gyngere, and greyne de Parys
Canell, and setewale of prys
And many a spyce delytable
To eaten when men ryse fro table
And many homely trees ther were
That peches, coynes, and apples bere.
Medlers, plommes, peeres, chesteynis
Cheryse, of whych many one fayne is
Notes, aleys, and bolas
That for to sene it was solas
wyth many hygh laurer, and pyne
was renged clene all that gardyne
wyth Cypres, and wyth Olyueris
Of whych that nygh no plenty here is
There were Elmes great and stronge
Maples, ashe, oke, aspe, planes longe
Fyne ewe, popler, and lyndes fayre
And other trees full many a payre
what shulde I tell you more of it.
There were so many trees yet
That I shulde all encombred be
Er I had rekened euery tree
These trees were sette that I deuyse
One from another in assyse
Fyue fadome or syre, I trowe so
But they were hye and great also
And for to kepe out well the sonne
The croppes were so thycke ynonne
And euery braunche in other knytte
And full of grene leues sytte
That sonne myght there none dyscende
Lest the tender grasses shende
There myght men Does and Roes ysse
And of squyrels full great plente
From bowe to bowe alwaye lepynge
Connes there were also playenge
That comyn out of her clapers.
Of sondry colours and maners
And maden many a tourneynge
Upon the freshe grasse spryngynge
In places sawe I welles there
In whych there no frogges were
And fayre in shadowe was euery well
But I ne can the nombre tell
Of stremys small that by deuyse
Mythe had done come through condyse
Of whych the water in rennynge
Gan make a noyse full lykynge

Aboute

Aboute the brynkes of these welles
And by the stremes ouer all elles
Sprange vp the grasse, as thycke yset
And softe as any veluet
On whych men myght hys lemman ley
As on a fetherbed to pley
For the erthe was full soft and swete
Through moysture of the well wete
Sprongе vp the sote grene gras
As fayre, as thycke, as myster was
But moche amended it the place
That therth was of suche a grace
That it of floures hath plente
That both in somer and wynter be
There sprange the violet al newe
And fresche peruynke ryche of hewe
And floures yelowe, whyte, and rede
Suche plente grewe there neuer in mede
Full gaye was all the grounde and queynt
And poudred, as men had it peynt
wyth many a fresche and sondrye floure
That casten vp full good sauoure
I woll not longe holde you in fable
Of all thys garden delectable
I mote my tonge stynten nede
For I ne maye wythouten drede
Naught tellen you the beaute all
Ne halfe the bounte there wyth all
I went on ryght hande and on lefte
Aboute the place, it was not lefte
Tyll I had all the garden bene
In the eftes that men myght sene
And thus whyle I wente in my playe
The God of loue me folowed aye
Ryght as an hunter can abyde
The beest, tyll he seeth hys tyde
To shoten at goodmesse to the dere
when that hym nedeth go no nere
And so belyll, I rested me
Besydes a well vnder a tree
whych tree in Fraunce men call a Pyne
But syth the tyme of kynge Pepyne
Ne grewe there tree in mannes syght
So fayre, ne so well wore in hyght
In all that yarde so hygh was none
And spryngynge in a marble stone
Had nature set, the soth to tell
Vnder that pyne tree a well
And on the border all wythout
was wrytten in the stone about
Letters small, that sayden thus
Here starke the fayre Narcisus.

Narcisus was a bachelere
That loue had caught in hys daungere
And in hys nette gan hym so strayne
And dyd hym so to wepe and playne
That nede hym muste hys lyfe forgo
For a fayre lady that hyght Echo
Hym loued ouer any creature
And gan for hym suche payne endure
That on a tyme she hym tolde
That yf he her louen nolde
That her behoued nedes dye
There laye none other remedye
But natheleſſe for hys beaute
So fyers and daungerous was he
That he nolde graunten her alkynge
For weppynge ne for fayre prayenge
And when she herde hym werne her so
She had in herte so great wo
And toke it in so great dyspyte
That she wythout more respyte
was deed anone: but ere she deyde
Full pytously to God she prayde
That proude herte Narcisus
That was in loue so daungerous
Wyght on a daye ben hampred so
For loue, and bene so hote for wo
That neuer he myght to ioye attayne
Then shulde he fele in euery bayne
what sorowe true louers maken
That ben so vyllaynously forsaken


Hys prayer was but reasonable
Therfore God held it ferme and stable
For Narcisus shortly to tell
By auenture came to ỳ well
To rest hym in the shadowynge
A daye, when he come from huntinge
Thys Narcisus had suffred paynes
For renuynge all daye in the playnes
And was for thurst in great dystresse
Of herte, and of hys werynesse
That had hys breth almost be nomen
when he was to that wel ycomen
That shadowed was with braunches grene
He thought of thylke water shene
To drynke, and fresche hym well wythall
And downe on knees he gan to fall
And forth hys necke and heed out straught
To drynke of that well a draught
And in the water anone was sene

Hys nose, hys mouth, hys eyen sheue
And he therof was all abashed
Hys owne shadowe had hym betrashed
For well wende he the forme se
Of a chylde of great beaute
Well couth loue hym wreke tho
Of daunger and of pryde also
That Narcisus somtyme hym bere
He quyte hym well hys guerdon there
For he mused so in the well
That shortly the soth to tell
He loued hys owne shadowe so
That at laste he starke for wo
For when he sawe that he hys wyll
Wyght in no maner waye fulfyll
And that he was so faste caught
That he hym couth comforte naught
He lost hys wytte, ryght in that place
And deyde wythin a lytell space
And thus hys warylon he toke
For the lady that he forsoke
Ladyes I praye ensample taketh
Ye that ayenst your loue mystaketh
For yf her death be you to wyte
God can full well your wyle quyte.

When ỳ thys lettre, of whych I tel
Had taught me ỳ it was ỳ welle
Of Narcisus in hys beaute
I gan anon wythdrawe me
When it fell in me remembraunce
That hym betyde suche myschaunce
But at the last then thought I
That scathlesse, full sekerly
I myght vnto the welle go
Wherof shulde I abashen so
Vnto the welle then went I me
And downe I louted for to se
The clere water in the stone
And eke the grauell, whych that shone
Downe in the botome, as syluer fyne
For of the welle, thys is the fyne
In worlde is none so clere of hewe
The water is euer freshe and newe
That welmeth vp, wyth wawes bryght.
The mountenaunce of two fynger hyght
Aboute it is grasse spryngynge
For moyste so thycke and well lykynge
That it ne maye in wynter dye
No more then maye the see be drye.

Downe at the botome set sawe I
Two cristall stones craftely
In thylke freshe and fayre well
But o thynge sothly dare I tell
That ye woll holde a great marvayle
When it is tolde, wythouten fayle
For when the sunne clere in syght
Caste in that welle hys bemes bryght
And that the heete dyscended is
Then taketh the cristall stone ywys
Agayne the sonne an hundred hewes
Blewe, yelowe, and reed that fresh & new is
Yet hath the mervaylons cristall
Suche strength, that the place ouer all
Both foule and tree, and leues grene
And all the yerde in it is sene
And for to done you to vnderstonde
To make ensample woll I fonde
Ryght as a myrrour openly
Sheweth all thynge that standeth therby
As well the coloure, as the fygure
Wythouten any couerture
Ryght so the cristall stone shynynge
Wythouten any dysceyuynge
The entrees of the yerde accuseth
To hym that in the water museth
For euer in whych halfe that ye be
Ye maye well halfe the gardyne se
And yf he turne, he maye ryght wele
Sene the remnaunt euery dele
For there is none so lytell thynge
So hydde ne closed wyth shyttynge
That it ne is sene, as though it were
Paynted in the cristall there
Thys is the myrrour perillus
In whych the proude Narcisus
Sey all hys fayre face bryght
That made hym syth to lye vprypght
For who so loketh in that myrrour
There may nothynge be hys socour
That he ne shall there se somthynge
That shall hym lede into laughynge.
Full many a worthy man hath it
yblent, for folke of greatest wyt
Ben soone caught here and wayted
Wythouten respyte ben they beyted
Here cometh to folke of newe rage
Here chaungeth many a wyght corage
Here lyeth no rede ne wytte therto
For Venus sonne, dan Cupido
Hath iowen there of loue the sede
That helpe ne lyeth there none, ne rede

So

So cercleth it the welle aboute
Hys gynnes hath he set withoute
Right for to catche in hys panters
These damoseis and bachelers
Loue wyll none other byrde catche
Though he set eyther nette or latche
And for the sede that here was sowen
Thys welle is cleped, as well is knowen
The welle of Loue, of very ryght
Of whyche there hath full many a wyght
Spoken in bokes dyuersely
But they shull neuer so verily
Discripcion of the welle here
Ne eke the sothe of thys matere
As ye shull, whan I haue vndo
The crafte that her belongeth to.

AL way me lyked for to dwell
To sene the chrystall in the well
That shewed me full openly
A thousande thynges faste by
But I may say in sorry houre
Stode I to loken or to powre
For sythen I sore syghed
That Myrrour hath me nowe entriked
But had I fyrst knowen in my wyt
The vertue and strengthes of it
I nolde not haue mused there
Me had bette ben els where
For in the snare I fell anone
That had bytreshed many one
In thylke Myrrour sawe I tho
Amonge a thousande thynges mo
A Roser charged full of roses
That with an hedge aboute enclosis
Tho had I suche luste and enuye
That for Parys ne for Pauye
Nolde I haue lefte to gone and se
There greatest heape of roses be
whan I was with thys rage hente
That caught hath many a man and shente
Towarde the Roser gan I go
And whan I was not ferre therfro
The sauour of the roses swote
Me smote right to the herte rote
As I had all enbaumed me
And yf I ne had endouted me
To haue ben hated or assayled
My thankes woll I not haue fayled
To pull a rose of all that route
To bere in myne honde aboute
And smellen to it where I went
But euer I dredde me to repent
And leste it greued or forthought
The lorde that thylke gardyn wrought
Of roses there were great wone
So fayre ware neuer in Rone
Of knoppes close, some sawe I there
And some well better woxen were
And some there ben of other moyson
That drowe nygh to her season
And spedde hem faste for to sprede
I loue well suche roses rede
For brode roses, and open also
Ben passed in a day or two
But knoppes wyll fresche be
Two dayes at leest, or els thre
The knoppes greatly lyked me
For fayrer may there no man se
who so myght haue one of all
It ought hym ben full lefe withall
Myght I garlonde of hem geten
For no rychesse I wolde it leten
Amonges the knoppes I chese one
So fayre, that of the remenaunt none
Ne preyse I halfe so well as it
Whan I auyse in my wyt
For it so well was enlumyned
wyth colour reed, as wel fyned
As nature couthe it make fayre
And it hath leaues wel foure payre
That kynde hath set through hys knowynge
Aboute the redde roses spryngyng
The stalke was as ryche ryght
And theron stode the knoppe vpright
That it ne bowed vpon no syde
The swote smel sprynge so wyde
That it dyed all the place aboute
whan I had smelled the sauour swote
No wyll had I fro thence yet go
But somdele nere it went I tho
To take it, but myne honde for drede
Ne durste I to the Rose bede
For thystels sharpe of many maners
Netles, thornes, and hoked briers
For moche they disturbled me
For sore I dradde to harmed be.

THe god of loue, with bowe bent
That all day set had hys talent
To pursue and to spyen me
was stondyng by a fygge tree
And whan he sawe how that I
Had chosen so ententifly

The bothum more vnto my paye
Than any other that I say
He toke an arowe, ful sharply whette
And in hys bowe whan it was sette
He streight vp to hys eere drough
The stronge bowe, that was so tough
And shotte at me so wonder smerte
That through myn eye vnto myn herte
The takel smote, and depe it wente
And therwithal such colde me hente
That vnder clothes warme and softe
Sythen that day I haue chyuered ofte
Whan I was hurte thus in stounde
I fell downe platte vnto the grounde
Myne hert fayled, and faynted aye
And longe tyme in swoune I laye
But whan I came out of swounyng
And had wytte, and my felyng
I was al mate, and wende full wele
Of bloode haue lorne a full great dele
But certes the arowe that in me stoode
Of me ne drewe no droppe of bloode
For why, I founde my woundes al drey
Than toke I with myn hondes twey
The arowe, and full faste it ought plyght
And in the pullyng sore I syght
So at the laste the shafte of tree
I drough out, with the fethers thre
But yet the hoked heed ywis
The whiche Beaute called is
Gan so depe in myne herte pace
That I it myght not arace
But in myn hert styll it stoode
All bledde I not a droppe of bloode
I was bothe anguyshous and trouble
For the peryll that I sawe double
I nyste what to say or do
Ne get a leche my woundes to
For neyther through grasse ne rote
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote
But to the bothum euer mo
Myn herte drewe, for all my wo
My thought was in none other thyng
For had it ben in my kepyng
It wolde haue brought my lyfe agayne
For certes euenly, I dare wel sayne
The syght onely, and the sauoure
Alegged moche of my langoure
Than gan I for to drawe me
Towarde the Bothom fayre to se
And loue had get hym in his throwe
Another arowe in to hys bowe
And for to shote gan hym dresse
The arowes name was Sympleſſe
And whan that Loue gan nygh me nere
He drowe it vp withouten were
And shotte at me wyth al hys myght
So that thys arowe anon ryght
Throughout eygh as it was founde
In to myn herte hath made a wounde
Than I anon dyd all my crafte
For to drawen out the shafte
And therwithall I syghed efte
But in myn herte the heed was lefte
whyche aye encresed my desyre
Vnto the bothom drowe I nere
And euermo that me was wo
The more desyre had I to go
Vnto the Roser, where that grewe
The fresche bothom, so bright of hewe
Better me were to haue letten be
But it behoued nede me
To don ryght as myne herte badde
For euer the body muste be ladde
After the herte, in wele and wo
Of force togyther they muste go
But neuer this archer wolde fyne
To shote at me wyth all hys pyne
And for to make me to hym mete
The thyrde arowe he gan to shete
Whan best hys tyme he myght espye
The whiche was named Curtesye
In to myne herte it dyd auale
A swoune I fell, bothe deed and pale
Longe tynie I lay, and styred nought
Tyll I abrayde out of my thought
And faste than I auysed me
To drawe out the shafte of tree
But euer the heed was lefte behynde
For aught I couthe pull or wynde
So sore it stycked whan I was hytte
That by no crafte I myght it flytte
But anguyshous and full of thought
I lefte suche wo, my wounde aye wrought
That somoned me alway to go
Towarde the Rose, that plesed me so
But I ne durste in no manere
Bycause the archer was so nere
For euermore gladly as I rede
Brent chylde of fyre hath moche drede
And certes yet for al my peyne
Though that I syght, yet arowes reyne
And grounde quarels, sharpe of steele
Ne for no payne that I might fele

Yet

Yet myght I not my selfe with holde
The fayre Roser to beholde
For Loue me yaue suche hardyment
For to fulfyll hys commaundement
Upon my fete I rose vp than
Feble, as a forwounded man
And forthe to gon might I sette
And for the archer nolde I lette
Towarde the Roser faste I drowe
But thornes sharpe, mo than ynowe
There were, and also thyllels thicke
And breres brymme for to pricke
That I ne myght get grace
The roughe thornes for to pace
To sene the freshe Roses of hewe
I muste abyde, thought it me rewe
The hedge about so thycke was
That closed the Roses in compas
But o thyng lyked me right wele
I was so nyghe, I myght fele
Of the bothom the swote odoure
And also se the freshe coloure
And that right greatly lyked me
That I so nere might it se
Suche ioye anon therof had I
That I forgate my maladye
To sene I had suche delyte
Of sorowe and angre I was all quyte
And of my woundes that I had thore
For no thyng lyken me myght more
Than dwellen by the Roser aye
And thence neuer to passe awaye
But whan a whyle I had be thare
The god of Loue, whyche all to share
Myne herte wyth hys arowes kene
Casteth hym to yeue me woundes grene
He shotte at me full hastely
An arowe named Company
The whyche takell is full able
To make these ladyes merciable
Than I anon gan chaungen hewe
For greuaunce of my wounde newe
That I agayne fel in swounyng
And syghed sore, in complaynyng
Sore I complayned that my sore
On me gan greuen more and more
I had non hope of allegeaunce
So nygh I drowe to disperaunce
I rought of dethe, ne of lyke
Whether that loue wolde me dryke
If me a martyr wolde he make
I might hys power not forsake
And whyle for anger thus I woke
The god of Loue an arowe toke
Ful sharpe it was and pugnaunt
And it was called Fayre semblaunt
The whiche in no wyse wol consent
That any louer hym repente
To serue hys loue, with herte and all
For any peryll that may befall
But though thys arowe was kene grounde
As any rasour that is founde
To cutte and kerue at the poynte
The god of Loue it had anoynte
wyth a precious oyntment
Somdele to yeue alegement
Upon the woundes that he hade
Through the body in my herte made
To helpe her sores, and to cure
And that they may the bette endure
But yet thys arowe, without more
Made in myne herte a large sore
That in full great payne I abode
But aye the oyntement went abrode
Throughout my woundes large and wyde
It spredde aboute in euery syde
Through whose vertue, and whose myght
Myne herte ioyfull was and lyght
I had ben deed and all to shent
But for the precious oyntment
The shafte I drowe out of the arowe
Rokyng for wo right wonder narowe
But the heed, whiche made me smerte
Lefte behynde in myne herte
wyth other foure, I dare wel say
That neuer woll be take away
But the oyntment halpe me wele
And yet suche sorowe dyd I fele
That al day I chaunged hewe
Of my woundes freshe and newe
As men might se in my vysage
The arowes were so ful of rage
So varyaunt of diuersyte
That men in euerych myght se
Bothe great anoye, and eke swetnesse
And ioye meynt with bytternesse
Nowe were they easy, now were they wood
In hem I felte bothe harme and good
Nowe sore without aleggement
Nowe softyng wyth oyntment
It softned here, and pricketh there
Thus ease and anger togyther were.

The god

THe God of Loue delyuerly
Come lepande to me hastely
And sayd to me in great iape
Yelde the, for thou may not escape
Way no defence auayle the here
Therfore I rede make no daungere
If thou wolte yelde the hastely
Thou shalt rather haue mercy
He is a foole in sykernesse
That wyth daunger or stoutnesse
Rebelleth, there that he shulde plese
In suche folye is lytell ese
Be meke, where thou muste nedes bowe
To stryue ayen is nought thy prowe
Come atones, and haue ydo
For I woll that it be so
Than yelde the here debonairly
And I answered full humbly
Gladly sir, at your byddyng
I wol me yelde in all thyng
To your seruyce I woll me take
For god defende that I shulde make
Ayen your byddyng resystence
I woll not don so great offence
For yf I dyd, it were no skyll
Ye may do wyth me what ye wyll
Saue or spyll, and also slo
Fro you in no wyse may I go
My lyfe, my dethe, is in your honde
I may not lafte out of your bonde
Playne at your lyste I yelde me
Hopyng in herte, that somtyme ye
Comforte and ese shull me sende
Or els shortly, this is the ende
Withouten helthe, I mote aye dure
But yf ye take me to your cure
Comforte or helthe, howe shulde I haue
Sythe ye me hurte, but ye me saue
The helthe of loue mote be founde
Where as they token fyrst her wounde
And yf ye lyst of me to make
Your prisoner, I woll it take
Of herte and wyll fully at gre
Holy and playne I yelde me
Wythout feynyng or feyntyse
To be gouerned by your empryse
Of you I here so moche price
I woll ben hole at your deuyce
For to fulfyll your lykyng
And repente for nothyng
Hopyng to haue yet in some tyde
Mercy, of that I abyde
And wyth that couenaunt yelde I me
Anone downe knelyng vpon my kne
Prokeryng for to kysse hys fete
But for nothyng he wolde me lete.

AND said, I loue the bothe and preise
Sens that thyn answer doth me ese
For thou answered so curtesly
For now I wote wel vtterly
That thou arte gentyll by thy speche
For though a man ferre wolde seche
He shulde not fynden in certayne
No suche answere of no vilayne
For suche a worde ne myght nought
Isse out of a vilayns thought
Thou shalt not lesen of thy speche
For thy helpyng woll I eche
And eke encresen that I maye
But fyrst I woll that thou obaye
Fully for thyne auauntage
Anon to do me here homage
And sythe kysse thou shalte my mouthe
Whiche to no vilayne was neuer couthe
For to aproche it, ne for to touche
For saufe of cherles I ne vouche
That they shall neuer neyght it nere
For curteys, and of fayre manere
Well taught, and full of gentylnysse
He muste ben, that shall me kysse
And also of full hygh fraunchyse
That shall atteyne to that empryse
And fyrst of o thyng warne I the
That payne and great aduersyte
He mote endure, and eke trauayle
That shall me serue, without fayle
But there agaynst the to comforte
And wyth thy seruyce to disporte
Thou mayst full glad and ioyfull be
So good a mayster to haue as me
And lorde of so hygh renoun
I beare of loue the Gonfenoun
Of Curtesy the banere
For I am of the selfe manere
Gentyll, curteys, meke, and fre
That who euer ententyfe be
Me to honoure, doute, and serue
And also that he hym obserue
Fro trespace and fro vilanye
And hym gouerne in curtesye
Wyth wyll and wyth entencion

For whan

For whan he fyrst in my prison
Is caught, than muste he vtterly
Fro thence forthe full besyly
Caste hym gentyll for to be
If he desyre helpe of me
Anon without more delay
Withouten daunger or affray
I become hys man anone
And gaue hym thankes many a one
And kneled downe wyth houdes ioyne
And made it in my porte ful queynt
The ioye went to my hert rote
Whan I had kyssed hys mouthe so swote
I had suche myrthe and suche lykyng
It cured me of languyshyng
He asked of me than hostages
I haue he sayd taken fele homages
Of one and other, where I haue bene
Disteyned ofte, withouten wene
These felons ful of falsyte
Haue many sythes begyled me
And through her falshede her luste acheued
Wherof I repent, and am agreued
And I hem get in my daungere
Her falshede shull they bye full dere
But for I loue the, I say the playne
I woll of the be more certayne
For the so sore I woll nowe bynde
That thou away ne shalt not wynde
For to denyen the couenaunt
Or done that is not auenaunt
That thou were false, it were great ruthe
Sythe thou semest so full of truthe
Sir, yf the lyst to vnderstande
I meruayle the askyng thys demande
For why or wherfore shulde ye
Hostages or borowes aske of me
Or any other sykernesse
Sythe ye wot in sothfastnesse
That ye me haue suspriseed so
And hole myne herte taken me fro
That it woll do for me nothyng
But yf it be at your byddyng
Myne herte is yours, and myn right nought
As it behoueth, in dede and thought
Redy in all to worche your wyll
whether so turne to good or yll
So sore it lusteth you to plese
No man therof may you disese
Ye haue theron sette suche iustyse
That it is werreyed in many wyse
And yf ye doute it nolde obey
Ye may therof do make a key
And holde it wyth you for hostage
Nowe certes thys is none outrage
(Quod loue) and fully I accorde
For of the body he is full lorde
That hath the herte in hys tresore
Outrage it were to asken more.

THan of his aumener he drough
A lytell key fetyse ynough
which was of goldpolished cler
And said to me, w̃ this key here
Thyn hert to me nowe woll I (shette
For all my iowell loke and knette
I bynde vnder this lytell key
That no wight maye cary awey
This key is full of great poste
wyth whyche anon he touched me
Under the syde full softely
That he myne herte sodaynly
wythout anoye hadde speered
That yet right nought it hath me deered
Whan he hadde done his wyll all out
And I had putte hem out of doute
Syr I sayd: I haue right great wyll
Your luste and pleasure to fulfyll
Loke ye my seruyce take at gree
By thylke faythe ye owe to me
I saye nought for recreaundyse
For I nought doute of your seruyce
But the seruaunt traueyleth in vayne
That for to seruen dothe hys payne
Unto that lorde, whyche in no wyse
Conne hym no thanke for hys seruyce.

LOue sayd, disnay the nought
Syth thou for socour haste me
sought
In thãke thy seruice wol I take
And high of degree I woll the
If wyckednesse ne hynder the (make
But (as I hoope) it shall nought be
To worshyppe no wyght by auenture
Maye come, but yf he payne endure
Abyde and suffre thy distresse
That hurteth nowe, it shall be lesse
I wotte my selfe what maye the saue
What medicyne thou woldest haue
And yf thy trouthe to me thou kepe
I shall vnto thyne helpyng eke
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene
where so they be olde or grene

Thou

Thou shalte be holpen at wordes fewe
For certaynly thou shalte well shewe
Where that thou seruest with good wyll
For to accomplyshen and fulfyll
My commaundementes daye and nyght
whyche I to louers yeue of right.

AH syr, for goddes loue (sayd I)
Er ye passe hens ententyfely
Your commaundemētes to me ye say
And I shall kepe hem yf I may
For hem to kepen is all my thought
And yf so be I wote hem nought
Than maye I vnwyttingly
Wherfore I praye you entierly
wyth all myne herte, me to lere
That I trespace in no manere
The god of Loue than charged me
Anone, as ye shall here and se
worde by worde, by right emprysse
So as the Romaunt shall deuyse
The maister leseth hys tyme to lere
whan the disciple woll nat here
It is but vayne on hym to swynke
That on hys lernynge woll nat thynke
Who so luste loue, lette hym entende
For nowe the Romance begynneth to amēde
Nowe is good to here in faye
If any be that canne it saye
And poynt it as the reason is
Sette for other gate ywis
It shall nat well in all thyng
Be brought to good vnderstondyng
For a reder that poynteth yll
A good sentence maye ofte spyl
The boke is good at the endyng
Made of newe and lusty thyng
For who so woll the endyng here
The crafte of loue he shall nowe lere
If that he woll so longe abyde
Tyll I thys Romance maye vnhyde
And vndo the sygnyfiaunce
Of thys dreme in to Romaunce
The sothfastnesse that nowe is hydde
without couerture shall be kydde
whan I vndone haue thys dremyng
wherin no worde is of lealyng.

VIllany at the begynnyng
I woll saye loue ouer all thyng
Thou leaue, yf thou wolte be
False, and trespace ayenst me
I curse and blame generally
All hem that louen villany
For villany maketh villeyne
And by hys dedes a chorle is seyne
These villayns arue without pyte
Frendshyp, loue, and all bounte
I nyll receyue vnto my seruyce
Hem that ben villayns of emprise
But vnderstonde in thyne entent
That thys is not myne entendement
To clepe no wight in no ages
Onely gentyll for hys lynages
But who so is vertuous
And in hys porte not outragyous
whan suche one thou seest the beforne
Though he be not gentyll borne
Thou mayste well seyne thys is in sothe
That he is gentyll, bycause he dothe
As longeth to a gentylman
Of hem none other deme I can
For certaynly withouten drede
A chorle is demed by hys dede
Of hye or lowe, as ye may se
Or of what kynrede that he be
Ne say nought for none yuell wyll
Thyng that is to holden styll
It is no worshyp to missey
Thou mayste ensample take of key
That was somtyme for missayeng
Hated bothe of olde and yonge
As ferre as Gaweyn the worthy
was preysed for hys curtesye
Kaye was hated, for he was fell
Of worde dispytous and cruell
wherfore be wyse and aqueyntable
Goodly of worde, and resonable
Bothe to lesse and eke to mare
And whan thou comest there men are
Loke that thou haue in custome aye
Fyrst to salue hem yf thou maye
And yf it fall that of hem somme
Salue the fyrst, be not domme
But quyte hem curtesly anon
wythout abydyng, er they gon
For nothyng eke thy tonge applye
To speke wordes of rybaudrye
To villayne speche, in no degre
Late neuer thy lyppe vnbounden be
For I nought holde hym in good faythe
Curteys that foule wordes saythe
And all women serue and preyse
And to thy power her honour reyse

And yf

And yf that any missayere
Dispise women, that thou mayst here
Blame him, and byde hym holde him styll
And sette thy myght, and all thy wyll
women and ladyes for to please
And to do thynge that may hem ease
That they euer speke good of the
For so thou mayst best prayseb be
Loke fro pride thou kepe the wele
For thou mayst both perceyue and fele
That pride is bothe foly and synne
And he that pryde hath him wythin
Ne may hys herte in no wyse
Meken ne souplen to seruyce
For pride is founde in euery parte
Contrarye vnto loues arte
And he that loueth trewly
Shulde hym conteyne iolyly
wythout pride in sondrie wyse
And hym disgysen in queyntyse
For queynte aray, wythout drede
Is nothyng proude, who taketh hede
For fresche aray, as men may se
wythout pride may ofte be
Mayntayne thy selfe after thy rent
Of robe and eke of garment
For many syth fayre clothyng
A man amendeth in much thyng
And loke alwaye that they be shape
what garment that thou shalte make
Of hym that can beste do
wythall that parteyneth therto
Poyntes and sleues be wel syttande
Ryght and streyght on the hande
Of shone and bootes, newe and fayre
Loke at the leest thou haue a payre
And that they sytte so fetously
That these rude may vtterly
Meruayle, syth that they sytte so playne
Howe they come on or of agayne
weare strayte gloues wyth aumere
Of sylke, and alway wyth good chere
Thou gyue, yf thou haue rychesse
And yf thou haue naught spende the lesse
Alwaye be mery, yf thou may
But wast not thy good alway
Haue hatte of floures, as fresche as May
Chapelet of Roses of whytsondaye
For suche araye ne costneth but lyte
Thine handes wasche, thy teeth make white
And let no fyth vpon the be
Thy nayles blacke, yf thou mayst se
Voyde it awaye delyuerly
And kembe thyne heed ryght iolyly
Farce not thy visage in no wyse
For that of loue is not thempryse,
For loue doth haten, as I fynde
A beaute that cometh nat of kynde
Alwaye in hert I rede the
Glad and mery for to be
And be as ioyfull as thou can
Loue hath no ioye of sorowful man
That yuel is ful of curtesy
That knoweth in hys malady
For euer of loue the sycknesse
Is meynte wyth swete and bytternesse
The sore of loue is maruaylous
For nowe the louer ioyous
Nowe can he playne, nowe can he grone
Nowe can he syngen, nowe maken mone
To day he playneth for heuynesse
To morowe he playneth for iolynesse
The lyke of loue is ful contrarye
wyche stoundemeale can ofte varye
But yf thou canst myrthes make
That men in gre wol gladly take
Do it goodly, I commaunde the
For men shulde where so euer they be
Do thynge that hem syttynge is
For therof commeth good loos and prys
wherof that thou be vertuous
Ne be not straunge ne daungerous
For yf thou good ryder be
Prycke gladly that men may se
In armes also yf thou conne
Pursue tyl thou a name haste wonne
And yf thy voice be fayre and clere
Thou shalt maken no greate daungere
whan to synge they goodly pray
It is thy worschyp for to abey
Also to you it longeth aye
To harpe and gyterne, daunce and playe
For yf he can wel fote and daunce
It maye hym greatly do auaunce
Amonge eke for thy lady sake
Songes and complayntes that thou make
For that wol meuen in her hete
whan they reden of thy smerte
Loke that no man for scarce the holde
For that may greue the manyfolde
Reson wol that a louer be
In his gyftes more large and fre
Than chorles that be not of louyng
For who therof can any thyng

He shal be lefe aye for to yeue
In londes lore who so wolde leue
For he that through a sodayne syght
Or for a kyssyng anon ryght
yaue hole his herte, in wyl and thought
And to hym selfe kepeth right nought
After this swyfte, it is good reason
He yeue his good in abandon.

NOwe woll I here reherce
Of that I haue sayde in verce
All the sentence by and by
In wordes fewe compendously
That thou mayste the better on hem thynke
whether so it be thou wake or wynke
For the wordes lytel greue
A man to kepe, whan it is breue
who so with loue wol gon or ryde
He mote be curteyes, and voyde of pryde
Mery, and full of iolyte
And of largesse a loled be.

First I ioyne the here in penaunce
That euer without repentaunce
Thou set thy thought in thy louyng
To last without repentyng
And thynke vpon thy myrthes swete
That shal folowe after whan ye mete.

And for thou trew to loue shalt be
I wyl, and cōmaunde the
That in one place thou set al hole
Thyne hert, wythout halfen dole
For trechery and sykernesse
For I loued neuer doublenesse
To many his hert that wol depart
Euerych shal haue but lytel parte
But of hym drede I me right nought
That in one place setteth his thought
Therfore in o place it sette
And lette it neuer thens flette
For if thou yeuest it in lenyng
I holde it but a wreched thyng
Therfore yeue it hole and quyte
And thou shalt haue the more meryte
If it be lent, than after soone
The bounte and the thanke is done
But in Loue, free yeuen thyng
Requireth a great guerdonyng
yeue it in yeft al quyte fully
And make thy gyfte debonairly
For men that yefte holde more dere
That yeuen is wyth gladsome chere
That gyfte nought to praysen is
That man yeueth maugre his
whan thou haste yenen thyne hert (as I
Haue sayd) the here openly
Than auentures shall the fall
whych harde and heuy bene wyth all
For oft whan thou bethynkest the
Of thy louynge, where so thou be
From folke thou must depart in hye
That none perceyue thy malady
But hyde thyne harme thou must alone
And go forth sole, and make thy mone
Thou shalt no whyle be in o state
But whylom colde and whylom hate
Nowe reed as Rose, now yelowe and fade
Such sorowe I trowe thou neuer hade
Cotidien, ne quarteyne
It is nat so full of peyne
For often tymes it shall fall
In loue, amonge thy paynes all
That thou thy selfe al holy
Forzyeten shalt so vtterly
That many tymes thou shalt be
Styl as an ymage of tree
Dome as a stone, wythout steryng
Of fote or hande, wythout spekyng
Than sone after al thy payne
To memorye shalt thou come agayne
A man abashed wonder sore
And after syghen more and more
For wytte thou wele wythouten wene
In such estate ful ofte haue I bene
That haue the yuel of loue assayde
wherthrough thou arte so dismayde

AFter a thought shal take the so
That thy loue is to ferre the fro
Thou shalte saye (God) what maye (thys be
That I ne may my lady se
Myne hert alone is to her go
And I abyde al sole in wo
Departed fro myne owne thought
And wyth myne eyen se right nought
Alas myne eyen sene I ne may
My carefull hert to conuay
Myne hertes gyde, but they be
I prayse nothyng what euer they se
Shulde they abyde than, nay
But gone and visiten wythout delay
That myne herte desyreth so
For certaynly, but yf they go

A foole

A foole my selfe I may wel holde
whan I ne se what myne hert wolde
wherfore I wol gone her to sene
Or cased shal I neuer bene
But I haue some tokenyng
Than gost thou forth wythout dwelling
But oft thou faylest of thy desyre
Er thou mayst come her any nere
And wastest in vayne thy passage
Than fallest thou in a newe rage
For want of syght, thou gynnest mourne
And homewarde pensyfe thou dost returne
In greate mischefe than shalt thou be
For than agayne shall come to the
Syghes and playntes wyth newe wo
That no itchynge prycketh so
Who wote it nought, he may go lere
Of hem that byen loue so dere
No thyng thyne herte appesen maye
That ofte thou wolt gone and assaye
If thou mayst sene by auenture
Thy lyues ioye, thyne hertes cure
So that by grace, yf thou myght
Attayne of her to haue a syght
Than shalt thou done none other dede
But wyth that syght thyne eyen fede
That fayre fresche whan thou mayst se
Thyne herte shal so rauysched be
That neuer thou woldeste thy thankes lete
Ne remoue, for to se that swete
The more thou seest in sothfastnesse
The more thou couytest of that swetnesse
The more thyne hert brenneth in fyre
The more thyne hert is in desyre
For who consydreth euerydele
It may be lykened wonder wele
The payne of loue vnto a fere
For euermore thou neyghest nere
Thought, or who so that it be
For very soth I tel it the
The hotter euer shalt thou brenne
As experience shal the kenne
Where so comest in any coste
Who is next fyre he brenneth moste
And yet forsoth for al thyne hete
Thoughe thou for loue swelte and swete
Ne for no thynge thou felen maye
Thou shalt not wyllen to passe awaye
And though thou go, yet must the nede
Thynke al day on her fayre hede
Whom thou beheldе wyth so good wyll
And holde thy selfe begyled yll
That thou ne haddest none hardyment
To shewe her ought of thyne entent
Thyne hert full sore thou wolte dispise
And eke repreue of cowardyse
That thou so dull in euery thyng
Were dome for drede, wythout spekyng
Thou shalt eke thynke thou dydest folye
That thou were her so fast bye
And durst not auntre the to say
Some thyng, er thou come away
For thou haddeste no more wonne
To speke of her whan thou begonne
But yet she wolde for thy sake
In armes goodly the haue take
It shuld haue bene more worth to the
Than of treasour great plente
Thus shalte thou mourne & eke cōplayne
And get encheson to gone agayne
Unto thy walke, or to thy place
Where thou beheldе her fleshely face
And neuer for false suspection
Thou woldost fynde occasion
For thou gone vnto her house
So arte thou than desyrouse
A syght of her for to haue
If thou thyne honour myghtest saue
Or any erande myghtest make
Thyder, for thy loues sake
Ful fayne thou woldest, but for drede
Thou goest not, leest that men take hede
Wherfore I rede in thy goyng
And also in thyne agayne commyng
Thou be wel ware that men ne wyt
Feyne the other cause than it
To go that waye, or fast bye
To heale wel is no folye
And yf so be it happe the
That thou thy loue there mayst se
In seker wyse thou her salewe
Wherwyth thy colour wol transmewe
And eke thy bloude shall all to quake
Thy hewe eke chaungen for her sake
But worde and wytte, wyth chere full pale
Shal wante for to tell thy tale
And yf thou mayst so ferforth wynne
That thou reason durst begynne
And woldest sayne thre thynges or mo
Thou shalt ful scarsly sayne the two
Though thou bethynke the neuer so wele
Thou shalt forgete yet somdele

BUt yf thou deale wyth trecherye
For false louers mowe all folye
Saine what the lust woutē drede
They be so double in her falshede
For they in herte can thynke o thynge
And sayne another in her spekynge
And whan thy speche is ended all
Ryght thus to the it shall befall
If any worde than come to mynde
That thou to saye haste lefte behynde
Than thou shalt brenne in great martyre
For thou shalt brenne as any fyre
Thys is the stryfe and eke the affraye
And the batell that lasteth aye
Thys bargayne ende maye neuer take
But yf that she thy peace wyll make
And whan the nyght is comen anon
A thousande angres shall come apon
To bedde as faste thou wolte the dyght
where thou shalt haue but small delyght
For whan thou wenest for to slepe
So full of payne shalte thou crepe
Sterte in thy bedde aboute full wyde
And turne full often on euery syde
Nowe downwarde grofle, & nowe vpright
And walowe in wo the longe nyght
Thyn armes shalte thou sprede a brede
As man in werre were forwerede
Than shall the come a remembraunce
Of her shappe and her semblaunce
wherto none other maye be pere
And wete thou well wythout were
That the shall se somtyme that nyght
That thou haste her, that is so bryght
Naked betwene thyne armes there
All sothfastnesse as though it were
Thou shalte than make castels in Spayne
And dreme of ioye, al but it vayne
And the delyten of ryght nought
whyle thou so slombrest in that thought
That so swete and delytable
The whyche in soth nys but a fable
For it ne shall no whyle laste
Than shalte thou syghe and wepe faste
And saye dere god, what thynge is this
My dreme is turned all amys
whyche was ful swete and apparent
But nowe I wake it is all shent
Nowe yede thys mery thought away
Twenty tymes vpon a day
I wolde thys thought wolde come agayne
For it alegeth well my payne
It maketh me full of ioyefull thought
It sleeth me that it lasteth nought
Ah lorde, why nyll ye me socoure:
The ioye I trowe that I langoure
The deth I wolde me shulde slo
whyle I lye in her armes two
Myne harme is harde wythouten wene
My great vnease full ofte I mene

BUt wolde loue do so I myght
Haue fully ioye of her so bryght
My payne were quitte me richly
Alas to greate a thynge aske I
It is but folye, and wronge wenyng
To aske so outragious a thyng
And who so asketh folyly
He mote be warned haskely
And I ne wote what I maye say
I am so ferre out of the way
For I wolde haue full great lykyng
And full greate ioye of lasse thyng
For wolde she of her gentylnesse
withouten more, me ones kesse
It were to me a greate guerdon
Relece of al my passion
But it is harde to come therto
All is but foly that I do
So hygh I haue myne herte sette
where I maye no comforte gette
I wote not where I saye wel or nought
But thys I wote well in my thought
Thet it were better of her alone
For to stynte my wo and mone
A loke on her I cast goodly
That for to haue all vtterly
Of an other all hole the play
Ah lorde where I shal byde the day
That euer she shal my lady be
He is full cured, that maye her se
A god, whan shall the dawnyng sprynge:
To lyggen thus is an angry thynge
I haue no ioye thus here to lye
whan that my loue is not me bye
A man to lyen hath great disese
whyche may not slepe, ne rest in ese
I wolde it dawed, and were now day
And that the nyght were went away
For were it daye, I wolde vp ryse
Ah slowe sunne, shewe thyne enprise
Spede the to sprede thy beemes bryght
And chace the derkenesse of the nyght
To put away the stoundes stronge

whyche

wheych in me lasten al to longe
The nyght shalte thou contynue so
wythout rest, in payne and wo
yf euer thou knewe of loue distresse
Thou shall mowe lerne in that sickenesse
And thus endurynge shalte thou lye
And ryse on morowe vp erly
Out of thy bedde, and harneys the
Er euer dawnyng thou mayst se
Al priuely than shalte thou gone
what whyder it be thy selfe alone
For reyne or hayle, for snowe, for slete
Thyder she dwelleth, that is so swete
The whiche may fall a slepe be
And thynketh but lytle vpon the
Than shalte thou go, ful foule aferde
Loke yf the gate be vnsperde
And wayte wythout in wo and payne
Ful yuel a coulde in wynde and rayne
Than shalt thou go the dore before
If thou mayst fynde any shore
Or hole, or refte, what euer it were
Than shalte thou stoupe, and laye to eere
If they wythin a slepe be
I meane al saue thy lady free
whom wakynge yf thou mayst aspye
Go put thy selfe in iupardye
To aske grace, and the bymene
That she may wete wythout wene
That thou nyght no reste haste had
So sore for her thou were bestad
women well ought pytie to take
Of hem that sorowen for her sake
And loke for loue of that relyke
That thou thynke none other lyke
For whan thou hast so great annoy
Shal kysse the er thou go awey
And holde that in ful great deynte
And for that no man shal the se
Before the house, ne in the way
Loke thou begone agayne er day
Such commyng, and such goyng
Such heuynesse, and such walkyng
Maketh louers wythouten any wene
Under her clothes pale and lene
For loue leaueth coloure ne cleernesse
who loueth trewe hath no fatnesse
Thou shalt well by thy selfe se
That thou must nedes assayed be
For men that shape hem other way
Falsely her ladyes for to betray
It is no wonder though they be fatte
wyth false othes her loues they gatte
For ofte I se suche losengeours
Fatter than Abottes or priours
Yet wyth o thynge I the charge
That is to saye, that thou be large
Unto the mayde, that her doth serue
So best her thanke thou shalt deserue
yeue her gyftes, and get her grace
For so thou may thanke purchace
That she the worthy holde and fre
Thy lady, and al that may the se
Also her seruauntes worshyp aye
And please as much as thou maye
Great good through hem maye come to the
Bycause wyth her they bene priue
They shal her tell howe they the fande
Curteys and wyse, and wel doande
And she shal preyse wel the more
Loke out of lande, thou be not fore
And yf such cause thou haue, that the
Behoueth to gone out of countre
Leaue hole thyne hert in hostage
Tyl thou agayne make thy passage
Thynke longe to se the swete thyng
That hath thyne herte in her kepyng
Nowe haue I tolde the, in what wyse
A louer shal do me seruice
Do it than, yf thou wolte haue
The mede, that thou after craue.


Whan loue al thys had boden me
I sayd hym, sir howe may it be
That louers may in such manere
Endure ꝑ paine ye haue said here
I meruayle me wonder faste
Howe any man may lyue or laste
In such payne, and such brennyng
In sorowe and thought, and such lyghyng
Aye vnrelesed wo to make
whether so it be they slepe or wake
In such anoy continually
As helpe me god this meruayle I
Howe man, but he were made of stele
Wyght lyue a month, such paynes to fele


He God of loue than sayde me
Frende, by the fayth I owe to the
Nay no man haue good, but he it bye
A man lyueth more tenderlye

The thyng, that he hath bought moste dere
For wete thou well wythout were
In thanke that thinge is taken more
For whych a man hath suffred sore
Certes no wo ne may attayne
Unto the sore of loues payne
None yuell therto ne may amounte
No more than a man counte
The droppes that of the water be
For drye as wel the greate see
Thou myghtest, as the harnes tell
Of hem that wyth loue dwell
In seruice, for peyne hem sleeth
And that eche man wolde flye the deth
And trowe they shulde neuer escape
Nere that hope couthe hem make
Glad as man in prison sete
And may not getten for to ete
But barlye breed, and water pure
And lyeth in vermyn and in ordure
wyth all thys yet can he lyue
Good hope such comforte hath hym yeue
whiche maketh wene that he shall be
Delyuered and come to liberte
In fortune is full trust
Though he lye in strawe or dust
In hope is all hys sustaynyng
And so for louers in her wenyng
which loue hath shytte in hys prisoun
Good hope is her saluatioun
Good hope (howe sore that they smerte)
yeueth hem both wyll and herte
To proffer her bodye to martyre
For hope so sore doth hem desyre
To suffre eche harme that men deuyse
For ioye that afterwarde shall aryse

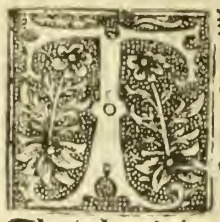
HOpe in desyre catche victorye
In hope of loue is all the glorye
For hope is all ý loue maye yeue
Nere hope, there shulde no lēger lyue
Blessed be hope, whych with desyre
Auaunceth louers in such manyre
Good hope is curteyse for to please
To kepe louers from all disease
Hope kepeth hys lande, and woll abyde
For any peryll that maye betyde
For hope to louers, as moost chefe
Doth hem endure all mischefe
Hope is her helpe whan myster is
And I shall yeue the eke ywys
Thre other thynges, that greate solace
Doth to hem that be in my lace
The fyrste good that maye be founde
To hem that in my lace be bounde
Is swete thought, for to recorde
Thynge wherwyth thou canst accorde
Best in thyne herte, where she be
Thynkyng in absence is good to the
whan any louer doth complayne
And lyueth in distresse, and in payne
Than swete thought shall come as blyue
Awaye hys angre for to dryue
It maketh louers to haue remembraunce
Of comforte, and of hygh pleasaunce
That hope hathe hyght him for to wynne
For thought anone than shall begynne
As ferre god wotte, as he can fynde
To make a myrrour of hys mynde
For to beholde he wol not lette
Her person he shall afore hym sette
Her laughyng eyen persaunt and clere
Her shappe, her forme, her goodly chere
Her mouth, that is so gratious
So swete, and eke so sauerous
Of all her feyters he shall take hede
Her eyen wyth all her lymmes fede.

Thus swete thynkynge shall aswage
The paynes of louers, and her rage
Thy ioye shall double wythout gesse
whan thon thynkest on her symelynesse
Or of her laughyng, or of her chere
That to the made thy lady dere
Thys comforte woll I that thou take
And yf the nexte thou wolte forsake
whiche is not lesse sauerous
Thou shuldest not bene to daungerous.

HE seconde shall be swete speche
That hathe to manye on be leche
To brynge hem oute of wo and were
And helpe manye a bachelere
And many a lady sent succour
That haue loued paramour
Through spekynge, whan they myght here
Of her louers to hem so dere
To me it voydeth al her smerte
The whiche is closed in her herte
In herte it maketh hem glad and lyght
Speche whan they mowe haue syght

And

And therfore now it cōmeth to mynde
In olde dayes as I fynde
That clerkes wryten that her knewe
Ther was a lady fresh of hewe
which of her loue made a songe
On hym for to remembre amonge
In which she sayd whan that I here
Speken of hym that is so dere
To me it voydeth all smerte
Iwys he sytteth so nere my herte
To speake of hym at eue or morowe
It cureth me of all my sorowe
To me is none so hygh pleasaunce
As of his person dalyaunce
Shy wyst ful wel that swete speakyng
Comforteth in full moche thynge
Her loue she had full well assayde
Of hym she was full well apayde
To speke of hym her ioye was set
Therfore I rede the that thou get
A felowe that can wel concele
And kepe thy counsayle, and wel hele
To whome go shewe holly thyne hert
Both well and wo, ioye and smerte
To get comfort to hym thou go
And priuyly bytwene you two
Ye shall speake of that goodly thyng
That hath thyne hert in her kepynge
Of her beautie and her semblaunce
And of her goodly countenaunce
Of al thy state thou shalt hym say
And aske hym counsayle how thou maye
Do any thyng that may her plese
For it to the shall do great ese
That he may wete thou trust hym so
Bothe of thy wele and of thy wo
And yf his her to loue be set
His company is moche the bet
For reson wyll he shewe to the
All vtterly his priuitie
And what she is he loueth so
To the playnly he shall vndo
without drede of any shame
Bothe tell her renome and her name
Than shall he farther ferre and nere
And namely to thy lady dere
In syker wyse, yea euery other
Shall helpen as his owne brother
In trouth without doubleneſſe
And kepen close in sykerneſſe
For it is noble thynge in fay
To haue a man thou darst say
Thy priuy counsayle euery dele
For that wyll comfort the ryght wele
And thou shalt holde the wel apayed
whan suche a frende thou hast assayed



The thyrde good of greate comforte
That yeueth to louers most disporte
Commeth of syght and beholdynge
That cleped is swete lokyng
The which maye none ese do
whan thou art ferre thy lady fro
wherfore thou prese alway to be
In place, where thou mayest her se
For it is thyng moost amerous
Moost delytable and fauerous
For to aswage a mans sorowe
To sene his lady by the morowe
For it is a full noble thynge
whan thyne eyen haue metyng
with that relyke precyous
wherof they be so desyrous
But all daye after soth it is
They haue no drede to faren amys
They dreden neyther wynde ne rayne
Ne non other maner payne
For when thyne eyen were thus in blysse
Yet of her curtesye ywys
Alone they can not haue her ioye
But to the hert they conuoye
Parte of her blysse to hym thou sende
Of all his harme to make an ende
The eye is a good messangere
which can to the hert in suche manere
Tydynges sende, that hath sene
To voyde hym of his paynes clene
wherof the hert reioyseth so
That a great partye of his wo
Is voyded and put awaye to flyght
Ryght as the darkenesse of the nyght
Is chased with clerenesse of the mone
Ryght so is al his wo full soone
Deuoyded clene, whan that the syght
Beholden may that fresh wyght
That the herte desyreth so
That all his darknesse is ago
For than the hert is all at ease
whan they sene that they hem please
Now haue I declared the all out
Of that thou were in drede and dout

For I haue tolde the faythfully
what the may curen vtterly
And all louers that wol be
Faythfull and full of stabylitie
Good hope alway kepe by thy syde
And swete thought make eke abyde
Swete lokyng and swete speche
Of all thyne harmes they shalbe leche
Of euery thou shalt haue great pleasaunce
yf thou canst byde in suffraunce
And serue well without fayntyse
Thou shalt be quyte of thyne emprysse
with more guerdoun yf that thou lyue
But all this tyme, this I the yeue

THe god of loue whan al the daye
Had taught me as ye haue herde saye
And enfourmed me compendously
He banyshed away all sodaynly
And I alone left all sole
So full of complaynt and of dole
For I sawe noman there me by
Wy woundes me greued wonderly
Ye for to curen nothyng I knewe
Saue the bothom bryght of hewe
wheron was set holly my thought
Of other comfort knewe I nought
But it were through the god of loue
I knewe not ele to my behoue
That myght me ease or comfort gete
But yf he wolde hym entermete
The Roser was withouten dout
Closed with an hedge without
As ye toforne haue herde me sayne
And fast I busyed and wolde fayne
Haue passed the haye, yf I myght
Haue getten in by any sleyght
Unto the bothom so fayre to se
But euer I drad blamed to be
If men wolde haue suspectioun
That I wolde of ententioun
Haue stole the roses that there were
Therfore to entre I was in fere
But at the last as I bethought
whether I shulde passe or nought
I sawe come with a glad chere
To me a lustye bachelere
Of good stature and of good height
And Bialacoil forsoth he hight
Sonne he was to curtesy
And he me graunted full gladly
The passage of the vtter hay
And sayde, syr: how that ye maye
Passe yf your wyll be
The fresh Roser for to se
And ye the swete sauour fele
Your warrans may ryght wele
So thou the kepe fro foly
Shal no man do the vylany
yf I may helpe you in ought
I shall not fayne, dredeth nought
For I am bounde to your seruyse
Fully deuoyde of feyntyse
Than vnto Bialacoil sayd I
I thanke you syr full hertely
And your behest take at gre
That ye so goodly proffer me
To you it cōmeth of great fraunchyse
That ye me prose your seruyse
Than after full delyuerly
Through the breers anon went I
whereof encombred was the haye
I was well plesed, the soth to saye
To se the bothom, fayre and swote
So fresh sprynge out of the rote

AND Bialacoil me serued wele
whan I so nygh me myght fele
Of the bothome the swete odour
And so lusty hewed of colour
But than a churle foule hym betyde
Besyde the roses gan hym hyde
To kepe the roses of that Rosere
Of whome the name was Daungere
This churle was hyd there in the greues
Couered with grasse and with leues
To spye and take whom that he fonde
Unto that Roser put an honde
He was not sole for there was mo
For with hym were other two
Of wicked maners, and euyl fame
Than one was cleped by his name
wycked tonge, god yeue hym sorowe
For neyther at eue ne at morowe
He can of no man good speake
On many a iust man doth he wreke
There was a woman eke that hyght
Shame, that who can reken ryght
Trespasse was her fathers name

Her

Her mother reason, and thus shame
Brought of these ylke two
And yet had trespasse neuer ado
with reson, ne neuer laye her by
He was so hydous and so vgly
I meane this, that trespasse hyght
But reason conceyueth of a syght
Shame of that I spake afore
And whan that shame was this bore
It was ordayned that chastitie
Shulde of the Roser lady be
which of the bothoms more and las
with sondrye folke assayled was
That she ne wyst what to do
For Venus her assayleth so
That nyght and day from her she stal
Bothoms and Roses ouer all
To reason than prayeth Chastitie
whom Venus hath fleemed ouer the see
That she her doughter wolde her leue
To kepe the Roser fresh and greue
Anon reason to chastitie
Is fully assented, that it be
And graunted her, at her request
That shame, bycause she is honest
Shal keper of the Roser be
And thus to kepe it, there were thre
That none shulde hardy be ne bolde
(were he yonge, or were he olde)
Agayne her wyll away to bere
Bothoms ne roses, that there were
I had well sped, had I nat bene
Awayted with these thre and sene
For Bialacoil, that was so fayre
So gratious and debonayre
Quytte hym to me full curtesly
And me to please bad that I
Shulde drawe me to the bothom nere
Prese in to touche the rosere
which bare the roses, he yake me leue
This graunt ne myght, but lytle greue
And for he sawe it lyked me
Ryght nygh the bothom pulled he
A leafe al grene, and yaue me that
The which full nygh the bothom sat
I made of that leafe ful queynt
And when I felte I was acquaynt
with Bialacoil, and so prynce
I wende all at my wyll had be
Than wert I hardy for to tell
To Bialacoil how me befell
Of loue, that toke and wounded me
And sayd, syr so mote I the
I maye no ioye haue in no wyse
Upon no syde, but it ryse
For syth (yf I shall not feyne)
In hert I haue had so great peyne
So great anoy and suche affray
That I ne wot what I shall saye
I drede your wrath to deserue
Leuer me were, that knyues kerue
My body shulde in peces small
Than in any wyse it shulde fall
That ye wrathed shulde ben with me
Saye boldly thy wyll (quod he)
I nyl be wroth yf that I maye
For nought that thou shalt to me saye.

Han sayde I syr, not you displease
To knowen of my greate vnease
In whiche onelye loue hath me brought
For paynes greate, disese, and thought
Fro day to day he doth me drye
Supposeth not syr, that I lye
In me fyue woundes dyd he make
The sore of which shall neuer slake
But ye the bothom graunt me
which is moost passaunt of beautie
My lyfe my deth, and my martyre
And treasour, that I moost desyre
Than Bialacoil affrayed all
Sayd syr, it may not fall
That ye desyre it maye not aryse
what wolde ye shende me in this wyse
A mokel foole than I were
yf I suffred you away to bere
The fresh bothom, so fayre of syght
For it were neyther skyll ne ryght
Of the Roser ye broke the rynde
Or take the rose afore his kynde
Ye are not curteys to aske it
Let it styll on the Roser syt
And let it growe tyl it amended be
And parfetly come to beautie
I nolde not that it pulled were
Fro the roser that it bere
To me it is so lefe and dere
with that anon stert out daunger
Out of the place where he was hydde
His malyce in his chere was kydde
Full great he was and blacke of hewe

Sturdye

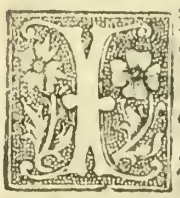
Sturdy and hydous, whoso hym knewe
Lyke sharpe vrchons his heer was growe
His eyes red sparklyng as the fyre glowe
His nose frounced full kyrked stode
He come cryande as he were wood
And sayd, Bialacoil tell me why
Thou bryngest hyther so boldly
Hym that so nygh the rosere
Thou worchest in a wronge manere
He thynketh to dishonour the
Thou art well worthy to haue maugre
To let hym of the Rosere wytte
who serueth a felon is euyll quytte
Thou woldest haue done great bountie
And he with shame wolde quyte the
Flye hence felowe I rede the go
It wanteth lytle he wol the slo
For Bialacoil ne knewe the nought
whan the to serue he set his thought
For thou wolt shame hym yf thou myght
Both agayne reason and vyght
I woll nomore in the affye
That comest so slyghly for tespye
For it proueth wonder wele
Thy sleyght and trayson euery dele
I durst nomore make there abode
For the churle he was so wode
So gan he thret and manace
And through the hay he dyd me chace
For feare of hym I trymbled and quoke
So churlyshly his heed he shoke
And sayd, yf eft he myght me take
I shulde not from his hondes scape
Than Bialacoil is fled and mate
And I all sole disconsolate
was left alone in payne and thought
For shame to death I was nygh brought
Than thought I on my hygh folly
How that my body vtterly
was yeue to payne and to martyre
And therto hadde I so great yre
That I ne durst the hayes passe
There was no hope, there was no grace
I trowe neuer man wyst of payne
But he were laced in loues chayne
Ne no man, and soth it is
But yf he loue, what angre is
Loue holdeth his heest to me vyght wele
whan payne (he sayd) I shulde fele
No hert may thynke, ne tonge sayne
A quarter of my wo and payne
I myght not with the angre last
Myne hert in poynt was for to brast
whan I thought on the rose that so
was through daunger cast me fro
A longe whyle stode I in that state
Tyll that me sawe so mad and mate
The lady of the hygh warde
which from her tower loked thytherwarde

Reason men clepe that lady
which from her tower delyuerly
Come downe to me without more
But she was neyther yonge ne hore
Ne hygh ne lowe, ne fat ne lene
But best, as it were in a mene
Her eyen two were clere and lyght
As any candel, that brenneth bryght
And on her heed she had a crowne
Her semed well an hygh person
For rounde enuyron her crownet
was full of ryche stones fret
Her goodly semblaunt by deuyse
I trowe was made in paradyse
For nature had neuer suche a grace
To forge a werke of suche compasse
For certeyne, but yf the letter lye
God hym selfe, that is so hye
Made her after his ymage
And yaue her sythe suche auauntage
That she hath myght and segnorie
To kepe men from all folly
who so woll trowe her lore
Ne may offenden neuermore

And whyle I stode this darke and pale
Reason began to me her tale
She sayde: alhayle my swete frende
Foly and chyldhode wyll the shende
which the haue put in great affraye
Thou hast bought dere the tyme of Maye
That made thyne herte mery to be
In euyll tyme thou wentest to se
The garden wherof ydlenesse
Bare the keye and was mastresse
whan thou yedest in the daunce
with her and had acquayntaunce
Her acquayntaunce is peryllous
Fyrst soft, and after noyous
She hath trashed without wene
The god of loue had the nat sene
Ne had ydlenesse the conueyde
In the verger, where myrth hym pleyde
Yf follye haue suppryised the

Do so that it recouered be
And be welware to take nomore
Counsayle, that greueth after sore
He is wyse, that wyll hym selfe chastyse
And though a yonge man in any wyse
Trespasse amonge, and do folly
Let hym not tary, but hastely
Let hym amende whatso be mys
And eke I counsayle the ywis
The god of loue holly forget
That hath the in suche payne set
And the in hert turmented so
I can not sene how thou must go
Other wayes to garysoun
For daunger, that is so feloun
Felly purposeth the to werrey
which is full cruell the soth to sey.

AND yet of Daunger commeth no blame
In rewarde of my doughter Shame
which hath ỳ rosesin her ward
As she that maye be no musarde
And wycked tonge is with these two
That suffreth noman thyther go
For er a thyng be do he shal
where that he cometh ouer all
In fourty places yf it be sought
Say thing that neuerwas don ne wrought
So moche trayson is in his male
Of falsnesse for to sayne a tale
Thou delest with angry folke ywys
wherfore to the better is
From these folke awaye to fare
For they wol make the lyue in care
This is the euyll that loue they call
wherin there is but foly all
For loue is folly euery dell
who loueth, in nowyse maye do well
Ne setteth his though on no good werke
His schole he leseth, yf he be clerke
Or other craft eke, yf that he be
He shall not thryue therin, for he
In loue shall haue more passyoun
Than monke, hermyte, or chanoun
This payne is herde out of mesure
The ioye maye eke no whyle endure
And in the possessyoun
Is moche tribulatioun
The ioye it is so short lastyng
And but in happe is the gettyng
For I se there many in trauayle
That at last foule fayle
I was nothyng thy counsayler
whan thou were made the homager
Of god of loue to hastely
There was no wysdom but folly
Thyne hert was ioly, but not sage
whan thou were brought in suche a rage
To yelde the so redely
And to loue of his great maystry.



Rede the loue awaye to dryue
That maketh the retche not of thy lyue
The folly more fro day to day
Shall growe, but thou it put awaye
Take with thy teeth the brydle fast
To daunt thyne hert, and eke the cast
Yf that thou mayest to get the defence
For to redresse thy fyrst offence
whoso his hert alway wol leue
Shall fynde amonge that shal hym greue.

whan I her herde thus me chastyse
I answered in full angry wyse
I prayed her cesse of her speche
Eyther to chastyse me or teche
To byd me my thought refreyne
which loue hath caught in his demeyne
what wene ye loue woll consent
(That me assayleth with bowe bent)
To drawe myne hert out of his honde
which is so quyckly in his bonde
That ye counsayle may neuer be
For when he fyrst arested me
He toke myne hert so sore hym tyll
That it is nothyng at my wyll
He thought it so hym for to obey
That it sparred with a key
I praye you let me be all styll
For ye may well, yf that ye wyll
Your wordes waste in ydlenesse
For vtterly wit houten gesse
Al that ye sayne is but in vayne
Ye were lever dye in the payne
Than loue to mewarde shulde arette
Falshed or treson on me sette
I wyll me get pryse or blame
And loue true to saue my name
who that me chasteseth I hym hate

with

with that worde Reson went her gate
whan she sawe for no sermonyng
She myght me fro my foly bryngc
Than dismayed I left all sole
Forwery, forwandred as a fole
For I ne knewe no cherysaunce
Than fell into my remembraunce
How loue bade me to purvey
A felowe, to whom I myght sey
My counsel and my priuytie
For that shulde moche auayle me
with that bethought I me, that I
Had a felowe fast by
True and syker, curteys and hende
And he was called by name a frende
A trewer felowe was no where non
In haste to hym I went anon
And to hym all my wo I tolde
From hym ryght nought I wold witholde
I tolde hym all without were
And made my compleynt on Daungere
Nowe for to se he was hydous
And to mewarde contrarious
The which through his crueltie
was in poynt to haue meymed me
with Bialacoil whan heme sey
within the garden walke and pley
Fro me he made hym for to go
And I belefte alone in wo
I durst no lenger with hym speke
For daunger sayd he wolde be wreke
whan that he sawe howe I went
The fresh bothom for to hent
Yf I were hardy to come nere
Bytwene the hay and the rosere.

This frend when he wyst of my thought
He discomforted me ryght nought
But sayd felow, be not so mad
Ne so abashed nor bestad
My selfe I knowe full well daungere
And howe he is fers of chere
At prime temps loue to manace
Full oft I haue bene in his case
A felon fyrst though that he be
After thou shalt hym souple se
Of longe passed I knewe hym wele
Ungoodly fyrst though men hym fele
He woll meke after in his bearynge
Ben, for seruyce and obeysynge
I shal the tell what thou shalt do
Mekely I rede thou go hym to
Of herte praye hym specyally
Of thy trespace to haue mercy
And hote hym well here to plese
That thou shalt neuer more hym displese
who can best serue of flatery
Shall please daunger most vtterly

My frende hath sayd to me so wele
That he me eased hath somdele
And eke alegged of my turment
For through hym had I hardement
Agayne to daunger for to go
To preue if I myght meke hym so.

O Daunger came I all ashamed
The whiche afore me had blamed
Desyrynge for to pease my woo
But ouer hedge durst I not go
For he forbode me the passage
I founde hym cruell in his rage
And in his honde a great burdowne
To hym I kneled lowe adowne
Full meke of porte, and symple of chere
And sayde syr, I am comen here
Onely to aske of you mercy
That greueth me full greatly
That euer my lyke I wrathed you
But for to amenden I am come now
with all my myght both loude and styl
To done ryght at your owne wyll
For loue made me for to do
That I haue trespassed hytherto
Fro whom I ne maye withdrawe myne
Yet shall I neuer for ioye ne smert (herte
(what so befall good or yll)
Offende more agayne your wyll
Leuer I haue endure discase
Than do that shulde you displease.

Yf you requyre, and pray that ye
Of me haue mercy and pytye
To stint your yre, that greueth so
That I wol swere for euer mo
To be redressed at your lykyng
Yf I trespasse in any thynge
Saue that (I praye the) graunt me
A thyng that may not warned be

That

That I maye loue all onely
None other thynge of you aske I
I shall done all well ywis
Yf of your grace ye graunt me thys
And ye maye nat letten me
For well wote ye, that loue is free
And I shall louen suche that I wyll
Who euer lyke it well or yll
And yet ne wolde I for all Fraunce
Do thynge to do you displesaunce.

THan Daungere fyll in hys entent
For to forgeue hys male talent
But all hys wrathe yet at last
He hath released, I prayde so fast
Shortely (he sayd) thy request
Is nat to mokell dishonest
Ne I woll nat werne it the
For yet nothynge engreueth me
For though thou loue thus euermore
To me is neyther softe ne sore
Loue where that the lyst, what retcheth me
So ferre fro my Roses be
Trust nat on me for none assaye
In any tyme to passe the haye
Thus hath he graunted my prayere
Than went I forthe withouten were
Unto my frende, and tolde hym all
Whyche was right ioyfull of my tale
(He sayd) nowe gothe well thyne affayre
He shall to the be debonayre
Though he afore was dispitous
He shall herafter be gratious
If he were touched on some good beyne
He shulde yet rewen on thy peyne
Suffre I rede, and no boost make
Tyll thou at good mes mayst hym take
By sufferaunce, and wordes softe
A man maye ouercome ofte
Hym, that afore he had in drede
In bokes sothely as I rede
Thus hath my frende with great comforte
Auaunced me wyth hygh disporte
Whyche wolde me good, as moche as I
And than anone full sodainly
I toke my leaue, and streight I went
Unto the haye, for great talent
I hadde to sene the freshe bothom
Wherin laye my saluatioun
And Daungere to kepe, yf that I
Kepe hym couenaunt trewly
So sore I dradde hys manasyng
I durste nat breke hys byddyng
For lest that I were of hym shent
I brake nat hys commaundement
For to purchase hys good wyll
It was for to come there tyll
Hys mercy was to ferre behynde
I kepte, for I ne myght it fynde
I complayned and sighed sore
And languyshed euermore
For I durst nat ouer go
Unto the Rose I loued so
Throughout my demyng vtterly
That he had knowlege certaynly
Than Loue me ladde in suche a wyse
That in me there was no fentyse
Falsheed, ne no trechery
And yet he full of villany
Of disdayne, and cruelte
On me ne wolde haue pyte
Hys cruel wyll for to refrayne
Tho I wepte alwaye, and me complayne

AND while I was in thys tourment
Were come of grace, by god sent
Fraunchyse, and with her Pyte
Fulfylde the Bothom of bounte
They go to Daungere anon ryght
To forther me wyth all her myght
And helpe in worde and in dede
For well they sawe that it was nede
Fyrst of her grace dame Fraunchyse
Hath taken of thys emprysse
Shye sayd, Daungere great wronge ye do
To worche thys man so moche wo
Or pynen hym so angerly
It is to you great villany
I canne nat se, why ne how
That he hath trespassed agayne you
Saue that he loueth, wherfore ye shulde
The more in cherete of hym holde
The force of loue maketh hym do thys
Who wolde hym blame he dyd amys
He leseth more than ye maye do
Hys payne is harde, ye maye se lo
And Loue in no wyse wolde consent
That ye haue power to repent
For though that quicke ye wolde hym slo
Fro loue hys herte may nat go
Nowe swete syr, it is your ease
Hym for to angre or disease
Alas, what maye it you auaunce
To done to hym so great greuaunce

What worshyppe is it agayne hym take
Or on your man a werre make
Sithe he so lowly euery wyse,
Is redy, as ye luste deuyse
If Loue haue caught hym in hys lace
You for to bey in euery caas
And ben your subiecte at your wyll
Shulde ye therfore wyllen hym yll
Ye shulde hym spare more all out
Than hym that is bothe proude and stout
Curtesy woll that ye socure
Hem, that ben meke vnder your cure
Hys hert is harde that woll nat meke
Whan men of mekenesse hym beseke.

THys is certayne, sayd Pyte
We se ofte that humylyte
Bothe yre, and also felony
Venquysheth, and also melancoly
To stonde forthe in suche duresse
Thys cruelte and wyckednesse
Wherfore I pray you sir Daungere
For to mayntene no lenger here
Suche cruell werre agayne your man
As holly yours as euer he can
Nor that ye worchen no more wo
Upon thys caytife, that languysheth so
Whyche woll no more to you trespace
But put hym holly in your grace
Hys offence ne was but lyte
The god of Loue it was to wyte
That he your thrall so greatly is
And yf ye harme hym ye done amys
For he hath had full harde penaunce
Sythe that ye refte hym thaqueyntaunce
Of Bialacoil, hys moste ioye
Whyche all hys paynes myght acoye
He was before anoyed sore
But than ye doubled hym well more
For he of blysse hath ben full bare
Sythe Bialacoil was fro hym fare
Loue hath to hym great distresse
He hath no nede of more duresse
Voydeth from hym your yre I rede
Ye may not wynnen in thys dede
Waketh Bialacoil repayre agayne
And haueth pyte vpon hys payne
For Franchyse woll, and I Pyte
That mercyfull to hym ye be
And sythe that she and I accorde
Haue vpon hym misericorde
For I you pray, and eke moneste
Nought to refusen our requeste
For he is harde, and fell of thought
That for vs two woll do right nought
Daunger ne might no more endure
He meked hym vnto mesure.

IWol in no wyse, saythe Daungere
Deny, that ye haue asked here
It were to great vncurtesye
I woll ye haue the companye
Of Bialacoil, as ye deuyse
I woll hym let in no wyse
To Bialacoil than went in hye
Franchyse, and sayde full curtesye
Ye haue to longe be deignous
Unto thys louer, and daungerous
Fro hym to withdrawe your presence
Whyche hath do to hym great offence
That ye not wolde vpon hym se
Wherfore a sorowfull man is he
Shape ye to paye hym, and to please
Of my loue yf ye woll haue ease
Fulfyll hys wyll, sythe that ye knowe
Daunger is daunted and brought lowe
Through helpe of me and of Pyte
You dare no more aferde be
I shall do right as ye wyll
Saythe Bialacoil, for it is skyll
Sythe Daunger woll that it so be
Than Franchyse hath hym sent to me.

BYalacoil at the begynnyng
Salued me in hys cõmyng
No straũgenesse was in him sene
No more thã he ne had wrathed bene
As fayre semblaunt than shewed he me
And goodly, as afore dyd he
And by the honde without dout
Wythin the haye ryght all about
He ladde me wyth right good chere
All enuyron the vergere
That Daunger hadde me chased fro
Nowe haue I leaue ouer all to go
Nowe am I rayed at my deuyse
Fro hell vnto paradyse
Thus Bialacoil of gentylnesse
Wyth all hys payne and besynesse
Hathe shewed me onely of grace
The ektres of the swote place

I sawe

I sawe the Rose whan I was nygh
was greatter woxen, and more high
Fresshe, roddy, and fayre of hewe
Of coloure euer yliche newe
And whan I hadde it longe sene
I sawe that through the leues grene
The Rose spredde to spaunyshinge
To sene it was a goodly thynge
But it ne was so sprede on brede
That men within myght knowe the sede
For it couert was and close
Bothe with the leues and with the rose
The stalke was euen and grene vpright
It was theron a goodly syght
And wel the better without wene
For the seed was nat sene
Ful fayre it spradde the god of blesse
For suche another, as I gesse
Afore ne was ne more vermayle
I was abawed for marueyle
For euer the fayrer that it was
The more I am bounden in loues laas
Longe I abode there sothe to saye
Tyl Bialacoil I ganne to praye
whan that I sawe him in no wyse
To me warnen his seruyce
That he me wolde graunt a thynge
whiche to remembre is wel syttynge
This is to sayne, that of his grace
He wolde me yeue leysar and space
To me that was so desyrous
To haue a kyssynge precious
Of the goodly freshe Rose
That so swetely smelleth in my nose
For if you displeased nought
I wolde gladly, as I haue sought
Haue a cosse therof freely
Of your yeft, for certainly
I wol none haue, but by your leue
So lothe me were you for to greue

HE sayd, frende so god me spede
Of Chastite I haue suche drede
Thou shuldest nat warned be for me
But I dare nat for Chastyte
Agayne her dare I nat mysdo
For alwaye bydeth she me so
To yeue no louer leaue to kysse
For who therto maye wynnen ywisse
He of the surplus of the praye
My lyke in hoope to gette some daye
For who so kyssynge maye attayne
Of loues payne hath (sothe to sayne)
The best and most auenaunt
And ernest of the remenaunt.

OF hys answere I sighed sore
I durst assaye him tho no more
I hadde suche drede to greue hym aye
A mā shuld nat to moche assaye
To chase hys frende out of measure
Nor putte hys lyfe in auenture
For no man at the fyrst stroke
Ne maye nat fel downe an oke
Nor of the reysyns haue the wyne
Tyll grapes be rype and well a fyne
Be sore empressed, I you ensure
And drawen out of the pressure
But I forpeyned wonder stronge
Though that I abode right longe
After the kysse, in payne and wo
Sythe I to kysse desyred so
Tyll that rennynge on my distresse
There come Venus the goddesse
(whyche aye werryeth Chastite)
Came of her grace to socour me
whose myght is knowe ferre and wyde
For she is mother of Cupyde.

THe God of Loue, blynde as stone
That helpeth louers manye one
This lady brought in her right honde
Of brennynge fyre a blasyng bronde
wherof the flame and hote fyre
Hath many a lady in desyre
Of Loue brought, and sore hette
And in her seruyce her hert is sette
Thys lady was of good entayle
Right wonderfull of apparayle
By her atyre so bryght and shene
Men myght perceyue well and sene
She was nat of Relygioun
Nor I nyll make mencioun
Nor of robe, nor of tresour
Of broche, neyther of her riche attour
Ne of her gyrdell about her syde
For that I nyll nat longe abyde
But knoweth well, that certaynly

She was arrayed richely
Deuoyde of pride certayne she was
To Bialacoil she went a paas
And to hym shortely in a clause
She sayd, sir: what is the cause
Ye ben of porte so daungerous
Unto thys louer, and daynous
To graunt hym nothyng but a kysse
To warne it hym ye done amysse
Sythe well ye wotte, howe that he
Is loues seruaunt, as ye maye se
And hath beaute, wherthrough is
worthy of loue to haue the blys
Howe he is semely beholde and se
Howe he is fayre, howe he is free
Howe he is swote, and debonayre
Of age yonge, lusty, and fayre
There is no lady so hawtayne
Duchesse, countesse, ne chastelayne
That I nolde holde her vngoodly
For to refuse hym vtterly
Hys brethe is also good and swete
And eke hys lyppes roddy and mete
Onely to playne, and to kysse
Graunt hym a kysse of gentylnysse
Hys teth arne also whyte and clene
Ye thynketh wronge withouten wene
If ye nowe warne hym, trusteth me
To graunt that a kysse haue he
The lasse ye helpe hym that ye haste
And the more tyme shull ye waste
whan the flame of the very bronde
That Venus brought in her right honde
Hadde Bialacoil with hys hete smete
Anone he badde me withouten lete
Graunt to me the rose kysse
Than of my payne I ganne to lysse
And to the rose anone went I
And kysled it full faythfully
There nede no man aske, yf I was blythe
whan the sauour softe and lythe
Stroke to myne hert without more
And me allegged of my sore
So was I full of ioye and blysse
It is fayre suche a floure to kysse
It was so swote and sauerous
I myght nat be so anguyssthous
That I mote gladde and ioly be
whan that I remembre me
Yet euer amonge sothly to sayne
I suffre noye and moche payne.

He see may neuer be so styll
That wyth a lytell wynde at wyll
Ouerwhelme and tourne also
As it were woode in wawes go
After the calme the trouble sonne
Note folowe, and chaunge as the moone
Right so fareth Loue, that selde in one
Holdeth hys ancre, for ryght anone
whan they in ease wene best to lyue
They ben wyth tempest all fordryue
who serueth Loue, canne tel of wo
The stoundmele ioye mote ouergo
Nowe he hurteth, and nowe he cureth
For selde in o poynte Loue endureth.

Owe is it ryght me to procede
Howe Shame gan medle and take hede
Through whom fel angres I haue hade
And howe the stronge wall was made
And the castell of brede and length
That god of Loue wan wyth hys strength
All thys in Romaunce wyll I sette
And for no thyng ne wyll I lette
So that it lykynge to her be
That is the floure of beaute
For she maye best my labour quyte
That I for her loue shall endyte
wycked tonge that the couyne
Of euerye louer can deuyne
worste, and addeth more sondele
(For wycked tonge saythe neuer wele)
To mewarde bare he ryght great hate
Espyenge me erly and late
Tyll he hathe sene the great chere
Of Bialacoil and me yfere
He myght not hys tonge wythstonde
worse to reporte than he konde
He was so full of cursed rage
It satte hym wele of hys lynage
For hym an Irisshe woman bare
Hys tonge was kyled sharpe and square
Poignaunt and ryght keruyng
And wonder bytter in spekyng
For whan that he me gan espye
He swore (affyrmyng sykerly)
Bytwene Bialacoil and me
was yuel aquayntaunce and priue
He spake therof so folilye

That he

That he awaked Jelousye
whyche all afrayde in hys rysyng
whan that he herde ianglyng
He ran anone as he were wode
To Bialacoil there that he stode
whyche had leuer in thys caas
Haue ben at Reynes or Amyas
For foote hote in hys felonye
To hym thus sayd Jelousye
Why haste thou ben so neglygent
To kepen, whan I was absent
Thys verger here left eyn thy warde:
To me thou haddest no regarde
To truste (to thy confusyon)
Hym thus, to whom suspection
I haue ryght great, for it is nede
It is well shewed by the dede
Great faute in the nowe haue I founde
By god anone thou shalt be bounde
And faste locken in a toure
without refuyte or socoure.

For Shame to longe hath be the fro
Ouer soone she was ago
Whan thou hast lost bothe drede and (kere
It semed well she was nat here
She was besy in no wyse
To kepe the and chastice
And for to helpen Chastite
To kepe the Roser, as thynketh me
For than this boye knaue so boldly
Ne shulde nat haue be hardy
In this verge hadde suche game
whyche nowe me tourneth to great shame.

Bialacoil nyst what to saye
Full fayne he wolde haue fledde
away
For feare haue hydde, nere that he
All sodaynly toke hym wyth me
And whan I sawe he had so
Thys Jelousye take vs two
I was astoned, and knewe no rede
But fledde away for very drede.

Than Shame came forthe ful symply
she wende haue trespaced ful greatly
Hũble of her porte, & made it symple
wearyng a vayle in stede of wymple
As nonnes done in her abbey
Bycause her herte was in affray
She gan to speke wythin a throwe
To Jelousye, right wonder lowe
First of hys grace she besought
And sayd sir, ne leueth nought
wycked tonge, that false espye
whyche is so glad to fayne and lye
He hath you made, through flatery ng
On Bialacoil a false leasyng
Hys falsnesse is not nowe a newe
It is to longe that he hym knewe
This is not the first daye
For wycked tonge hath custome aye
Yonge folkes to bewrye
And false lesynges on hem lye.

Yet nenerthelesse I se amonge
That the loigne it is so longe
Of Bialacoil, hertes to lure
In loues seruyce for to endure
Drawyng suche folke hym to
That he hath nothynge wyth to do
But in sothnesse I trowe nought
That Bialacoil had euer in thought
To do trespace or vilanye
But for hys mother Curtesye
Hathe taught hym euer to be
Good of aqueyntaunce and pryue
For he loueth none heuynesse
But myrthe and play, and all gladnesse
He hateth all trechours
Soleyne folke and enuyous
For ye weten howe that he
woll euer glade and ioyfull be
Honestly wyth folke to pley
I haue be neglygent in good fey
To chastyse hym, therfore nowe I
Of herte I crye you here mercy
That I haue ben so recheles
To tamen hym wythouten lees
Of my foly I me repente
Nowe woll I hole set myne entente
To kepe bothe lowe and styll
Bialacoyl to do youre wyll
Shame Shame (sayde Jelousye)
To be bytrasshed great drede haue I
Lecherye hathe clombe so hye
That almoste blered is myne eye
No wonder is, yf that drede haue I
Ouer all reygneth lechery
whose myght groweth nyght and dey
Bothe in cloystre and in abbey
Chastyte is werreyed ouer all

Therfore I woll wyth syker wall
Close bothe roses and rosere
I haue to longe in thys manere
Leste hem vnclosed wylfully
wherfore I am right inwardly
Sorowfull, and repente me
But nowe they shall no lenger be
Unclosed, and yet I drede sore
I shall repent ferthermore
For the game gothe all amys
Counsayle I must newe iwys
I haue to longe trusted the
But nowe it shall no lenger be
For he may beste in euery coste
Disceyue, that men trusten moste
I se well that I am nyghe shent
But yf I shette my full entent
Remedye to purvey
wherfore close I shall the wey
Fro hem that woll the rose espye
And come to waite me vilonye
For in good faythe and in trouthe
I woll not let for no slouthe
To lyue the more in sykernesse
Do make anone a fortresse
Than close the roses of good sauour
In myddes shall I make a tour
To put Bialacoil in prison
For euer I drede me of treson
I trowe I shall hym kepe so
That he shall haue no myght to go
Aboute to make companye
To hem that thynke of vilanye
Ne to no suche as hath ben here
Aforne, and founde in hym good chere
whyche han assayled hym to shende
And wyth her trowandyse to blende
A foole is eyth to begyle
But may I lyue a lytell whyle
He shall forthynke hys fayre semblaunt.
And with that worde came Drede auaunt
whyche was abashed, and in great fere
whan he wyste Jelousye was there
He was for drede in suche affray
That not a worde durste he saye
But quakyng stode full styll alone
(Tyll Jelousye hys way was gone)
Saue Shame, that hym not forsoke
Bothe Drede and she full sore quoke
That at laste Drede abrayde
And to hys cosyn Shame sayde

Shame (he sayd) in sothfastnesse
To me it is great heynesse
That the noyse so ferre is go
And the sclaunder of vs two
But sythe that it is befall
we may it not agayne call
whan ones sprynge is a fame
For many a yere wythouten blame
we haue ben, and many a day
For many an Aprill, and many a May
we han passed, not shamed
Tyll Jelousye hath vs blamed
Of mystrust and suspection
Causelesse, wythout encheson
Go we to Daunger hastely
And let vs shewe hym openly
That he hath not a right wrought
whan that he set not hys thought
To kepe better the purprise
In hys doyng he is not wyse
He hath to vs do great wronge
That hath suffred nowe so longe
Bialacoil to haue hys wyll
All hys lustes to fulfyll
He muste amende it vtterly
Or els shall he vilaynously
Exiled be out of thys londe
For he the werre may not wythstonde
Of Jelousye, nor the greke
Sythe Bialacoil is at mischeke.

To Daunger Shame & Drede anon
The right way ben gon
The chorle they foud he aforne
Ligging vnder an hawethorne
Under hys heed no pylowe was
But in the stede a trusse of gras
He slombred, and a nappe he toke
Tyll Shame pitously hym choke
And great manace on hym gan make
Why slepest thou, whan thou shuld wake
(Quod Shame) thou doest vs vilanye
who trusteth the, he dothe folye
To kepe roses or bothoms
whan they ben fayre in her sesons
Thou arte wore to famyliere
where thou shulde be straunge of chere
Stoute of thy porte, redy to greue
Thou doest great folye for to leue
Bialacoil here inne to call
The yonder man, to shenden vs all

Though

Though that thou slepe, we maye here
Of Jelousye great noyse here
Arte thou nowe late, ryse vp an hye
And stoppe sone and delyuerly
All the gappes of the hay
Do no fauoure, I the pray
It falleth nothynge to thy name
To make fayre semblant, where thou mayst (blame.

If Bialacoil be swete and free
Dogged and fell thou shuldest be
Frowarde and outragious ywys
A chorle chaũgeth that curtyse is
Thys haue I herde ofte in sayenge
That man may for no dauntynge
Make a sperhauke of a bosarde
All men woll holde the for musarde
That debonayre haue founden the
It sytteth the nought curteys to be
To do men pleasaunce or seruyse
In the it is recreaundyse
Let thy werkes ferre and nere
Be lyke thy name, whych is Daungere
Then all abawed in shewynge
Anone spake Drede, ryght thus sayenge
And sayd, Daungyr I drede me
That thou ne wolte besy be
To kepe that thou hast to kepe
When thou shuldesh wake, thou arte a slepe
Thou shalt be greued certaynly
Yf the aspye Jelousye
Or yf he fynde the in blame
He hath to daye assayled shame
And chased away, wyth great manace
Bialacoil out of thys place
And swereth shortly that he shall
Enclose hym in a sturdy wall
And all is for thy wyckednesse
For that he fayleth straungenesse
Thyne herte I trowe be fayled all
Thou shalt repent in speciall
Yf Jelousye the sothe knewe
Thou shalt forthynke, and sore rewe.

Wyth ý the churle his clubbe gan shake
Frownynge hys eyen gan to make
And hydous chere, as man in rage
For yre he brent in hys vysage
When that he herde hym blamed so
He sayd out of my wytte I go
To be dyscomfyte I haue great wronge
Certes I haue nowe lyued to longe
Syth I maye not thys closer kepe
All quycke I woll be doluen depe
Yf any man shall more repayre
Into thys gardyn for foule or fayre
Myne herte for yre gothe a fere
That I lette any enter here
I haue do folly nowe I se
But nowe it shall amended be
Who setteth fote here any more
Truly he shall repent it sore
For no man more into thys place
Of me to entre shall haue grace
Leuer I had wyth swerdes twayne
Throughout myne herte, in euery vayne
Perced to be, wyth many a wounde
Then slouth shulde in me be founde
From hence forth by nyght or daye
I shall defende it yf I maye
Wythouten any excepcion
Of eche maner condicion
And yf I it any man graunt
Holdeth me for recreaunt.

Then Daũger on hys fete gan stande
And hente a burden in his hande
Wroth in hys yre ne left he nought
But through the berger he hath sought
Yf he myght fynde hole or trace
Where through that me mote forth by pace
Or any gappe, he dyd it close
That no man myght touche a rose
Of the Roser all aboute
He shytteth euery man wythout
Thus daye by daye Daunger is wers
More wonderfull and more dyuers
And feller eke, then euer he was
For hym full ofte I synge alas
For I ne maye nought, through hys yre
Recouer that I moste desyre
Myne herte alas, woll brast a two
For Bialacoil I wrathed so
For certaynly in euery membre
I quake, when I remembre
Of the bothom, whych I wolde
Full ofte a daye sene and beholde
And when I thynke vpon the kysse
And howe moche ioye and blysse
I had through the sauour swete
For wante of it I grone and grete
Me thynketh I fele yet in my nose
The swete sauour of the rose
And nowe I wote that I mote go

So ferre the freshe floures fro
To me full welcome were the dethe
Absence therof(alas)me slethe
For whylom wyth thys rose,alas
I touched nose,mouth,and face
But nowe the death I muste abyde
But Loue consent an other tyde
That ones I touche maye and kysse
I trowe my payne shall neuer lysse
Theron is all my couetyse
whych brent myne herte in many wyse
Nowe shall repayre agayne syghynge
Longe watche on nyghtes, and no slepynge
Thought in wyshynge,turment,and wo
wyth many a turnynge to and fro
That halfe my payne I can not tell
For I am fallen into hell
From paradyse and welth,the more
My turment greueth more,and more
Anoyeth nowe the bytternesse
That I to forne haue felte swetnesse
And wycked tonge,through hys falshede
Causeth all me wo and drede
On me he leyeth a pytous charge
Bycause hys tonge was to large.

NOwe it is tyme shortly that I
Tell you somthynge of Jelousy
That was in great suspection
Aboute hym selfe he no mason
That stone coulde laye,ne querrour
He hyred hem to make a tour
And fyrst the roses for to kepe
Aboute hem made he a dyche depe
Ryght wonder large,and also brode
Upon the whych also stode
Of squared stone,a sturdy wall
whych on a cragge was founded all
And ryght great thycknesse eke it bare
Aboute it was founded square
An hundred fadome on euery syde
It was all lych longe and wyde
Lest any tyme it were assayled
Full well about it was batayled
And rounde enuyron eke were sette
Full many a ryche and fayre tourette
At euery corner of thys wall
was set a toure full principall
And euerych had wythout fable
A portcolyse defensable
To kepe of enemyes,and to greue
That there her force wolde preue
And eke amydde thys purpryse
was made a toure of great maystryse
A fayrer saugh no man wyth syght
Large and wyde, and of great myght
They drad none assaut
Of gynne,gonne,nor skaffaut
The tempure of the mortere
was made of lycoure wonder dere
Of quycke lyme persaunt and egre
The whych was tempred wyth vynegre
The stone was harde of adamant
wherof they made the foundemant
The toure was rounde made in compas
In all thys worlde no rycher was
Ne better ordayned there wythall
Aboute the toure was made a wal
So that betwyxt that and the toure
Roses were sette of swete sauoure
wyth many roses that they bere
And eke wythin the castell were
Spryngoldes, gonnes, bowes, and archers
And eke about at corners
Men seyne ouer the wall stonde
Great engyns,who were nere honde
And in the kernels here and there
Of arblasters great plentye were
None armure myght her stroke wythstonde
It were foly to preace to honde
wythout the dytche were lystes made
wyth wall batayled large and brade
For men and horse shulde not attayne
To nygh the dyche ouer the playne
Thus Jelousye hath enuyron
Sette aboute hys garnyson
wyth walles rounde,and dyche depe
Onely the Roser for to kepe
And Daunger erly and late
The keyes kept of the vtter gate
The whych openeth towarde the eest
And he had wyth hym at leest
Thurty seruauntes echeone by name
That other gate kepte Shame
whych opened,as it was couthe
Towarde the parte of the southe
Sergeauntes assygned were her to
Full many,her wyll for to do
Then Drede had in her baylye
The keppynge of the conestablerye
Towarde the north I vnderstonde
That opened vpon the lyfte honde
The whych for nothynge may be sure
But yf she do besy cure

Erly

Erly on morowe, and also late
Strongly to shette and barre the gate
Of euery thynge that she may se
Drede is aferde, where so she be
For wyth a puffe of lytell wynde
Drede is astonyed in her mynde
Therfore for stealynge of the Rose
I rede her not the yate vnclose
A foules flyght woll make her fle
And eke a shadowe yf she it se.

THen wycked tonge ful of enuye
wyth soudyours of Normandye
As he that canseth all the bate
was keper of the fourth gate
And also to the tother thre
He went full ofte for to se
when hys lotte was to wake a nyght
Hys instrumentes wolde he dyght
For to blowe and make sowne
After then he hath enchesoune
And walken ofte vpon the wall
Corners and wyckettes ouer all
Full narowe serchen and espye
Though he nought fonde, yet wolde he lye
Dyscordaunt euer fro armonye
And dystoned from melodye
Controue he wolde, and foule fayle
wyth hornepypes of Cornewayle
In floytes made he dyscordaunce
And in hys musyke wyth myschaunce
He wolde seyne wyth notes newe
That he fonde no woman trewe
Ne that he sawe neuer in hys lyfe
Vnto her husbonde a trewe wyfe
Ne none so full of honeste
That she nyll lauge and mery be
when that she hereth or maye espye
A man speaken of lecherye
Eueryche of hem hath some vyce
One is dyshonest, another is nyce
Yf one be full of vyllanye
Another hath a lykerous eye
Yf one be full of wantonnesse
Another is a chyderesse.

THus wycked tonge, God yeue
hym shame
Can put hem euerychone in
blame
wythout deserte and causelesse
He lyeth, though they ben gyltlesse
I haue pyte to sene the sorowe
That walketh both eue and morowe
To innocentes doth suche greuaunce
I praye God yeue hym yuell chaunce
That he euer so besye is
Of any woman to seyne amys
Eke Jelousye, God confounde
That hath made a toure so rounde
And made aboute a garyson
To sette Bealacoil in pryson
The whych is shette there in the tour
Full longe to holde there soiour
There for to lyue in penaunce
And for to do hym more greuaunce
whyche hath ordeyned Jelousye
In olde vecke for to espye
The maner of hys gouernaunce
The whych dyuell in her enfaunce
Had lerned of loues arte
And of hys pleys toke her parte
She was except in hys seruyse
She knewe eche wrenche and euery gyse
Of Loue, and euery wyle
It was harde her to begyle
Of Bealacoil she toke aye hede
That euer he lyueth in wo and drede
He kept hym koye, and eke pryue
Leest in hym she had se
Any foly countenaunce
For she knewe all the olde daunce
And after thys when Jelousye
Had Bealacoil in hys baillye
And shette hym vp that was so fre
For sure of hym he wolde be
He trusteth sore in hys castell
The stronge werke hym lyketh well
He dradde not that no glotons
Sulde steale hys roses or bothoms
The roses weren assured all
Defenced wyth the stronge wall
Nowe Jelousye full well maye be
Of drede deuoyde in lyberte
whether that he slepe or wake
For of hys roses maye none be take.

BUt I (alas) nowe mourne shall
Bycause I was wythout the wall
Full moche doole and mone I made
who had wyst what wo I hadde
I trowe he wolde haue had pete
Loue to dere had solde me
The good that of hys loue had I

I went about it all queyntly
But nowe through doublynge of my payne
I se he wolde it sell agayne
And me a newe bargayne lere
The whych all out the more is dere
For the solace that I haue lorne
Then I had it neuer aforne
Certayne I am full lyke in dede
To hym that cast in earth hys sede
And hath ioye of the newe sprynge
When it greneth in the gynnynge
And is also fayre and freshe of floure
Lusty to sene, swote of odoure
But er he it in sheues shere
Maye fall a wether that shall it dere
And make it to fade and fall
The stalke, the greyne, and floures all
That to the tyllers is fordone
The hope that he had to sone
I drede certayne that so fare I
For hope and trauayle sykerly
Ben me byralte all wyth a storme
The floure nyll seden of my corne
For Loue hath so auaunced me
When I began my prayere
To Bialacoil all for to tell
Whome I ne founde frowarde ne fell
But toke agree all hole my playe
But loue is of so harde assaye
That all at ones he reued me
When I wente best abouen to haue be
It is of loue, as of fortune
That chaungeth ofte, and nyll contune
Whych whylom woll on folke smyle
And glombe on hem another whyle
Nowe frende nowe foe shalt her fele
For a twynclynge tourneth her whele
She can wrythe her heed awaye
Thys is the concourse of her playe
She can areyse that doth mourne
And whirle adowne and ouertourne
Whosytteth hyghest, but as her lust
A foole is he that woll her trust
For it is I that am come downe
Through charge and reuolutioun
Syth Bialacoil mote fro my twyne
Shette in the prison yonde wythinne
Hys absence at myne herte I fele
For all my ioye and all myne hele
Was in hym, and in the Rose
That but you woll, whych hym doth close
Open, that I maye hym se
Loue woll not that I cured be
Of the paynes that I endure
Nor of my cruell auenture

AH, Bialacoil myne owne dere
Though thou be nowe a prisonere
Kepe at leest thyne herte to me
And suffre not that it daunted be
Ne let not Jelousye in hys rage
Putten thyne herte in no seruage
All though he chastyce the wythout
And make thy body vnto hym lout
Haue herte as harde as diamaunt
Stedfast, and naught plyaunt
In prison though thy body be
At large kepe thyne herte free
A trewe herte woll not plye
For no manace that it maye drye
If Jelosye doth the payne
Quyte hym hys whyle thus agayne
To venge the at leest in thought
Yf other waye thou mayst nought
And in thys wyse subtelly
Worche, and wynne the maystry
But yet I am in great affraye
Lest thou do not, as I saye
I drede thou canst me great maugre
That thou enprysoned arte for me
But that not for my trespas
For through me neuer dyscouered was
Yet thynge, that ought by secree
Well more annoye is in me
Then is in the of thys myschaunce
For I endure more harde penaunce
Then any can sayne or thynke
That for the sorowe almost I synke
When I remembre me of my wo
Full nyghe out of my wytte I go.
Inwarde myne herte I fele blede
For comfortlesse the death I drede
Owe I not well to haue dystresse
When false, through her wyckednesse
And traytours, that arne enuyous
To noyen me, be so corragious
Ah, Bialacoil full well I se
That they hem shape to dysceyue the
To make the burome to her lawe
And wyth her corde the to drawe
Where so hem lust, ryght at her wyll
I drede they haue the brought there tyll
Wythout comforte, thought me slethe
Thys game woll brynge me to my dethe

For

For yf I your good wyll lese
I mote be deed I maye not chese
And yf that thou forgete me
Myne herte shall neuer in lykynge be
Nor elswhere fynde solace
yf I be put out of your grace
As it shall neuer ben I hope
Then shulde I fall in wanhope
Alas, in wanhope: naye parde
For I woll neuer dyspeyred be
yf hope me fayle, then am I
Ungratious and vnworthy
In hope I woll conforted be
For Loue, when he betaught her me
Sayd, that hope where so I go
Shulde aye be relees to my wo
But what and she my bales bete
And be to me curteys and swete
She is in nothynge full certayne
Louers she put in full great payne
And maketh hem wyth wo to dele
Her fayre behest dysceyueth fele
For she woll behote sykerly
And faylen after vtterly
Ah, that is a full noyous thynge
For many a louer in loupnge
Hangeth vpon her, and trusteth fast
whych lese her trauayle at the last
Of thyng to cõmen she wote ryght nought
Therfore yf it be wysely sought
Her counsayle foly is to take
For many tymes, when she woll make
A full good sylogysme, I drede
That afterwarde there shall in dede
Folowe an yuell conclusyoun
This put me in confusioun
For many tymes I haue it sene
That many haue begyled bene
For truste that they haue set in hope
whych fell hem afterwarde a slope
But natheleſſe yet gladlye she wolde
That he that woll hym wyth her holde
Had altymes her purpose clere
wythout dysceyte or any were
That she desyreth sykerly
when I her blamed I dyd foly
But what auayleth her good wyll
when she ne may staunche my stounde yll
That helpeth lytell that she may do
Outtake behest vnto my wo
And heest certayne in no wyse
wythout yefte is not to prayse.

When heest and dede a sondre vary
They done a great contrary
Thus am I posled vp and downe
wyth doole, thought, and confusyoun
Of my dyseaſe there is no nombre
Daungere and shame me encombre
Drede also, and Jelousye
And wycked Tonge full of enuye
Of whych the sharpe and cruel Ire
Full ofte me put in great martyre
They haue my ioye fully lette
Syth Bialacoil they haue beshette
Fro me in pryson wyckedly
whome I loue so entierly
That it woll my bane be
But I the sooner maye hym se
And yet more ouer worst of all
There is set to kepe, foule her befall
A Rympled becke ferre ronne in rage
Frownynge and yelowe in her vysage
whych in awayte lyeth daye and nyght
That none of hem maye haue a syght.

Owe mote my sorow enforced be
Full soth it is that Loue yafe me
Thre wonder yeftes of hys grace
whych I haue lorne now in thys place
Syth they ne may wythout drede
Helpen but lytell who taketh hede
For here auayleth no Swete thought
And swete Speche helpeth ryght nought
The thyrde was called Swete Lokynge
That nowe is lorne wythout lesynge.

Yeftes were fayre, but not for thy
They helpe me but symply
But Bialacoil loosed be
To gone at large, and to be free
For hym my lyfe lyeth all in doute
But yf he come the rather oute
Alas I trowe it woll not bene
For howe shulde I euermore hym sene?
He maye not out, and that is wronge
Byeause the Toure is so stronge
Howe shulde he out, or by whose prowesse
Of so stronge a forteresse?
By me certayne it nyll be do

God wotte I haue no wytte therto
But well I wote I was in rage
when I to Loue dyd homage
who was in cause(in sothfastnesse)
But her selfe dame Idelnesse-
whych me conueyd through fayre prayere
To entre in to that fayre vergere
Shye was to blame me to leue
The whych nowe doth me sore greue
A fooles worde is nought to trowe
Ne worthe an apple for to lowe
Wenne shulde hym snybbe bytterly
At pryme temps of hys foly
I was a foole,and she me leued
Through whō I am ryght nought releued
She accomplyched all my wyll
That nowe me greueth wonder yll.

REason me sayd what shulde fall
A foole my selfe I maye well call
That loue asyde I had not layde
And trowed that dame Reason sayde
Reason had both skyll and ryght
when she me blamed,wyth all her myght
To medle of loue,that hath me shent
But certayne nowe I woll repent.

AND shulde I repente-naye
parde
A false traytour,then shulde
I be
The dyuels engyns wolde
me take
yf I my loue wolde forsake
Or Bialacoil falsly betraye
Shulde I at myschefe hate hym-naye
Syth he nowe for hys curtesye
Is in pryson of Jelousye
Curtesye certayne dyd he me
So moche,that it maye not yolden be
when he the hay passen me lete
To kysse the Rose,fayre and swete
Shulde I therfore con hym maugre
Naye certaynly,it shall not be
For Loue shall neuer yeue good wyll
Here of me,through worde or wyll
Offence or complaynt more or lesse
Neyther of Hope nor Idelnesse
For certes it were wronge that I
Hated hem for her curtesye
There is not els,but suffre and thynke
And waken when I shulde wynke
Abyde in hope,tyll Loue through chaunce
Sende me socour or allegeaunce
Expectant aye tyll I maye mete
To getten mercy of that swete.

WHylom I thynke howe Loue
to me
Sayd he wolde take at gre
My seruyce,yf vnpacience
Caused me to done offence
He sayd,in thanke I shall it take
And hygh mayster eke the make
yf wyckednesse ne reue it the
But sone I trowe that shall not be
These were hys wordes by and by
It semed he loued me truely
Nowe is there not but serue hym wele
yf that I thynke hys thanke to fele
My good myne harme,lyeth hole in me
In loue maye no defaute be
For trewe loue ne fayled neuer man
Sothly the faute mote nedes than
As God forbyd,be founde in me
And how it cōmeth,I can not se
Nowe let it gone as it maye go
whether Loue woll socoure me or slo
He may do hole on me hys wyll
I am so fore bounde hym tyll
From hys seruyce I maye not flene
For lyfe and death wythouten wene
Is in hys hande,I maye not chese
He maye me do both wynne and lese
And syth so fore he doth me greue
yet yf my luste he wolde acheue
To Bialacoil goodly to be
I yeue no force what fell on me
For though I dye,as I mote nede
I praye Loue of hys goodlyhede
To Bialacoil do gentylnesse
For whome I lyue in suche dystresse
That I mote dyen for penaunce
But fyrst,wythout repentaunce
I woll me confesse in good entent
And make in hast my testament
As louers done that felen smerte
To Bialacoil leaue I myne herte
All hole,wythout departynge
Or doublenesse of repentynge

¶ Cōment Raison vient a
Lamant.

Thus

THus as I made my passage
In complaynt and in cruell rage
And I not where to fynde a leche
That couthe vnto myne helpynge eche
Sodaynly agayne comen doune
Out of her tour I sawe Reasoun
Discrete and wyse, and full pleasaunt
And of her port full auenaunt
The rygbt waye she toke to me
which stode in great perplexitie
That was poshed in euery syde
That I nyst where I myght abyde
Tyll she demurely sad of chere
Sayd to me as she came nere
Myne owne frende, art thou greued
How is this quarel yet atcheued
Of loues syde anon tell me
Hast thou not yet of loue thy fyll
Art thou nat wery of thy seruyce
That the hath in suche wyse
what ioye hast thou in thy louyng
Is it swete or bytter thyng
Canst thou yet chese, let me se
what best thy socour myght be.

THou seruest a full noble lorde
That maketh the thrall for thy rewarde
which aye returneth thy turment
with foly so he hath the blent
Thou fell in myschefe thylke daye
whan thou dyddest, the sothe to saye
Obeysaunce, and eke homage
Thou wroughtest nothyng as the sage
whan thou became his liege man
Thou dyddest a great foly than
Thou wystest nat what fell therto
with what lorde thou hadst to do
Yf thou haddest hym well knowe
Thou hadst nought be brought so lowe
For yf thou wystest what it were
Thou woldest serue hym halfe a yere
Nat a weke, nor halfe a daye
Ne yet an houre without delaye
Ne neuer I loued paramours
His lordshyp is so full of shours
Knowest hym ought
Lamaunt. Yea dame pardye
Reasoun. Nay nay Lamaunt. Yes I
Reasoun. wherfore let se
Lamaunt. Of that he sayd I shulde be
Glad to haue suche lorde (as he)
And master of suche seignorie
Reasoun. Knowest hym nomore
Lamaunt. Nay certes I
Saue that ye yafe me rules there
And went his way, I nyst where
And I abode bounde in balaunce
Lo, there a noble conysaunce.

¶ Reasoun.

BUt I woll that thou knowe hym nowe
Gynnynge and ende, syth that thou
Arte so anguyshious and mate
Disfigured out of astate
There maye no wretche haue more of wo
Ne cautyfe none enduren so
It were to euery man syttyng
Of his lorde haue knowledgyng
For yf thou knewe hym out of doubt
Lyghtly thou shuldest escapen out
Of thy pryson that marreth the
Lamaunt. Ye dame syth my lorde is he
And I his man made with myne honde
I wolde rygbt fayne vnderstonde
To knowe of what kynde he be
Yf any wolde enforme me.

¶ Reasoun

I wolde (sayde reason) the lere
Sith thou to lerne hast such de
And shew the wouté fable (sire
A thyng ỳ is not demonstrable
Thou shalt withouten science
And knowe withouten experience
The thyng that may not knowen be
Ne wyst ne shewed in no degree
Thou mayst the soth of it nat wytten
Though in the it were wrytten
Thou shalt not knowe therof more
whyle thou art ruled by his lore
But vnto hym that loue woll flye
The knotte maye vnclosed be
which hath to the, as it is founde
So longe to knytte, and not vnbounde
Now sette well thyne ententioun
To here of loue descriptioun.

LOue it is an hatefull pees
A free acquaintaunce without relees
And through the fret full of falshede
A syckernesse all set in drede
In herte is a dispayryng hope
And full of hope it is wanhope
wyse woodnesse, and voyde Reason
A swete peryl in to drowne
An heuy burthen lyght to beare
A wicked bawe awaye to weare
It is Carybdes perylous
Disagreable and gratious
It is discordaunce that can accorde
And accordaunce to discorde
It is connyng without science
wysedome without sapience
without discretioun
Hauoyre without possessyoun
It is lyke hele and hole syckenesse
A trust drowned and dronkenesse
And helthe ful of maladye
And charyte ful of enuye
And angre ful of habundaunce
And a gredye suffisaunce
Delyte right ful of heuynesse
And dreried ful of gladnesse
Bytter swet nesse and swete errour
Right yuel sauoured good sauour
Sen that pardou hath within
And pardon spotted without synne
A payne also it is ioyous
And felony ryght pytious
Also playe that selde is stable
And stedfast ryght meuable
A strength weyked to stande vprygh
And feblenesse full of myght
wytte vnaduysed, sage follye
And ioye full of tourmentrye
A laughter it is wepyng aye
Rest that trauayleth nyght and daye
Also a swete hell it is
And a sorowfull paradys
A plesaunt gayle and prisoun
And full of frost somer season
Pryme temps full of frostes whyte
And Maye deuoyde of all delyte
with seer braunches blossoms vngrene
And newe frute fylled with wynter tene
It is a slowe maye not forbeare
Ragges rybaned with golde to weare
For all so well woll loue be sette
Under ragges as ryche rochette
And eke as wel by amorettes
In mournyng blacke, as bryght burnettes
For none is of so mokel pryse
Ne noman founden so wyse
Ne none so hygh is of parage
Ne noman founde of wyt so sage
No man so hardye ne so wyght
Ne no man of so mokell myght
None so fulfylled of bountie
That he with loue maye daynted be
All the worlde holdeth this waye
Loue maketh all to gone myswaye
But it be they of euyll lyke
whome Genius cursed man and wyke
That wrongly werke agayne nature
None suche I loue, ne haue no cure
Of suche as loue seruauntes bene
And woll not by my counsayle flene
For I ne preyse that louynge
wherthrough men at the last endyng
Shall call hem wretches full of wo
Loue greueth hem and shendeth so
But yf thou wolt well loue eschewe
For to escape out of his mewe
And make all hole thy sorowe to slake
No better counsayle mayst thou take
Than thynke to fleen well ywys
Maye nought helpe els, for wyt thou this
yf thou flye it, it shall flye the
Folowe it, and folowen shall it the

Clamaunt.

whan I had herde al Reason sayne
which had spylt her speche in vayne
Dame (sayde I) I dare well saye
Of this auaunt me well I maye
That from your schole so deuiaunt
I am, that neuer the more auaunt
Ryght nought am I through your doctrine
I dull vnder your disciplyne
I wot nomore than wyst euer
To me so contrary and so fer
Is euery thynge that ye me lere
And yet I can it al by partuere
My hert forzeteth therof ryght nought
It is so wrytten in my thought
And depe grauen it is so tender
That all myne hert I can it render
And rede it ouer communely
But to my selfe leudest am I

Bu-

But syth ye loue discryuen so
And lacke and preise it bothe two
Defyneth it into this letter
That I maye thynke on it the better
For I herde neuer defyned here
And wylfully I wolde it lere
Yf loue be searched well and sought
It is a sykneſſe of the thought
Innexed and kned bytwyxt tweyne
With male and female with o cheyne
So frely that byndeth, that they ne twynne
Whether so therof they lese or wynne
The rote sprygeth through hote brenning
Into disordinate desyryng
For to kyſſen and embrace
And at her luſt them to solace
Of other thynge loue retcheth nought
But setteth her hert and all her thought
More for delectatioun
Than any procreatioun
Of other frute by engendure
Which loue to god is nat pleasure
For of her body frute to get
They yeue no forse, they are so set
Upon delyte to play in fere
And some haue also this manere
To faynen hem for loue seke
Suche lone I prayse not at a leke
For paramours they do but fayne
To loue truly they disdayne
They falsen ladyes traytoursly
And swerne hem othes vtterly
With many a lesyng, & many a fable
And all they fynden disceyuable
And whan they han her luſt getten
The hote ernes they all forgeten
Women the harme byen full sore
But men this thynken euermore
That lasse harme is so mote I the
Disceyne them, than disceyued be
And namely where they ne may
Fynde none other meane way
For I wot well in sothfastneſſe
That who doeth nowe his busyneſſe
With any woman for to dele
For any luſt that he may fele
But yf it be so for engendure
He doth trespaſſe I you ensure
For he shulde letten all his wyll
To getten a lykely thyng hym tyll
And to sustayne yf he myght
And kepe forth by kyndes ryght
His owne lykeneſſe and semblable
For bycause all is corumpable
And fayle shulde successyoun
Ne were theyr generatioun
Our sectes sterne for to saue
Whan father or mother arne in graue
Her chyldren shulde, whan they ben bede
Full diligent bene in her stede
To vse that warke on suche a wyse
That one may through another ryse
Therfore set kynde therin delyte
For men therin shulde haue delyte
And of that dede be not erke
But oft sythens haunt that werke
For none wolde drawe therof a draught
Ne were delyte which hath hym caught
This had subtyl dame Nature
For none goth ryght I the ensure
Ne hath entent hole ne perfyte
For her desyre is for delyte
The which fortened crease, and eke
The playe of loue for oft seke
And thrall hem selfe they be so nyse
Unto the prince of euery vyce
For of eche synne it is the rote
Unlefull luſt though it be sote
And of all euyll the racyne
As Tullius can determyne
Which in his tyme was full sage
In a boke he made of age
Where that more he prayseth elde
Though he be croked and vnwelde
And more of cõmendatioun
Than youth in his descriptioun
For youth set both man and wyfe
In all paryll of soule and lyfe
And parell is, but men haue grace
The paryll of youth for to pace
Without any deth or distresse
It is so full of wyldnesse
So oft it doth shame or domage
To hym or to his lynage
And ledeth man now vp nowe downe
In mokell dissolutioun
And maketh hym loue well company
And led his lyfe disrulely
And halte hym payde with none estate
Within hym selfe is suche debate
He chaungeth purpose and entent
And yalte into some couent

To lyuen after her emprysse
And leseth fredom and fraunchyse
That nature in hym had sette
The whiche agayne he may not gette
Yf he there make his mansyon
For to abyde professyon
Though for a tyme his hert absent
It maye not fayle he shall repent
And eke abyde thylke daye
To leaue his habyte, and gone his waye
And leseth his worthyp and his name
And dare not come agayne for shame
But all his lyfe he doth so mourne
Bycause he dare not home retourne
Fredom of kynde so lost hath he
That neuer may recured be
But that yf god hym graunt grace
That he may or he hence pace
Conteyne vnder obedience
Through the vertue of patience
For youth set man in all folye
In vnthryft and in rybaudrye
In lechery and in outrage
So oft it chaungeth of corage
Youth gynneth oft suche bargayne
That may not ende without payne
In great paryll is set youth hede
Delyte so doth his brydell lede
Delyte this hangeth, drede the nought
Both mans body and his thought
Onely through youthes chambere
That to done euyll is customere
And of naught els taketh hede
But onely folkes for to lede
In to disporte and wyldenesse
So is frowarde from sadnesse
But elde draweth hem therfro
who wote it not, he may wel go
And mo of hem, that nowe arne olde
That whylom youthe had in holde
whiche yet remembreth of tender age
Howe it hem brought in many arage
And many a folly therin wrought
But now ỳ elde hath hym through sought
They repent hem of her follye
That youth hem put in ieopardye
In paryll and in moche wo
And made hem oft amysse to do
And sewen euyll companye
Ryot and auoutryce.

But elde can agayne restrayne
From suche folly, and refrayne
And set men by her ordynaunce
In good rule and in gouernaunce
But euyll she spendeth her seruyse
For noman woll her loue neyther preyse
She is hated, this wote I wele
Her acquayntaunce wolde no man fele
Ne han of elde company
Men hate to be of her alye
For no man wolde become olde
Ne dye whan he is yonge and bolde
And elde maruayleth ryght greatly
whan they remembre hem inwardly
Of many a peryllous emprysse
which that they wrought in sondry wyse
How euer they myght without blame
Escape awaye without shame
In youth without domage
Or repreue of her lynage
Losse of membre, shedyng of blonde
Parell of deth, or losse of good
wost thou not where youth abyt
That men so preysen in her wyt
with delyte she halte soiour
For both they dwellen in o tour
As longe as youth is in season
They dwell in one mansyon
Delyte of youth woll haue seruyce
To do what so he woll deuyse
And youth is redy euermore
For to obeye for smerte of sore
Unto delyte, and hym to yeue
Her seruyce, whyle that she maye lyue.

Here elde habytte, I wol the tell
Shortly, and no whyle dwel
For thither behoueth ỳ to go
Yf deth in youth the not slo
Of this iourneye thou mayst not fayle
with her labour and trauayle
Lodged ben with sorowe and wo
That ueuer out of her courte go
Payne and distresse, sykness and yre
And melancoly that angry syre
Bene of her paleys senatours
Gronyng and grutchynge her harbegeours
The daye and nyght her to tourment
with cruell deth they her present
And tellen her erlyche and late
That deth standeth armed at her gate

Than

Than bryngeth they to her remembraunce
The folly dedes of her enfaunce
Which causen her to mourne in wo
That youth hath her begyled so
Which sodayuly away is hasted
She wepeth the tyme that she hath wasted
Complaynyng of the preterytte
And the present, that nat abytte
And of her olde vanitie
That but afore her she maye se
In the future some socour
To leggen her of her dolour
To graunt her tyme of repentaunce
For her synnes to do penaunce
And at the last so her gouerne
To wynne the ioye that is eterne
Fro which go bakwarde youth he made
In vanitie to drowne and wade
For present tyme abydeth nought
It is more swyft than any thought
So lytle whyle it doth endure
That there nys compt ne measure
But how that euer the game go
Who lyst to loue, ioy and myrth also
Of loue, be it he or she
Hye or lowe who it be
In frute they shulde hem delyte
Her parte they may not els quyte
To saue hem selfe in honestie
And yet full many one I se
Of women, sothly for to sayne
That desyre, and wolde fayne
The playe of loue, they be so wylde
And not coueyte to go with chylde
And yf with chylde they be perchaunce
They wol it holde a great mischaunce
But what so euer wo they fele
They woll not playne, but concele
But yf it be any foole or nyce
In whome that shame hath no iustyce
For to delyte echone they drawe
That haunt this worke both hye and lawe
Saue suche that arne worth right nought
That for moneye woll be bought
Suche loue I prayse in no wyse
Whan it is gyuen for couetyse
I preyse no woman, though so be woode
That yeueth her selfe for any good
For lytle shulde a man tell
Of her that wyl her body sell
Be she mayde, be she wyfe
That quycke wyll sell her by her lyfe
How fayre there that euer she make
He is a wretche I vndertake
That loued suche one, for swete or soure
Though she hym called her paramoure
And laugheth on him, and maketh him feest
For certaynly no suche beest
To be loued is not worthy
Or beare the name of drury
Non shulde her please, but he were woode
That woll dispoyle hym of his good
Yet nathelesse I woll not saye
That she for solace and for playe
Haye a iewell or other thyng
Take of her louers free yeuyng
But that she aske it in no wyse
For drede of shame, or couetyse
And she of hers may hym certayne
Without slaunder yeuen agayne
And ioyne her hertes togyther so
In loue, and take and yeue also
Trowe not that I woll hem twynne
Whan in her loue there is no synne
I woll that they togyther go
And don all that they han ado
As curteys shulde and debonayre
And in her loue beren hem fayre
Without vyce both he and she
So that alwaye in honestie
Fro folly loue to kepe hem clere
That brenneth hertes with his fere
And that her loue in any wyse
Be deuoyde of couetyse
Good loue shulde engendred be
Of true hert, iust and secree
And not of suche as set her thought
To haue her lust, or els nought
So are they caught in loues lace
Truly for bodily solace
Fleshly delyte is so present
With the, that set all thyne entent
Without more what shuld I glose
For to get and haue the rose
Which maketh the so mate and wood
That thou desyrest none other good
But thou art not an yuche the nerere
But euer abydest in sorowe and werre
As in thy face it is to sene
It maketh the both pale and lene
Thy myght, thy vertue goth awaye
A sory gest in good faye
Thou harborest in thyne Inne

The god of loue whan thou let in
wherfore I rede thou shet hym out
Or he shall greue the out of dout
For to thy profyt it wyll turne
Yf he nomore with the soiourne
In great myschefe and sorowe sonken
Ben hertes that of loue arne dronken
As thou peraduenture knowen shall
whan thou hast lost the tyme all
And spent by thought in ydlenesse
In waste, and wofull lustynesse
Yf thou mayst lyue the tyme to se
Of loue for to delyuered be
Thy tyme thou shalt bewepe sore
The which neuer thou mayest restore
For tyme lost, as men may se
For nothyng may recouered be
And yf thou scape, yet at last
Fro loue that hath the so fast
Knytte and bounden in his lace
Certayne I holde it but a grace
For many one as it is seyne
Haue lost and spent also in veyne
In his seruyce without socour
Body and soule, good and treasour
wytte and strength, and eke rychesse
Of which they had neuer redresse.

Clamant.

Thus taught and preached hath Reason
But loue spylte her sermon
That was so imped in my thought
That her doctryne I set at nought
And yet ne sayd she neuer a dele
That I ne vnderstode it wele
worde by worde the mater all
But vnto loue I was so thral
which calleth ouer all his praye
He chaseth so my thought aye
And holdeth myne hert vnder his scale
As trusty and true as any stele
So that no deuocion
Ne had I in the sermon
Of dame Reason, ne of her rede
It toke no soiour in myne heed
For all yede out at one ere
That in that other she dyd lere
Fully on me she lost her lore
Her speche me greued wonder sore

That vnto her for yre I sayd
For angre, as I dydde abrayde
Dame, and is it your wyll algate
That I not loue, but that I (hate
All men as ye me teche
For yf I do after your speche
Syth that ye sayne loue is not good
Than must I nedes saye with mode
Yf I it leue, in hatred aye
Lyuen, and voyde loue alwaye
From me a synfull wretche
Hated of all that teche
I maye not go none other gate
For eyther must I loue or hate
And yf I hate men of newe
More than loue, it woll me rewe
As by your prechyng semeth me
For loue nothyng ne prayseth the
Ye yeue good counsayle sykerly
That precheth me al day, that I
Shulde not loues lore alowe
He were a foole wolde you not trowe
In speche also ye han me taught
Another loue that knowen is nought
which I herde you not repreue
To loue eche other by your leue
Yf ye I wolde diffyne it me
I wolde gladly here to se
At the lest yf I may lere
Of sondry loues the manere.

Raison.

Certes frende, a fole art thou
whan that thou nothynge wolt alowe
That I for thy profyte saye
Yet woll I saye the more in faye
For I am redy at the leest
To acomplysh thy request
But I not where it woll aueyle
In vayne peraduenture I shall traueyle
Loue there is in sondry wyse
As I shall the here deuyse.
For some loue lefull is and good
I mene nat ỳ which maketh the woode
And bryngeth the in many a fytte
And rauysheth fro the all thy wytte
It is so marueylous and queynt
with suche loue be nomore acqueynt

Cõment

¶ Cōment Reason diffinist Amisete.

LOue of frenshyppe also there is
whych maketh no man doue amys
Of wyl knytte betwyxte two
That wol not breke for wele ne wo
whych longe is lykely to contune
whan wyl and goodes bene in commune
Grounded by goddes orddinaunce
Hoole wythout discordaunce
wyth hem holdyng cōmunte
Of al her good in charite
That there be none exceptioun
Through chaungyng of ententioun
That eche helpe other at her nede
And wysely hele both worde and dede
Trewe of meanyng, deuoyde of slouth
For wytte is nought wythout trouth
So that the tone dare al his thought
Sayne to his frende, and spare nought
As to him selfe without dredyng
To be discouered by wreying
For glad is that coniunction
whan there is none suspection
whom they wolde proue
That trewe and parfyte weren in loue
For no man may be amiable
But yf he be so ferme and stable
That fortune chaunge hym nat ne blynde
But that hys frende alwaye him fynde
Both poore and ryche in o state
For yf hys frende through any gate
wol complayne of his pouerte
He shulde nat byde so longe, tyl he
Of hys helpyng hym requyre
For good dede done through prayere
Is solde and bought to dere ywys
To herte that of great valure is
For hert fulfylled of gentylnesse
Can yuel demeaue his distresse
And man that worthy is of name
To asken often hath great shame
A good man brenneth in his thought
For shame whan he asketh ought
He hath great thought, and dredeth aye
For hys disease whan he shal praye
His frende lest that he warned be
Tyl that he preue his stabilite
But whan that he hath founden one
That trustye is and trewe as stone
And assayed him at al
And founde him stedfast as a wal
And of hys frenshyp be certayne
He shal him shewe, both ioye and payne
And al that dare thynke or saye
wythout shame, as he wel maye
For howe shulde he a shamed be
Of such one as I tolde the
For whan he wotte hys secrete thought
The thyrde shal know therof ryght nought
For twey in nombre is bette than thre
In euery counsayle and secree
Repreue he dredeth neuer a dele
Who that besette his wordes wele
For euery wyse man out of drede
Can kepe hys tonge tyll he se nede
And fooles can nat holde her tonge
A fooles belle is sone ronge
Yet shal a trewe frende do more
To helpe his felowe of hys sore
And succour him whan he hath nede
In al that he may done in dede
And gladder that he hym pleaseth
Than his felowe that he easeth
And yf he do not his request
He shal as much him molest
As hys felowe, for that he
Maye not fulfyl hys volunte
Fully as he hath requyred
If both the hertes loue hath fyred
Ioye and wo they shal departe
And take euenly eche hys parte
Halfe his anoye he shall haue aye
And comfort what that he maye
And of thys blysse parte shal he
If loue wol departed be.

AND whylom of thys vnite
Spake Tullius in a dyte
And shulde maken hys request
Unto his frende, that is honest
And he goodly shulde it fulfyl
But it the more were out of skyl
And otherwyse not graunt therto
Excepte only in causes two
If men his frende to dethe wolde dryue
Let hym be besy to saue hys lyue
Also yf men wollen hym assayle
Of hys worshyp to make hym fayle
And hyndren hym of his renoun
Let him wyth ful ententioun
his deuer done in eche degre

That hys frende ne shamed be
In thys two case wyth hys myght
Takyng no kepe to skyl nor ryght
As ferre as loue maye hym excuse
Thys ought no man to refuse
Thys loue that I haue tolde the
Is nothyng contrary to me
Thys wol I that thou folowe wele
And leaue the tother euery dele
Thys loue to vertue al entendeth
The tother fooles blent and shendeth.

Another loue also there is
That is contrary vnto thys
whych desyre is so constrayned
That is but wyl fayned
Awaye fro trouth it doth so varye
That to good loue it is contrarye
For it maymeth in many wyse
Syke hertes wyth couetyse
Al in wynnynge and in profyte
Suche loue setteth his delyte
Thys loue so hangeth in balaunce
That yf it lese hys hope parchaunce
Of lucre, that he is set vpon
It wol fayle, and quenche anon
For no man may be amorous
Ne in hys lyuyng vertuous
But he loue more in moode
Yen for hem selfe, than for her goode
For loue that profyte doth abyde
Is false and bydeth not in no tyde
Loue cometh of dame fortune
That lytle whyle wyl contune
For it shall chaungen wonder soone
And take eclyps ryght as the moone
whan he is from vs lette
Through erth, that betwyxt is sette
The sunne and her, as it may fal
Be it in partie, or in al
The shadowe maketh her bemes merke
And her hornes to shewe derke
That parte, where she hath lost her lyght
Of Phebus fully, and the syght
Tyl whan the shadowe is ouerpast
She is enlumyned agayne as fast
Through the bryghtnesse of the sune bemes
That yeueth to her agayne her lemes
That loue is ryght of such nature
Nowe is fayre, and nowe obscure
nowe bryght, nowe cliply of manere
And whylom dymme, and whylom clere
As sone as pouerte gynneth take
wyth mantel and weedes blake
Hydeth of loue the lyght away
That in to nyght it turneth day
It may not se ryches shyne
Tyl the blacke shadowes fyne
For whan rychesse shyneth bryght
Loue recouereth ayen his lyght
And whan it fayleth, he wol flyt
And as she greueth, so greueth it
Of thys loue here what I saye
The ryche men are loued aye
And namely tho that sparande bene
That wol nat washe her hertes clene
Of the fylth nor of the vyce
Of gredy brennyng auaryce
The ryche man ful fonde is ywys
That weneth that he loued is
If that hys herte it vnderstode
It is not he, it is hys good
He may wel weten in his thought
Hys good is loued, and he ryght nought
For yf he be a nygarde eke
Yen wyl not set by hym a leke
But haten hym, thys is the soth
Lo what profyte hys catel doth
Of euery man that may hym se
It getteth hym nough but enmyte
But he amende hym selfe of that vyce
And knowe hym selfe he is not wyse
Certes he shulde aye frendly be
To gette hym loue also bene fre
Or els he is not wyse ne sage
No more than is a gote ramage
That he not loueth, his dede proueth
whan he hys rychesse so wel loueth
That he wol hyde it aye and spare
Hys poore frendes sene forfare
To kepen aye hys purpose
Tyl for drede hys eyen close
And tyl a wycked death hym take
Hym had leuer a sondre shake
And let al hys lymmes a sondre ryue
Than leaue his rychesse in his lyue
He thynketh to parte it wyth no man
Certayne no loue is in him than
Howe shulde loue wythin hym be
whan in hys hert is no pyte
That he trespaseth wel I wate
For eche man knoweth hys estate
For wel hym ought to be reproued
That loueth nought, ne is not loued

But syth we arne to fortune comen
And hath our sermon of her nomen
I wonder wyl I tel the nowe
Thou hardest neuer such one I trowe
I not where thou me leuen shal
Though sothfastnesse it be al
As it is writen: and is soth
That vnto men more profyte doth
The frowarde fortune and contraire
Than the swote and debonaire
And yf the thynke it is doutable
It is through argument prouable
For the debonayre and softe
Falseth and begyleth ofte
For lyche a mother, she can cherysche
And mylken as doth a norice
And of her good to hym deles
And yeueth him part of her ioweles
With great rychesse and degnite
And hem she hoteth stabilyte
In a state that is not stable
But chaungyng aye and variable
And fedeth him wyth glory vayne
And worldly blysse noncertayne
Whan she hym setteth on her whele
Than wene they to be right wele
And in so stable state wythall
That neuer they wene for to fall
And whan they sette so hygh be
They wene to haue in certeynte
Of hertly frendes to great nombre
That nothynge myght her state encombre
They truste hem so on euery syde
Wenyng wyth hym they wolde abyde
In euery parel and mischaunce
Wythout chaunge or variaunce
Both of catel and of good
And also for to spende her blood
And al her membres for to spyll
Onely for to fulfyl her wyll
They maken it hole in many wyse
And hoten hem her full seruyse
Howe sore that it do hem smerte
In to her very naked sherte
Herte and also hole they gyue
For the tyme that they may lyue
So that wyth her flatterye
They maken fooles glorifye
Of her wordes spekyng
And han chere of a reioysyng
And trowe hem as the Euangyle
And it is al falsheed and gyle
As they shal afterwarde se
Whan they arne fallen in pouerte
And bene of good and catel bare
Than shul they sene who frendes ware
For of an hundrede certaynly
Nor of a thousande ful scarsly
Ne shal they fynde vnnethes one
Whan pouerte is comen vpon
For thus fortune that I of tell
Wyth men whan her lust to dwell
Maketh hem to lese her conysaunce
And norisheth hem in ignoraunce

But frowarde fortune and peruerse
Whan hygh estates she doth reuerse
And maketh hem to tomble doune
Of her whele wyth sodayne tourne
And from her rychesse doch hem flye
And plongeth hem in pouerte
As a stepmother enuyous
And layeth a playstre dolorous
Vnto her hertes wounded egre
Whych is not tempred wyth vynegre
But wyth pouerte and indigence
For to shewe by experience
That she is fortune verylye
In whom no man shulde affye
Nor in her yeftes haue fyaunce
She is so full of varyaunce
Thus can she maken hye and lowe
Whan they from rychesse arne throwe
Fully to knowen without were
Frende of affecte, and frende of chere
And whych in loue weren trewe and stable
And whych also weren varyable
After fortune her goddesse
In pouerte, eyther in rychesse
For all that yeueth here out of drede
Vnhappe bereueth it in dede
For in fortune let not one
Of frendes, whan fortune is gone
I meane tho frendes that wyll fle
Anone as entreth pouerte
And yet they woll not leaue hem so
But in eche place where they go
They cal hem wretche, scorne, and blame
And of her mishappe hem diffame
And namely such as in rychesse
Pretendeth moost of stablenesse
Whan that hey sawe hym set on lofte
And weren of hym socoured ofte
And moost yholpe in al her nede

But

But nowe they take no maner hede
But seyne in voyce of flatery
That nowe appereth her foly
Ouer al where so they fare
And synge, go farewel feldefare
All such frendes I beschrewe
For of trewe there be to fewe
But sothfast frendes, what so betyde
In euery fortune wollen abyde
They han her hertes in such noblesse
That they nyl loue for no rychesse
Nor for that fortune may hem sende
They wollen hem socour and defende
And chaunge for softe ne for sore
For who is frende loueth euermore
Though men drewe swerde hys frend to slo
He may not hewe her loue a two
But in case that I shal say
For pride and ire lese it he may
And for reproue by nycete
And discouerynge of priuite
wyth tonge woundyng, as felon
Through venemous detraction
Frende in thys case wol gon hys way
For nothyng greue him more ne may
And for nought els wol he fle
Ik that he loue in stabylyte
And Certayne he is wel begone
Amonge a thousande that fyndeth one
For there maye be no rychesse
Ayenst frendschyp of worthynesse
For it ne may so hygh attayne
As may the valure, soth to sayne
Of hym that loueth trewe and wel
Frendschyp is more than is catel
For frende in courte aye better is
Than peny in purse certis
And fortune mischappyng
whan vpon men she is fablyng
Though misturnyng of her chaunce
And cast hem out of balaunce
She maketh through her aduersite
Men ful clerely for to se
Hym that is frende in existence
From hym that is by apparence
For in fortune maketh anone
To knowe thy frendes fro thy fone
By experience ryght as it is
The whych is more to prayse ywys
Than is much rychesse and tresour
For more depe profyte and valour
Pouerte, and such aduersyte
Before than doth prosperite
For that one yeueth conysaunce
And the tother ignoraunce

And thys pouerte is in dede
Troth declared fro falshede
For faynt frendes it wol declare
And trewe also, what wey they fare
For whan he was in hys rychesse
These frendes ful of doublenesse
Offred hym in many wyse
Herte and body, and seruyce
what wold he thã haue you to haue bought
To knowen openly her thought
That he nowe hath so clerely sene
The lasse begyled he shulde haue bene
And he had than perceyued it
But rychesse nolde not let hym wytte
wel more auantage doth hym than
Syth that maketh hym a wyse man
The great mischefe that he perceyueth
Than doth rychesse that hym deceyueth
Rychesse riche ne maketh nought
Hym that on tresour sette hys thought
For rychesse stonte in suffysaunce
And nothynge in habundaunce
For suffysaunce al onely
Maketh men to lyue rychly.

Or he that hathe mytches tweyne
Ne value in hys demayne
Lyueth more at ease, & more is ryche
Than doth he that is chiche
And in hys berne hath soth to sayne
An hundrede mauys of whete grayne
Though he be chapman or marchaunt
And haue of golde many besaunt
For in the gettynge he hath such wo
And in the keppynge drede also
And sette euermore hys besynesse
For to encrease, and not to lesse
For to augment and multyplye
And thoughe on heapes that lye hym by
Yet neuer shal make hys rychesse
Asseth vnto hys gredynesse
But the poore that recheth nought
Saue of his lyuelode in hys thought
whych that he getteth wyth hys traueyle
He dredeth naught that it shal feyle
Though he haue lytle worldes goode

Yeate

Meate and drynke, and easy foode
Upon hys traueyle and lyuyng
And also suffysaunt clothyng
Dryk in syckenesse that he fall
And loth meate and drynke wythall
Though he haue nat his meate to bye
He shal bethynke hym hastely
To put hym out of al daungere
That he of meate hath no mistere
Or that he may wyth lytle eke
Befounden, whyle that he is seke
Or that men shul hym berne in haste
To lyue tyl hys syckenesse be paste
To some Maysondewe besyde
He caste nought what shal hym betyde
He thynketh nought that euer he shal
In to any syckenesse fal.

And though it fal, as it maye be
That al be tyme spare shal he
As mokel as shal to hym suffyce
whyle he is sycke in any wyse
He doth for that he wol be
Content wyth his pouerte
wythout nede of any man
So much in lytle haue he can
He is apayed wyth hys fortune
And for he nyl be importune
Unto no wyght, ne onerous
Nor of her goodesse coueytous
Therfore he spareth, it may wel bene
hys pore estate for to sustene.

Dryk hym luste not for to spare
But suffreth forthe, as not ne ware
At laste it hapneth as it maye
Ryght vnto hys last daye
And take the worlde as it wolde be
For euer in hert thynketh he
The sooner that deth hym slo
To paradyse the sooner go
He shall, there for to lyue in blysse
where that he shal no good mysse
Thyder he hopeth god shal him sende
After hys wretched lyues ende
Pythagoras hym selfe reherses
In a boke that the golden verses
Is cleped, for the nobylite
Of the honorable dyte
Than whan thou gost thy body fro
Free in the heyre thou shalt vp go
And leauen al humanyte
And purely lyue in deite
He is a foole wythouten were
That troweth haue hys countrey here
In erth is not our countre
That may these clerkes seyne and se
In Boece of consolation
where it is maked mention
Of our countre playne at the eye
By techyng of phylosophye
where leude men mygh lere wyt
who so that wolde translaten it
If he be such that can wel lyue
After hys rent, maye hym yeue
And not desyreth more to haue
Than may fro pouerte hym saue
A wyse man sayd, as we may sene
Is no man wretched, but he it wene
Be he kynge, knyght, or rybaude
And many a rybaude is mery and baude
That swynketh, & bereth both day & nyght
Many a burthen of great myght
The whych doth hym lasse offence
For he suffreth in pacience
They laugh and daunce, tryppe and synge
And lay nought vp for her lyuyng
But in the tauerne all dispendeth
The wynnyng that god hem sendeth
Than goth he fardels for to bere
wyth as good chere as he dyd ere
To swynke and trauayle he not fayneth
For to robben he disdayneth
But right anon, after hys swynke
He goeth to the tauerne for to drynke
All these are ryche in abundaunce
That can thus haue suffisaunce
wel more than can an vsurere
As god wel knoweth, wythout were
For an vsurer, so god me se
Shal neuer for rychesse ryche be

But euermore poore and indigent
Scare and gredy in hys entent.
For soth it is, whom it displese
There may no marchaunt lyue at ese
Hys herte in such a where is set
That it quycke brenneth to get
Ne neuer shal, though he hath geten
Though he hath golde in garners yeten
For to be nedy he dredeth lore
wherfore to getten more and more

He set

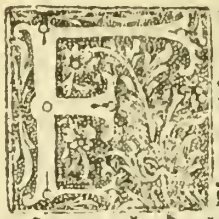
He set hys hert and hys desyre
So hote he brenneth in the fyre
Of couetyse, that maketh hym wood
To purchase other mennes good
He vnderfongeth a great payne
That vndertaketh to drynke vp Sayne
For the more he drynketh aye
The more he leaueth, soth to saye
Thus is thurst of false gettyng
That last euer in coueytyng
And the anguysche and distresse
wyth the fyre of gredynesse
She fyghteth with hym aye, and strynyeth
That his herte asonder ryueth
Suche gredynesse hym assayleth
That whan he most hath, moste he fayleth
Physiciens, and aduocates
Gone ryght by the same yates
They sel her scyence for wenyng
And haunt her craft for great gettyng
Her wenyng is of suche swetnesse
That yf a man fall in sycknesse
They are full glad for her encrase
For by her wyl, without lease
Euerych man shulde be seke
And though they dye they set not a leke
After whan they the golde haue take
Ful lytle care for hem they make
They wolde that fourty were sycke at ones
Yea two hundred in flesche and bones
And yet two thousande, as I gesse
For to encresen her rychesse
They wol not worchen in no wyse
But for lucre and couetyse
For physycke gynneth fyrst by (phy)
The phisycien also sothly
And sythen it gothe fro fye to fye
To trust on hem it is folye
For they nyl in no maner gre
Do ryght nought for charite
Eke in the same sect are sette
All tho that prechen for to gette
worshyps, honour, and rychesse
Her hertes arne in great distresse
That folke lyue not holyly
But abouen al specially
Such as prechen veynglory
And towarde god haue no memory
But forth as ypocrites trace
And to her soules deth purchace
And outwarde shewyng holynesse
Though they be ful of cursednesse
Nat lyche to the apostles twelue
They discreyue other and hem selue
Begyled is the gyler than
For preachyng of a cursed man
Thoughe to other may profyte
Hym selfe it aueyleth not amyte
For ofte good predicatioun
Cometh of yuel ententioun
To hym nat vayleth hys preachyng
Al helpe he other wyth hys teachyng
For where they good ensample take
There is he wyth vayn glorye shake
But lette vs leuen these preachours
And speke of hem that in her tours
Heape vp her golde, and fast shette
And sore theran her herte sette
They neyther loue God ne drede
They kepe more than it is nede
And in her bagges sore it bynde
Out of the sunne, and of the wynde
They put vp more than nede ware
whan they sene pore folke forfare
For hungre dye, and for colde quake
God can wel vengeaunce therof take
The great mischeues hem assayleth
And thus in gadryng aye trauayleth
wyth much payne they wynne rychesse
And drede hem holdeth in distresse
To kepe that they gather faste
wyth sorowe they leaue it at the laste
wyth sorowe they both dye and lyue
That vnto rychesse her hertes yeue
And in defaute of loue it is
As it sheweth ful wel ywis
For yf these gredy, the soth to sayne
Loueden and were loued agayne
And good loue reygned ouer al
Suche wyckednesse ne shulde fal
But he shulde yeue, that moost good had
To hem that weren in nede bestade
And lyue wythout false vsure
For charyte, ful clene and pure
If they hem yeue to goodnesse
Defendyng hem fro ydlenesse
In al thys worlde than poore none
we shude fynde I trowe not one
But chaunged is thys worlde vnstabale
For loue is ouer al vendable
we se that no man loueth nowe
But for wynnyng and for prowe
And loue is thralled in seruage
whan it is solde for auauntage

Yet

yet women woll her bodyes sell
Suche soules goeth the dyuell of hell.

When Loue had tolde hem hys entent
The baronage to coũsayle went
In many sentences they fyll
And dyuersly they sayd her wyll
But after dyscorde they accorded
And her acorde to Loue recorded
Syr sayden they, we ben atone
By euen accorde of euerychone
Out take Rychesse all onely
That sworne hath full hauteynly
That she the castell nyll not assayle
Ne smyte a stroke in thys batayle
wyth darte ne mace, speare, ne knyfe
For man that speaketh, or beareth the lyfe
And blameth your emprysse ywys
And from our hoste departed is
At leest waye, as in thys plyte
So hath she thys man in dyspyte
For she sayeth he ne loued her neuer
And therfore she woll hate hym euer
For he woll gather no treasore
He hath her wrath for euermore
He agylte her neuer in other caas
Lo here all holy hys trespas
She sayeth well, that thys other daye
He asked her leaue to gone the waye
That is clypped to moche yeuynge
And spake full fayre in hys prayenge
But when he prayed her, poore was he
Therfore she warned hym the entre
Ne yet is he not thryuen so
That he hath getten a peny or two
That quytely is hys owne in holde
Thus hath Rychesse vs all tolde
And when Rychesse vs thys recorded
wythouten her we ben accorded.

And we kynde in our accordaunce
That false Semblant and Abstinaunce
wyth all the folke of her batayle
Shull at the hynder gate assayle
That wycked Tonge hath in keppynge
wyth hys Normans full of ianglynge
And with hem Curtesy and Largesse
That shull shewe her hardynesse
To the olde wyfe that kepte so harde
Fayre welcomynge wythin her warde
Then shall Delyte and well Helynge
Foude, Shame adowne to brynge
wyth all her hoost early and late
They shull assaylen that ylke gate
Agaynst Drede shall Hardynesse
Assayle, and also Sykernesse
wyth all the folke of her leadynge
That neuer wyst what was fleynge



Raunchyse shall fyght and eke Pyte
with Daũgere ful of cruelte
Thus is your hoost ordeyned wele
down shal ẏ castel euery dele
yf euerych do hys entent
So that Venus be present
Your mother full of vesselage
That canne ynough of suche vsage
wythouten her maye no wyght spede
Thys werke, neyther for worde ne dede
Therfore is good ye for her sende
For through her maye thys worke amende.

Ordynges, my mother the goddesse
That is my lady, and my maystresse
Nys not al at my wyllyng
Ne doth not al my desyryng
Yet canne she somtyme done labour
when that her luste in my socour
As my nede is for to atcheue
But nowe I thynke her nat to greue
My mother is she, and of chylde hede
I both worthyp her, and eke drede
For who that dredeth syre ne dame
Shall it abye in body or name
And natheless, yet conne we
Sende after her yf nede be
And were she nygh she cõmen wolde
I trowe that nothynge myght her holde

My mother is of great prowesse
She hath tane many a forteresse
That cost hath many a poũd er this
There I nas not present ywys
And yet men sayd it was my dede
But I come neuer in that stede
Ne me ne lyketh so mote I the
That suche toures ben take wyth me

For why? My thynketh that in no wyse
It maye be cleped but marchaundyse.

GO bye a courser blacke or whyte
And paye therfore, then arte ỳ quyte
The marchaũt oweth ỳ right noght
Ne thou hym when thou it bought
I woll not sellynge clepe yeuynge
For sellynge asketh no guerdonynge
Here lyeth no thanke, ne no meryte
That one goeth from that other all quyte
But thys sellynge is not semblable
For when hys horse is in the stable
He maye it selle agayne parde
And wynnen on it, suche happe maye be
All maye the manne not lese ywys
For at the leest the skynne is hys
Or els, yf it so betyde
That he woll kepe hys horse to ryde
Yet is he lorde aye of hys horse
But thylke chaffare is well worse
There Venus entremeteth ought
For who so suche chaffare hath bought
He shall not worchen so wysely
That he ne shall lese all vtterly
Both hys money, and hys caffare
But the seller of the ware
The pryse and profite haue shall
Certayne the byer shall lese all
For he ne can so dere it bye
To haue lordshyppe, and full maystry
Ne haue power to make lettynge
Neyther for yefte ne for preachynge
That of hys chaffare maugre hys
Another shall haue as moche ywys
Yf he woll yeue as moche as he
Of what countrey so that he be
Or for ryght nought so happe maye
Yf he can flatter her to her paye
Ben then suche marchauntes wyse?
No, but fooles in euery wyse
when they bye suche thynge wylfully
There as they lese her good folyly
But natheleſſe, thys dare I saye
My mother is not wonte to paye
For she is neyther so foole ne nyce
To entremete her of suche vyce
But trust well, he shall paye all
That repent of hys bargayne shall
when pouerte putte hym in dystresse
All were the scholer to Rychesse
That is for me in great yernynge
when she assenteth to my wyllynge.

BUt my mother saynt Venus
And by her father Saturnus
That her engendred by hys lyfe
But not vpon hys wedded wyfe
Yet woll I more vnto you swere
To make thys thynge the surere
Nowe by that fayth, and that beaute
That I owe to all my brethren free
Of whych there nys wyght vnder heuen
That can her fathers names neuen
So dyuers and so many there be
That wyth my mother haue be pryue
Yet wolde I swere for syckernesse
The Pole of helle to my wytnesse
Nowe drynke I not thys yere clarre
Yf that I lye, or forsworne be
For of the goddes the vsage is
That who so hym forsweareth amys
Shall that yere drynke no clarre
Nowe haue I sworne ynough parde
Yf I forswere me then am I lorne
But I woll neuer be forsworne
Syth Rychesse hath me sayled here
She shall abye that trespas full dere
At leestwaye but her arme
wyth swerde, or sparth, or gysarme
For certes syth she loueth not me
Fro thylke tyme that she maye se
The castell and the toure to shake
In sorye tyme she shall awake
Yf I maye grype a ryche manne
I shall so pulle hym, yf I canne
That he shall in a fewe stoundes
Lese all hys markes, and hys poundes
I shall hym make hys pens out slynge
But they in hys garner sprynge
Our maydens shall eke plucke hym so
That hym shall neden fethers mo
And make hym sell hys lande to spende
But he the bette conne hym defende.

PDore men han made her lorde of me
All thoughe they not so myghtye be
That they maye fede me in delyte
I woll not haue hem in dyspyte
No good man hateth hem, as I gesse
For chynche and feloun is rychesse
That so can chase hem and dyspyse

And

And hem dekoule in sondrye wyse
They louen ful bette, so god me spede
Than dothe the riche chynchy grede
And bene (in good kaythe) more stable
And trewer, and more seruyable
And therfore it suffyseth me
Her good herte, and her beaute
They han on me sette all her thoughe
And therfore I forget hem nought
I woll hem bryngc in great noblesse
If that I were god of Rychesse
As I am god of Loue sothely
Suche routh vpon her playnt haue I
Therfore I muste hys socour be
That payneth hym to seruen me
For yf he deyde for loue of thys
Then semeth in me no loue ther is

Sir sayd they, soth is euery dele
That ye reherce, & we wot wele
Thylke oth to hold is resonable
For it is good and couenable
That ye on rych mē han iworne
For syr, thys wote we well beforne
Yf ryche men done you homage
That is as fooles done outrage
But ye shull not forsworne be
Ne let therfore to drynke clarre
Or pyment maked freshe and newe
Ladyes shull hem suche peppr brewe
Yf that they fall in to her laas
That they for wo mowe sayne alas
Ladyes shullen euer so curteys be
That they shall quyte your othe all free
Ne seketh neuer other bycayre
For they shall speake wyth hem so fayre
That ye shall holde ye payde full wele
Though ye you medle neuer a dele
Late ladyes worche wyth her thynges
They shall hem tell so fele tydynges
And moue hem eke so many requestes
By flatery, that not honest is
And therto yeue hem suche tankynges
what wyth kyssynge, and wyth thalkynges
That certes yf they trowed be
Shall neuer leaue hem londe ne fee
That it nyll as the noble fare
Of whych they fyrst delyuered are
Nowe maye ye tell vs all your wyll
And we your hestes shall fulfyll

But False semblant dare not for drede
Of you syr, medle hym of thys dede
For he sayeth, that ye ben hys fo
He not, yt ye wol worche hym wo
wherfore we praye you all beausyre
That ye forgyue hym nowe your yre
And that he maye dwell as your man
wyth Abstinence hys dere lemman
Thys our acorde and our wyll nowe
Parfey sayd Loue, I graunt it you
I woll well holde hym for my man
Nowe let hym come, and he forth ran
False semblant (q Loue) in thys wyse
I take the here to my seruyce
That thou our frendes helpe alwaye
And hyndreth hem neyther nyght ne daye
But do thy myght hem to releue
And eke our enemyes that thou greue
Thyne be thys myght, I graunt it the
My kynge of harlotes shalte thou be
we woll that thou haue suche honour
Certayne thou arte a false traytour
And eke a theke, syth thou were borne
A thousande tymes thou arte forsworne
But natheleſſe in our herynge
To put our folke out of doutynge
I bydde the teche hem, wost thou howe?
By some generall sygne nowe
In what place thou shalt founden be
Yf that men had myster of the
And howe men shall the best espye
For the to knowe is great maystrye
Tell in what place is thyne hauntynge
Syr I haue full dyuers wonnynge
That I kepe not reherſed be
So that ye wolde respyten me
For yf that I tell you the sothe
I maye haue harme and shame bothe
Yf that my felowes wysten it
My tales shulden me be quyt
For certayne they wolde hate me
Yf euer I knewe her cruelte
For they wolde ouer all holde hem styll
Of trouth, that is agayne her wyll
Suche tales kepen they not here
I myght eftsone bye it full dere
Yf I sayd of hem any thynge
That ought dysplease to her herynge
For what worde that hem prycke or byteth
In that worde none of hem delyteth
All were it gospell the euangyle
That wolde reproue hem of her gyle

For theyare cruell and hautayne
And thys thynge wote I well certayne
Yf I speake ought to payre her loos
Your couet shall not so well be cloos
That thry ne shall wyte it at last
Of good men am I nought agast
For they woll taken on hem nothynge
When that they knowe all my meanynge
But he that woll it on hem take
He woll hym selfe suspecious make
That he hys lyke let couertly
In gyle and in Ipocrisy
That me engendred and yaue fostrynge
They made a full good engendrynge
(Quod Loue) for who so sothly tell
They engendred the dyuell of hell.

BUt nedely, howe so euer it be
(Quod loue) I wyll ꝯ charge ꝑ
To tel anon thy wōning places
Hearynge eche wyght that in thys place is
And what lyke that thou lyuest also
Hyde it no lenger nowe, wherto
Thou must dyscouer all thy worchynge
Howe thou seruest, and of what thynge
Though ꝑ thou shuldest for thy soth sawe
Ben all to beaten and to drawe
And yet arte thou not wonte parde
But natheleſſe, though thou beaten be
Thou shalt not be the fyrst that so
Hath for sothsawe suffred wo.

YF, syth that it maye lyken you
Thoughe that I shulde be slayne ryght nowe
I shal done your cōmaūdement
For therto haue I great talent

WYthoutē wordes mo, ryght than
False Sēblant hys sermō began
And sayd hem thus in audience
Barons take hede of my sentēce
ꝑ wyght ꝑ lyst to haue knowing
Of false semblant, full of flateryng
He must in worldly folke hym seke
And certes in the cloysters eke
I wone no where, but in hem twey
But not lyke euen, soth to say
Shortly I woll herberowe me
There I hope best to hulstred be
And certaynly, sykerest hydynge
Is vnderneth humblest clothynge

Religious folke ben full couerte
Seculer folke ben more apperte
But natheleſſe, I wyll not blame
Religious folke, ne hem dyffame
In what habyte that euer they go
Religyon humble, and trewe also
Woll I not blame, ne dyspyse
But I nyll loue it in no wyse
I meane of false religious
That stoute ben, and malicious
That wollen in an habyte go
And setten not her herte therto.

REligious folke ben all pytous
Thou shalt not sene one dyspytous
They louen no pryde, ne no stryke
But humbly they woll lede her lyke
Wyth whych folke woll I heuer be
And yf I dwell, I fayne me
I maye well in her habyte go
But me were leuer my necke a two
Then lette a purpose that I take
What couenaunt that euer I make
I dwell wyth hem that proude be
And full of wyles and subtelte
That worshyp of thys worlde coueyten
And great nede connen expleyten
And gone and gadren great pitaunces
And purchace hem the acqueyntaunces
Of men that myghty lyke may leden
And fayne hem poore, and hem selfe feden
Wyth good morcels delicious
And drynken good wyne precious
And preche vs pouert and dystresse
And fyshen hem selfe great rychesse
Wyth wyly nettes, that they caste
It woll come foule out at the laste
They ben fro clene religion went
They make the worlde an argument
That hath a foule conclusyon
I haue a robe of religion
Then am I all religious
Thys argument is all roignous
It is not worth a croked brere
Habyte ne maketh neyther monke ne frere
But clene lyke and deuocion
Maketh good men of religion
Natheleſſe, there can none answere
Howe hygh that euer hys heed he there
Wyth rasour whetted neuer so kene
That gyle in braunches cutte thurtene
There can no wyght dysfyncte it so

That

That he dare saye a worde therto.
But what herberowe that euer I take
Or what semblaunt that euer I make
I meane but gyle, and folowe that
For ryght no more then gybbe our cat
(That awayteth myce & rattes to kyllen)
Ne entende I but to begylen
Ne no wyght may, by my clothynge
wete wyth what folke is my dwellynge
Ne by my wordes yet parde
So soft and so pleasaunt they be
Beholde the dedes that I do
But thou be blynde thou oughtest so
For barye her wordes fro her dede
They thynke on gyle wythout drede
what maner clothynge that they were
Or what estate that euer they bere
Lered or leude, lorde or lady
knyght, squyer, burgeys, or bayly.

Ryght thus whyle False semblant sermoneth
Eft sones Loue hym aresoneth
And brake hys tale in hys speakynge
As though he had hym tolde leasynge
And sayd: what deuell is that I here-
what folke hast thou vs nempned here-
Maye men fynde religion
In worldly habitacion-
Yea syr, it foloweth not that they
Shulde lede a wycked lyfe parfey
Ne not therfore her soules lese
That hem to worldly clothes chese
For certes it were great pyte
Wenne maye in seculer clothes se
Florysshen holy religioun
Full many a saynt in felde and towne
wyth many a virgyn glorious
Deuoute, and full religious
Han dyed, that cõmen cloth aye beren
Yet sayntes neuertheleſſe they weren
I coude recken you many a ten
Yea, welnygh all these holy wemen
That menne in churches herry and seke
Both maydens, and these wyues eke
That baren full many a fayre chylde here
weared alwaye clothes seculere
And in the same dydden they
That sayntes weren, and ben alwaye
¶ The. xi. thousande maydens dere
That bearen in heuen her cierges clere
Of whych men rede in church and synge
were take in seculer clothynge
when they receyued martyrdome
And wonnen heuen vnto her home
Good herte maketh the good thought
The clothynge yeueth ne reueth nought
The good thought and the worchynge
That maketh the religion flourynge
There lyeth the good religioun
After the ryght ententioun

Who so toke a wethers skynne
And wrapped a gredy wolfe therinne
For he shuld go with lãbes whyte
wenest thou not he wolde hem byte-
yes: neuertheleſſe, as he were wode
He wolde hem wirry, and drynke the blode
And well the rather hem dysceyue
For syth they coude not perceyue
Hys tregette, and hys cruelte
They wolde hym folowe all tho he flye.

If there be wolues of suche hewe
Amonges these apostles newe
Thou holy church thou mayst be wayled
Syth that thy cyte is assayled
Through knyghtes of thyne owne table
God wote thy lordshyp is doutable
Yf they enforse it to wyn
That shulde defende it fro wythin
who myght defence ayenst hem make
wythout stroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonell
wythout dysplayenge of pensell
And yf god nyll done it socoure
But let renne in thys coloure
Thou muste thy heestes letten be
Then is there nought, but yelde the
Or yeue hem trybute doutles
And holde it of hem to haue pees
But greater harme betyde the
That they all mayster of it be
well conne they scorne the wythall
By day stuffen they the wall
And all the nyght they mynen there
Naye, thou planten muste els where
Thyne ympes, yf thou wolt fruyte haue
Abyde not there thy selfe to saue.
But now peace, here I turne agayne
I woll nomore of thys thynge sayne
Yf I maye passen me hereby

I myght maken you wery
But I woll heten you alwaye
To helpe your frendes what I maye
So they wollen my company
For they be shent all vtterly
But yf so fall, that I be
Ofte wyth hem, and they wyth me
And eke my lemman mote they serue
Or they shull not my loue deserue
Forsoth I am a false traytour
God iuged me for a theke trechour
Forsworne I am, but well nygh none
wote of my gyle, tyll it be done

THrough me hath many one death receaued
That my treget neuer aperceyued
And yet receyueth, and shall receyue
That my falsnesse shall neuer apperceyue
But who so doth, yf he wyse be
Hym is ryght good beware of me
But so slyghe is the aperceyuynge
That all to late cometh knowynge
For Protheus that coude hym chaunge
In euery shappe, homely and straunge
Coude neuer suche gyle ne treasoune
As I, for I come neuer in towne
There as I myght knowen be
Though men me both myght here and se
Full well I can my clothes chaunge
Take one, and make another straunge
Nowe am I knyght, nowe chastelayne
Nowe prelate, and nowe chapelayne
Nowe preest, nowe clerke, and nowe fostere
Nowe am I mayster, nowe scholere
Nowe monke, nowe chanon, nowe bayly
what euer myster man am I
Nowe am I prynce, nowe am I page
And can by herte euery langage
Somtyme am I hoore and olde
Nowe am I yonge, stoute, and bolde
Nowe am I Robert, nowe Robyn
Nowe frere mynor, nowe Jacobyn
And wyth me foloweth my loteby
To done me solace and company
That hyght dame Abstinence, and raygned
In many a queynt arraye fayned
Ryght as it cometh to her lykynge
I fulfyll all her desyrynge
Somtyme a womans cloth take I
Nowe am I a mayde, nowe lady
Somtyme I am religious
Nowe lyke an anker in an hous
Somtyme am I priorresse
And nowe a nonne, and nowe abbesse
And go through all regiouns
Sekynge all religiouns
But to what order that I am sworne
I take the strawe and beate the corne
To ioly folke I enhabyte
I aske no more but her habyte
what woll ye more in euery wyse
Ryght as me lyst I me dysgyse
well can I beare me vnder wede
Unlyke is my worde to my dede
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The people, through my priuyleges all
That bene in christendome a lyue
I maye assoyle, and I maye shryue
That no prelate maye let me
All folke, where euer they founde be
I not no prelate maye done so
But I onlye, and no mo
That made thylke establyshynge
Nowe is not thys a propre thynge
But were my sleyghtes aperceyued
As I was wonte, and woste thou why
For I dyd hem a tregetry
But therof yeue I a lytell tale
I haue the syluer and the male
So haue I preached and eke shryuen
So haue I take, so haue I yeuen
Through her foly, husbande and wyfe
That I lede ryght a ioly lyfe
Through symplesse of the prelacye
They knowe not all my tregettrye.

BUt for as moche as a man and wyfe
Shulde shewe her perysche preest her lyfe
Ones a yere, as sayth the boke
Er any wyght hys housel toke
Then haue I priuyleges large
That maye of moche thynge dyscharge
For he maye saye ryght thus parde
Syr preest, in shryfte I tell it the
That he to whome that I am shryuen
Hath me assoyled, and me yeuen
Penaunce sothly for my syn
whych that I fonde me gylty in
Ne I ne haue neuer entencion
To make double confessyon
Ne reherce efte my shryft to the

O shrift is ryght ynough to me
Thys ought the suffyse wele
Ne be not rebell neuer a dele
For certes, though thou haddest it sworne
I wote no preest ne prelate borne
That may to shrift efte me constrayne
And yf they done I woll me playne
For I wote where to playne wele
Thou shalt not streyne me a dele
Ne enforce me, ne not me trouble
To make my confessyon double
Ne I haue none affection
To haue double absolution
The fyrst is right ynough to me
Thys latter assoylyng quyte I the
I am vnbounde, what mayst thou fynde
More of my synnes me to vnbynde
For he that myght hath in hys honde
Of all my synnes me vnbonde
And yf thou wolte me thus constrayne
That me mote nedes on the playne
There shall no iuge imperyall
Ne bysshop, ne offyciall
Done iugement on me, for I
Shall gone and playne me openly
Unto my shriftfather newe
That hyght Frere wolfe vntrewe
And he shall chuse hym for me
For I trowe he can hamper the
But lorde he wolde be wrothe wythall
If men hym wolde Frere wolfe call
For he wolde haue no pacience
But done all cruell vengience
He wolde hys myght done at the leest
Nothyng spare for goddes heest
And god so wyse be my socour
But thou yeue me my sauyour
At Easter, whan it lyketh me
wythout preasyng more on the
I woll forthe, and to hym gone
And he shall housell me anon
For I am out of thy grutchyng
I kepe not deale wyth the nothyng
Thus may he shryue hym, that forsaketh
Hys parysche preest, and to me taketh
And yf the preest woll hym refuse
I am full redy hym to accuse
And hym punische and hamper so
That he his churche shall for go.


But who so hath in hys felyng
The consequence of such shryuyng
Shall sene, that preest maye never
haue myght
To knowe the conscience a right
Of hym, that is vnder hys cure
And thys is ayenst holy scripture
That byddeth euery heerd honest
Haue very knowyng of hys beest
But poore folke that gon by strete
That haue no golde, ne sommes grete
Hem wolde I let to her prelates
Or let her preestes knowe her states
For to me right nought yeue they
And why it is, for they ne may
They ben so bare, I take no kepe
But I woll haue the fatte shepe
Let parysche preestes haue the lene
I yeue not of her harme a bene
And yf that prelates grutche it
That oughten woth be in her wyt
To lese her fatte beestes so
I shall yeue hem a stroke or two
That they shall lesen wyth force
Ye, bothe her mytre and her croce
Thus iape I hem, and haue do longe
My priuileges ben so stronge.


Alse Semblaunt wolde haue
stynted here
But Loue ne made hym no
suche chere
That he was werye of hys
sawe
But for to make hym glad and fawe
He sayd, Tell on more specially
Howe that thou seruest vntruely
Tell forthe, and shame the neuer a dele
For as thyne habyt sheweth wele
Thou seruest an holy Heremyte
Sothe is, but I am but an Ypocryte
Thou gost and prechest pouerte
Ye syr, but rychesse hath poste
Thou prechest abstynence also
Syr, I woll fyllen so mote I go
My paunche, of good meate and wyne
As shulde a maister of diuyne
For thowe that I me poore fayne
Yet all poore folke I disdayne.


I Loue better the acqueyntaunce
Ten tymes of the kyng of Fraunce
Than of a poore mã of mylde mode
Though that hys soule be also good
For whan I se beggers quakyng

Naked on myrins all stynkyng
For hongre crye, and eke for care
I entremet not of her fare
They ben so poore, and full of pyne
They myght not ones yeue me a dyne
For they haue nothyng but her lyke
What shulde he yeue that lycketh hys knyke
It is but folly to entremete
To seke in houndes nest fatte mete
Lette beare hem to the spyttle anone
But for me, comforte gette they none
But a ryche sycke vsurere
Wolde I visyte and drawe nere
Hym woll I comforte and rehete
For I hoope of hys golde to gete
And yf that wycked dethe hym haue
I woll go wyth hym to hys graue
And yf there any reproue me
Why that I lette the poore be
Wost thou howe I not ascape
I saye and swere hym full rape
That riche menne han more tetches
Of synne, than han poore wretches
And hanne of counsayle more myster
And therfore I wolde drawe hem ner
But as great hurte, it maye so be
Hath a soule in right great pouerte
As soule in great richesse forsothe
All be it that they hurten bothe
For richesse and mendicitees
Bene cleped two extremytees
The meane is cleped Suffysaunce
There lyeth of vertue the aboundaunce
For Salomon full well I wote
In hys Parables vs wrote
As it is knowe of many a wyght
In hys thrittene chapiter ryght
God thou me kepe for thy poste
Fro rychesse and mendycite
For yf a ryche manne hym dresse
To thynke to moche on rychesse
Hys herte on that so ferre is sette
That he hys creatour dothe forzyette
And hym that beggeth woll aye greue
Howe shulde I by hys worde hym leue
Unneth that he nys a mycher
Forsworne, or els goddes lyer
Thus saythe Salomon sawes
Ne we fynde written in no lawes
And namely in our christen laye
Who so saythe yea, I dare say naye
That Christ, ne hys apostels dere
While that they walked in erthe here
Were neuer seen herbred beggyng
For they nolden beggen for nothyng
And right thus were men wont to teche
And in thys wyse wolde it preche
The maysters of dyuinyte
Somtyme in Parys the cyte.

And yf men wold there gayne appose
The naked texte and lette the glose
It myght soone assoyled be
For menne may wel ỳ soth se
That pardie they myght aske a thynge
Playnly forthe wythout beggynge
For they weren goddes heerdes dere
And cure of soules hadden here
They nolde nothyng begge her foode
For after Christ was done on rodde
Wyth theyr proper hondes they wrought
And wyth traueyle, and els nought
They wonnen all her sustenaunce
And lyueden forthe in her penaunce
And the remenaunt yaf awaye
To other poore folkes alwaye
They neyther bylden towre ne halle
But they in houses small wyth alle
A mighty man that canne and maye
Shulde wyth hys honde and body alwaye
Wynne hym hys foode in laboryng
If he ne haue rent or suche a thyng
All though he be relygious
And god to seruen curyous
Thus mote he done, or do trespas
But yf it be in certayne caas
That I can reherce, yf myster be
Ryght well, whan the tyme I se.

Eke the boke of saynt Anstyne
Be it i paper or perchmyne
There as he writte of these worchynges
Thou shalt sene that none excusynges
A parfyte man ne shulde seke
By wordes, ne by dedes eke
All though he be religyous
And god to seruen curyous
That he ne shall, so mote I go
Wyth proprie hondes, and body also

Get his

Get hys fode in laboryng
If he ne haue proprete of thyng
Yet shulde he sell all hys substaunce
And with hys swynke haue sustenaunce
If he be parfyte in bounte
Thus han the bookes tolde me
For he that woll gone ydelly
And vseth it aye besyly
To haunten other mennes table
He is a trechour full of fable
Ne he ne may by good reason
Excuse hym by hys orison
For men behoueth in some gyse
Ben somtyme in goddes seruyse
To gone and purchasen her nede
Men mote eaten, that is no drede
And slepe, and eke do other thyng
So longe may they leaue prayeng
So may they eke her prayer blynne
whyle that they werke her meate to wynne
Seynt Austyn woll therto accorde
In thylke boke that I recorde
Justinian eke, that made lawes
Hath thus forboden by olde sawes.

O man, vp payne to be deed
Mighty of body, to begge hys breed
If he may swynke it for to gete
Men shuld hym rather mayme (or bete
Or done of hym aperte iustyce
Than suffren hym in suche malyce
They done not well so mote I go
That taken suche almesse so
But yf they haue somme priuilege
That of the payne hem woll alege
But howe that is, can I not se
But yf the prynce disceyued be
Ne I ne wene not sykerly
That they may haue it ryghtfully
But I woll not determyne
Of princes power, ne defyne
Ne by my worde comprehende iwys
If it so ferre may stretche in thys
I woll not intremete a dele
But I trowe that the boke saythe wele
who that taketh almesses, that be
Dewe to folke that men may se
Lame, feble, wery, and bare
Poore, or in suche maner care
That conne wynne hem neuer mo
For they haue no power therto
He eateth hys owne dampnyng
But yf he lye, that made all thyng
And yf ye suche a truaunt fynde
Chastyse hym well, yf ye be kynde
But they wolde hate you parcaas
If ye fyllen in her laas
They wolde eftsones do you scatche
If that they might, late or rathe
For they be not full pacient
That han the worlde thus foule blent
And weteth well, that god bad
The good man sell all that he had
And folowe hym, and to poore it yeue
He wolde not therfore that he lyue
To seruen hym in mendience
For it was neuer hys sentence
But he bad werken, whan that nede is
And folowe hym in good dedes
Saynt Poule, that loued all holy churche
He bade the apostels for to wurche
And wynnen her lyuelode in that wyse
And hem defended truandyse
And sayd, werketh wyth your honden
Thus shulde the thyng be vnderstonden
He nolde iwys haue byd hem beggyng
Ne sellen gospell, ne prechyng
Lest they berafte, wyth her asknyng
Folke of her catell or of her thyng
For in thys worlde is many a man
That yeueth hys good, for he ne can
werne it for shame, or els he
wolde of the asker delyuered be
And for he hym encombreth so
He yeueth hym good to let hym go
But it can hym no thyng profyte
They lese the yefte and the meryte
The good folke that Poule to preched
Profred hym ofte, whan he hem teched
Some of her good in charyte
But therfore right nothyng toke he
But of hys hondewerke wolde he gete
Clothes to wryne hym, and hys mete.

Tell me than howe a man may lyuen
That al his good to poore hath yeuen
And woll but onely bydde hys bedes
And neuer wyth hondes labour hys nedes
Maye he do so: Ye syr: And howe
Syr, I woll gladly tell you

Saynt

SEynt Austen saith, a man may be
In houses that han properte
As templers, and hospytelers
And as these chanons regulers
Or whyte monkes, or these blake
I woll no mo ensamples make
And take therof hys sustenynng
For therin lythe no beggyng
But otherwayes not ywis
Yet Austyn gabbeth not of thys
And yet full many a monke laboureth
That god in holy churche honoureth
For whan her swynkyng is agon
They rede and synge in churche anon.

AND for there hath ben great discorde
As manye a wyght may beare recorde
Upon the estate of mendicience
I woll shortly in your presence
Tel howe a man may begge at nede
That hath not wherwith hym to fede
Maugre hys felowes iangelynges
For sothfastnesse woll none hydynges
And yet parcase I may abey
That I to you sothly thus sey.

LO here the case especiall
If a man be so bestyall
That he of no crafte hath science
And nought desyreth ignorence
Thã may he go a begging yerne
Tyll he some maner crafte can lerne
Through whyche wythout truandyng
He may in trouthe haue hys lyuyng
Or yf he may done no labour
For elde, or sicknesse, or langour
Or for hys tendre age also
Than may he yet a beggyng go
Or yf he haue perauenture
Through vsage of hys noriture
Lyued ouer delycyously
Than oughten good folke comenly
Han of hys mischefe some pyte
And suffren hym also, that he
May gon aboute and begge hys breed
That he be not for honger deed
Or yf he haue of crafte connyng
And strength also, and desyryng
To worchen, as he had what
But he fynde neyther thys ne that
Than may he begge tyll that he
Haue getten hys necessyte
Or yf hys wynnyng be so lyte
That hys labour woll not acquyte
Suffyciantly all hys lyuyng
Yet may he go hys breed beggyng
Fro doore to doore, he may go trace
Tyll he the remenaunt may purchace
Or yf a man wolde vndertake
Any emprise for to make
In the rescous of our lay
And it defenden, as he may
Be it with armes, or lettrure
Or other couenable cure
If it be so he poore be
Than may he begge, tyll that he
May fynde in trouthe for to swynke
And get hym clothe, meate, and drynke
Swynke he wyth hys hondes corporell
And not wyth hondes espyrituell.

IN all this case, and in semblables
If that there ben mo resonables
He may begge, as I tell you here
And els not, in no manere
As willyam seynt Amour wolde preche
And ofte wolde dispute and teche
Of thys mater all openly
At Parys full solemply
And also god my soule blesse
As he had in thys stedfastnesse
The accorde of the vniuersyte
And of the people, as semeth me.

NO good man ought it to refuse
Ne ought hym therof to excuse
Be wrothe or blythe, who so be
For I woll speke, and tel it the
All shulde I dye, and be put doun
As was seynt Poule in derke prisoun
Or be exiled in thys caas
wyth wronge, as mayster william was
That my mother Hypocrise
Banyshed for her great enuye.

MY mother flemed hym Seynt Amour
Thys noble dyd suche labour
To sustenue euer the loyalte
That he to moche agylte me

He made

He made a boke, and let it write
Wheryn hys lyfe he dyd all write
And wolde yche renyed beggyng
And lyued by my traueylyng
If I ne had rent ne other good
What weneth he that I were wood:
For labour might me neuer plese
I haue more wyll to ben at ese
And haue well leuer, sothe to saye
Before the people pattre and pray
And wrye me in my foxerye
Under a cope of papelardie.

(Uod Loue) what dyuell is this
that I here
What wordes tellest ȳ me here
What sir Falsnesse that apert is
Than dredest thou not god: No
certis
For selde in great thyng shall he spede
In this worlde, that god woll drede
For folke that hem to vertue yeuen
And truely on her owne lyuen
And hem in goodnesse aye contene
On hem is lytell thrifte yscene
Suche folke drinken great misese
That lyfe may me neuer plese
But se what golde han vsurers
And syluer eke in garners
Taylagiers, and these monyours
Bayliffes, bedels, prouost, countours
These lyuen well nygh by rauyne
The smale people hym mote enclyne
And they as wolues wol hem eten
Upon the poore folke they geten
Full moche of that they spende or kepe
Nys none of hem that he nyll strepe
And wryne hem selfe well at full
Wythout scaldyng, they hem pull
The stronge the feble ouergothe
But I that weare my symple clothe
Robbe bothe robbyng and robbours
And gyle gylyng, and gylours
By my treget, I gather and threst
The great tresour in to my chestе
That lyeth wyth me so faste bounde
Wyne hygh paleys do I founde
And my delytes I fulfyll
Wyth wyne at feestes, at my wyll
And tables full of entremees
I woll no lyfe, but ease and pees
And wynne golde to spende also
For whan the great bagge is go
It cometh ryght with my iapes
Make I not well tomble myne apes
To wynnen is alway myne entent
My purchace is better than my rent
For though I shulde beten be
Ouer all I entremet me
Without me may no wight dure
I walke soules for to cure
Of all the worlde cure haue I
In brede and length boldly
I woll bothe preche, and eke counsaylen
With hondes wyll I not trauaylen
For of the Pope I haue the bull
I ne holde not my wyttes dull
I woll not stynten in my lyue
These Emperours for to shriue
Of kynges, dukes, and lordes grete
But poore folke all quyte I lete
I loue no suche shryuyng parde
But it for other cause be
I recke not of poore men
Her astate is not worthe an hen
Where fyndest thou a swynker of labor
Haue me vnto hys confessour:
But Empresses, and duchesses
These quenes, and eke countesses
These abesses, and eke bygyns
These great ladyes palasyns
These iolye knyghtes, and bayliues
These nonnes, and these burgeys wyues
That ryche ben, and eke plesyng
And these maydens welfaryng
Where so they clad or naked be
Uncounsayled gothe there none fro me
And for her soules sauete
At lorde and lady, and her meyne
I aske, whan they hem to me shriue
The proprete of all her lyue
And make hem trowe, bothe moste and leest
Her parysshe preest nys but a beest
Ayens me and my company
That shrewes ben, as great (as I)
For whyche I woll not hyde in holde
No pryuite that me is tolde
That I by worde or signe ywis
Ne woll make hem knowe what it is
And they wollen also tellen me
They hele fro me no pryuite
And for to make you hem perceyuen
That vsen folke thus to disceyuen
I woll you sayne withouten drede

what

what menne maye in the Gospell rede
Of saynt Mathue the gospelere
That saythe, as I shall you saye here.

Vpon the chayre of Moyses
Thus it is glosed doutlees
(That is the olde Testament
For therby is the chayre ment)
Sytte Scribes and Pharysen
That is to sayne, the cursed men
whyche that we hypocrites call
Dothe that they preche I rede you all
But dothe nat as they done a dele
That bene nat wery to saye wele
But to do well, no wyll haue they
And they wolde bynde on folke alwaye
That bene to begyled able
Burdons that ben importable
On folkes shulders thynges they couchen
That they nyll wyth her fyngers touchen
And why woll they nat touche it why?
For hem ne lyste nat sykerly
For sadde burdons that men taken
Make folkes shulders aken
And yf they do ought that good be
That is for folke it shulde se
Her burdons larger maken they
And make her hemmes wyde alwaye
And louen seates at the table
The fyrste, and most honorable
And for to hanne the fyrste chayrs
In synagogges, to hem full dere is
And wyllen that folke hem loute and grete
whan that they passen through the strete
And wollen be cleped mayster also
But they ne shulde nat wyllen so
The gospell is there agaynst I gesse
That sheweth well her wyckednesse.

Another custome vse we
Of hem that wol ayenst vs be
we hate hi deedly euerichone
& we wol werrey him, as one
Hym ý one hateth, hate we al
And cõiecte, how to done him (fal
And yf we sene hym wynne honour
Rychesse or preyse, through hys valour
Prouende, rente, or dignyte
Full faste ywis compassen we
By what ladder he is clomben so
And for to maken hym downe to go
with trayson we woll hym defame
And done hym lese hys good name
Thus from hys ladder we hym take
And thus hys frendes foes we make
But worde ne wete shall he noon
Tyll all hys frendes bene hys foon
For yf we dyd it openly
we myght haue blame redily
Had he wyste of our malyce
He hadde hym kepte, but he were nyce.

Another is thys, that yf so fall
That ther be one amõgevs al
That doth a good tourne, out of drede
We sayne it is our alder dede
Ye sikerly, though he it fained
Or that hym lyste, or that hym dayned
A manne through hym auaunced be
Therof all parceners be we
And tellen folke, where so we go
That manne through vs is sprongen so
And for to haue of menne preysyng
we purchace through our flatterynge
Of ryche menne of great poste
Letters, to wytnesse our bounte
So that manne weneth that maye vs se
That all vertue in vs be
And alwaye poore we vs fayne
But howe so that we begge or playne
we bene the folke without leasyng
That all thynge haue wythout hauyng
Thus be we dradde of the people ywis
And gladly my purpose is thys.
¶ I deale wyth no wyght, but he
Haue golde and treasour great plente
Her acqueyntaunce well loue I
Thys is moche my desyre shortely
I entremete me of brocages
I make peace, and mariages
I am gladly executour
And many tymes a procuratour
I am somtyme messagere
That falseth nat to my mystere
And many tymes I make enqueste
For me that offyce is nat honest
To deale with other mennes thynge
That is to me a great lykynge
And yf that ye haue ought to do
In place that I repeyre to
I shall it speden through my wyt
As soone as ye haue tolde me it
So that ye serue me to paye

My seruyce

My seruyce shalbe yours alwaye
But who so wol chastyce me
Anone my loue lost hath he
For I loue no man in no gyse
That wol me repreue, or chastyce
But I wolde al folke vndertake
And of no wyght no teachyng take
For I that other folke chasty
wol not be taught fro my foly

I Loue none Hermytage more
Al desertes, and holtes hoore
And greate woodes euerychone
I Let them to the Baptiste Iohn
I queth hym quyte and hym relesse
Of Egypte al the wyldernesse
To ferre were al my mansions
Fro al cities and good towns
My paleys and myne house make I
There menne may renne in openly
And saye that I the worlde forsake
But al amydde I bylde and make
My house, and swymme and playe therinne
Bette than a fyshe doth wyth hys fynne.

Of Antechristes menne am I
Of whiche that Christe sayeth
openly
They haue habyte of holy-
nesse
And lyuen in such wyckednesse
To the coppe, yf hym talent toke
Of the Euangelistes boke
Ther myght he se by great trayson
Ful many false comparison
As moche as though hys greate myght
Be it of heate or of lyght
The sunne surmounteth the moone
That troubler is, and chaungeth soone
And the mutte kynel the shelle
I skorne not that I you telle
Ryght so wythouten any gyle
Surmounteth thys noble Euangyle
The worde of any Euangelist
And to her tytel they token Christ
And many such comparysoun
Of whyche I make no mencioun
Myght men in that booke fynde
who so coulde of hem haue mynde.

The vniuersyte that tho was a slepe
Gan for to brayde, and taken kepe
And at the noyse, the heed vp cast
Ne neuer sythen slepte it fast
But vp it sterte, and armes tooke
Ayenst thys false horrible booke
All redy batayle for to make
And to the iuge the boke they take
But they that broughten the boke there
Hent it anone away for fere
They nolde shewe it no more a dele
But than it kepte, and kepen wele
Tyl such a tyme that they may se
That they so stronge woxen be
That no wyght maye hem wel wythstonde
For by that boke they durst nat stonde
Awaye they gonne it for to bere
For they ne durst nat answere
By expositioun no glose
To that that clerkes wol appose
Ayenst the cursednesse ywys
That in that boke wrytten is
Now wotte I nat, ne I can nat se
what maner ende that there shall be
Of al thys that they hyde
But yet algate they shal abyde
Tyl that they may it bette defende
Thys trowe I best woll be her ende.

Thus Antechrist abyden we
For we bene al of hys meyne
And what man that wol not be so
Ryght soone he shal hys lyke for go
Outwarde Lamben semen we
Ful of goodnesse and of pyte
And inwarde we wythouten fable
Bene gredy wolues rauysable
we enuyroun both lande and see
wyth al the worlde werryen we
we wol ordayne of al thyng
Of folkes good, and her lyuyng.

If there be castel or citye
wherin that any bougerons be
All though that they of Myllayne were
For therof bene they blamed there
Or yf a wyght out of measure
wolde leane her golde, and take vsure
For that he is so coueytous
Or yf he be to lecherous
Or these that haunten Simonye
Or prouost ful of trechery
Or Prelate lyuyng iolyly
Or preest that halte hys queyn hym by

Or olde hoores hostylers
Or other baudes or bordellers
Or els blamed of any vyce
Of whyche men shulden done iustyce
By al the sayntes that we prey
But they defende them wyth lamprey
wyth luce, wyth elys, wyth samons
wyth tendre gees, and with capons
wyth tartes, or wyth cheffes fatte
wyth deyntye flaunes, brode and flatte
wyth caleweys, or wyth pullayle
wyth conynges, or fyne bytayle
That we vnder our clothes wyde
Maken through our golet glyde
Or but he wol do come in haste
Roe venyson bake in paste
whether so that he loure or groyne
He shal haue of a corde a loygne
wyth whiche men shal hym bynde and lede
To brenne hym for hys synful dede
That men shulde here hym crye and rore
A myle waye aboute and more
Or els he shal in prison dye
But yf he wol hys frendshyp bye
Or sinecten that, that he hath do
More than hys gylte amounteth to
But and he couth, through hys sleyght
Do make vp a toure of heyght
Nought rought I, wheder of stone or tre
Or erth, or turues though it be
Though it were of no bounde stone
wrought wyth squyre and scantilone
So that the toure were stuffed wel
wyth al rychesse temporel
And than that he wolde vp dresse
Engyns, both more and lesse
To cast at vs by euery syde
To bere hys good name wyde
Such sleyghtes I shal you neuen
Barels of wyne, by syxe or seuen
Or golde in sackes greate plente
He shulde sone delyuered be
And yf he haue no such pytences
Let hym study in equipolences
And let lyes, and fallaces
If that he wolde deserue our graces
Or we shal beare hym such wytnesse
Of synne, and of hys wretchednesse
And done hys lose so wyde renne
That al quicke we shulde hym brenne
Or els yeue hym such penaunce
That is wel worse than the pytaunce
For thou shalt neuer for nothyng
Con knowen a ryght by her clothyng
The traitours ful of trecherye
But thou her werkes can aspye
And ne had the good kepyng be
whyloin of the vniuersite
That kepeth the key of christendome
we had bene turmented al and some
Such bene the stynkyng prophetis
Nys none of hem, that good prophete is
For they through wycked entention
The yere of the incarnation
A thousande, and two hundred yere
Fyue and fyfty, ferther ne nere
Broughten a boke, wyth sory grace
To yeue ensample in comune place
That sayd thus, though it were fable
Thys is the gospel pardurable
That fro the holy ghost is sent
wel were it worth to bene brent
Entytled was in such manere
Thys boke of whyche I tel here
There nas no wyght in al Parys
Before our lady at paruys
That they ne myght the booke by
The sentence pleased hem well trewly.
But I wol stynte of thys matere
For it is wonder longe to here
But had that ylke boke endured
Of better estate I were ensured
And frendes haue I yet parde
That han me set in great degre

Of al thys worlde is Emperour
Gyle my father, the trechour
And Empresse my mother is
Maugre the holy ghost ywys
Our myghty lynage, and our route
Reygneth in euery reygne aboute
And wel is worthy we minystres be
For al thys worlde gouerne we
And can the folke so wel disceyue
That none our gyle can perceyue
And though they done, they dare not say
The soth dare no wyght bewray
But he in Christes wrath hym ledeth
That more than Christ my brethern dredeth
He nys no ful good champion
That dredeth such similacion
Nor that for payne wol refusen
Vs to correcte and accusen
He wol not entremete by ryght

Ne haue god in hys eye syght
And therfore shal god hym punyce
But me ne recketh of no vyce
Sythen men vs louen communably
And holden vs for so worthy
That we may folke reprene echone
And we nyl haue reprefe of none
whom shulden folke worshypen so
But vs that stynten neuer mo
To patren, whyle that folke may vs se
Though it not so behynde hem be.

And where is more woode foly
Than to enhaunce chiualry
And loue noble men and gaye
That ioly clothes weren alwaye
If they be such folke as they semen
So clene, as men her clothes demen
And that her wordes folowe her dede
It is great pyte out of drede
For they wol be none hypocritis
Of hem me thynketh great spyte is
I can not loue hem on no syde
But beggers wyth these hoodes wyde
wyth sleygh and pale faces leane
And graye clothes nat ful cleane
But fretted ful of tatarwagges
And hygh shoes knopped wyth dagges
That frouncen lyke a quayle pype
Or bootes ryuelyng as a gype
To such folke, as I you deuyse
Shulde princes and these lordes wyse
Take al her landes and her thynges
Both warre and peace in gouernynges
To such folke shulde a prince hym yeue
That wolde hys lyfe in honour leue

And yf they be nat as they seme
That seruen thus the worlde to queme
There wolde I dwelle to disceyue
The folke, for they shal not parceyue
But I ne speke in no suche wyse
That men shulde humble habytte dispyse
So that no pride there vnder be
No man shulde hate, as thynketh me
The poore man in such clothyng
But god ne preyseth hym nothyng
That sayeth he hath the worlde forsake
And hath to worldly glory hym take
And wol of such delyces vse
who maye that begger wel excuse
That papelarde, that hym yeldeth so
And wol to worldly ease go
And sayth that he the worlde hath lefte
And gredyly it grypeth efte
He is the hounde, shame is to sayne
That to hys castyng goth agayne

But vnto you dare I not lye
But myght I felen or espye
That ye perceyued it nothyng
Ye shulde haue a starke leasyng
Ryght in your hande thus to begynne
I nolde it let for no synne
The god loughe at the wonder tho
And euery wyght ganne laughe also
And sayd: Lo here a man aryght
For to be trusty to euery wyght.

Alse semblant (qy Loue) saye to me
Sythe I thus haue auaunced the
That in my courte is thy dwellyng
And of rybaudes shalt be my kyng
wolte thou wel holden my forwardes
Yee sir, from hence forwardes
we wol people vpon hym areyse
And through our gyle, done hym ceyse
And hym on sharpe speares ryue
Or other wayes bryngc hym fro lyue
But yf that he wol folowe ywys
That in our boke written is

Thus muche wol our boke signyfye
That whyle Peter hath mastrye
Maye neuer John shewe wel hys myght
Nowe haue I you declared ryght
The meanyng of the backe and rynde
That maketh the ententions blynde
But nowe at erst I wol be gyn
To expowne you the pythe wythin
And the seculers comprehende
That Cyrisites lawe wol defende
And shulde it kepen and mayntenen
Ayenst hem that al susteynen
And falsly to the people teachen
That Johan betoketh hem to prechen
That there nys lawe couenable
But thylke gospell pardurable

That fro the holy ghost was sent
To turne folke that bene myswent

The strength of Johan they understonde
The grace in whych they say they stonde
That doth the synful folke conuerte
And hem to Jesu Christ reuerte
Ful many an other horriblete
Maye men in that booke se
That bene commaunded doutelesse
Ayenst the lawe of Rome expresse
And al wyth Antechrist they holden
As men may in the boke beholden
And than commaunden they to sleen
All tho that wyth Peter been
But they shall neuer haue that myght
And god to forne, for stryke to fyght
That they ne shal ynough fynde
That Peters lawe shal haue in mynde
And euer beholde, and so mayntene
That at the last it shal be sene
That they shall al come therto
For aught that they can speke or do
And thylke lawe shal not stonde
That they by Jhon haue understonde
But maugre hem, it shal doun
And hem brought to confusioun
Had neuer your father here beforne
Seruaunt so trewe, syth he was borne
That is ayenst al nature
Sir, put you that in auenture
For though ye borowes take of me
The sykerer shal ye neuer be
For hostages, ne sykernesse
Or charters for to bere wytnesse
I take your selfe to recorde here
That men ne maye in no manere
Teren the wolfe out of hys hyde
Tyl he be slayne, backe and syde
Though men hym beate and al delyle
what wene ye that I wol begyle
For I am clothed mekely
There vnder is al my trechery
Myne hert chaungeth neuer the mo
For none habyt, in whych I go
Though I haue chere of simplenesse
I am not wery of shreudnesse
My lemman, strayned abstenaunce
Hath mister of my purueyaunce
She had ful longe ago be dede
Nere my counsayle and my rede
Let her alone, and you and me
And loue answerde, I trust the
wythout borowe, for I woll none
And false semblaunt the thefe anone
Ryght in that ylke same place
That had of treson al his face
Ryght blacke wythin, and whyte wythout
Thankyng hym, gan on hys knees lout

Than was there nought, but euerye man
Nowe to assaute, that saylen can
(Quod Loue) and that ful hardely
Than armed they hem comenly
Of such armoure, as to hem fell
whan they were armed, fyers and fel
They went hem forth al in aroute
And set the castel al aboute
They wyl not away for no drede
Tyl it so be that they bene dede
Or tyl they haue the castel take
And foure batels they gan make
And partid hem in foure anone
And toke her way, and forth they gone
The foure gates for to assayle
Of whych the kepers woll not fayle
For they bene neyther sycke ne dede
But hardy folke, and stronge in dede

Nowe wol I sayne the countenaunce
Of false semblaunt, and abstinaunce
That bene to wycked tonge went
But fyrst they helde her parlyment
whether it to done were
To maken hem knowen there
Or els walken forth dysgyled
But at the laste they deuysed
That they wolde gone in tapynage
As it were in a pylgrymage
Lyke good and holy folke vnfeyned
And dame abstinence streyned
Toke on a robe of camelyne
And gan her gratche as a bygyne
A large couercheife of threde
She wrapped al aboute her hede
But she forgate not her psaltere
A payre of beedes eke she bere
Upon a lace al of whyte threde
On whych that she her beades bede
But she ne bought hem neuer a dele
For they were gyuen her, I wote wele
God wote of a ful holy frere
That sayd he was her father dere
To whom she had ofter went

Than

Than any frere of hys couent
And he vysited her also
And many a sermon sayd her to
He nolde let for man on lyue
That he ne wolde her ofte shryue
And wyth so great deuotion
They made her confession
That they had ofte for the nones
Two heedes in one hode at ones
Of fayre shappe, I deuyled her the
But pale of face somtyme was she
That false traytouresse vntrewe
was lyke that salowe horse of hewe
That in the Apocalips is shewed
That signyfyeth to folke beshrewed
That bene al ful of trecherye
And pale, through hypocrisye
For on that horse no colour is
But onely deed and pale ywys
Of such a colour enlangoured
was abstinence ywys coloured
Of her estate she her repented
As her vysage represented
She had a burdowne al of theste
That gyle had yeue her of hys yeste
And a skryppe of faynte distresse
That ful was of elengenesse
And forth she walked sobrely
And false semblaunt saynt, ie vous die
And as it were for such mistere
Done on the cope of a frere
wyth chere symple, and full pytous
Hys lokyng was not disdeynous
Ne proude, but meke and ful pesyble
About hys necke he bare a Byble
And squierly, forth gan he gon
And for to rest hys lymmes vpon
He had of treason a potent
As he were feble, hys way he went
But in hys sleue he gan to thryng
A rasoure sharpe, and wel bytyng
That was forged in a forge
whyche that men clepen Coupe Gorge
So longe forth her waye they nomen
Tyl they to wycked tonge comen
That at hys gate was syttyng
And sawe folke in the way passyng
The pylgrymes sawe he faste by
That beren hem ful meekely
And humbly they wyth hym mette
Dame abstinence fyrst hym grette
And syth hym false semblant salued
And he hem, but he not remeued
For he ne dred hem not a dele
For whan he sawe her faces wele
Alwaye in herte, hym thought so
He shulde knowe hem both two
For wele he knewe dame abstynaunce
But he ne knewe not Constreynaunce
He ne knewe nat that she was constreyned
Ne of her theues lyke fayned
But wende she come of wyll al fre
But she come in another degre
And yf of good wyl she beganne
That wyl was fayled her thanne.

And false semblant had he
sayne alse
But he knewe nat that he was
false
Yet false was he, but his false-
Ne coulde he not espye, nor gesse (nesse
For semblant was so slye wrought
That falsenesse he ne espyed nought
But haddest thou knowen hym before
Thou woldest on a boke haue swore
whan thou hym saugh in thylke araye
That he that whylome was so gaye
And of the daunce Joly Robyn
was tho become a Jacobyn
But sothly what so men hym call
Frere preachours bene good men all
Her order wyckedly they beren
Such minstrels, yf they weren
So bene Augustyns, and Cordylers
And Carmes, and eke sacked freers
And al freres shodde and bare
Though some of hem bene great and square
Ful holy men, as I hem deme
Euerych of hem wolde good man seme
But shalt thou neuer of apparence
Sene conclude good consequence
In none argument ywys
If existence all fayled is
For men may fynde alwaye sopheme
The consequence to eueneme
who so that hath had the subtelte
The double sentence for to se.

whan the pylgrymes comen were
To wycked tonge that dwelled there
Her harneys nygh hem was algate
By wycked tonge adowne they sate
That badde hem nere hym for to come

And of tidynges telle hym some
And sayde hem: what case maketh you
To come to this place nowe:

SIr sayde Strayned Abstinaunce
we for to drye our penaunce
with hertes pytous deuoute
Are cõmen, as pylgrimes gon aboute
wel nyght on fote alway we go
Ful doughty ben our heeles two
And thus bothe we ben sent
Throughoute this worlde that is mylwent
To yeue ensample, and preche also
To fyshen synfull menne we go
For other fyshynge, ne fyshe we
And syr, for that charite
As we be wont, herbore we craue
Your lyfe to amende Christ it saue
And so it shulde you nat displease
we wolden, yf it were your ease
A shorte sermon vnto you sayne
And wicked tonge answered agayne
The house (quod he) such (as ye se)
Shal not be warned you for me
Say what you lyst, and I wol here
Graunt mercy swete syr dere.

(Quod alder first) dame abstynence
And thus began she her sentence
Sir the fyrst vertue certayne
The greatest and moost souerayne
That may be founde in any man
For hauyng, or for wytte he can
That is hys tonge to refrayne
Therto ought euery wyght hym payne
For it is better styl be
Than for to speken harme parde
And he that herkeneth it gladly
He is no good man sykerly
And sir, abouen al other synne
In that arte thou moost gylty inne
Thou spake a iape, not longe ago
And sir, that was ryght yuel do
Of a yonge man, that here repayred
And neuer yet thys place apayred
Thou saydest he awayted nothynge
But to deceyue fayre welcomyng
Ye sayd nothyng soth of that
But sir, ye lye, I tel you plat
He ne cometh no more, ne goth parde
I trowe ye shal hym neuer se
Fayre welcomynge in prison is
That ofte hath played wyth you er thys
The fayrest games that he coulde
wythout fylth styl or loude
Nowe dare she not her selfe solace
ye han also the man to chace
That he dare neyther come ne go
what meueth you to hate hym so
But properly your wycked thought
That many a false leasyng hath thought
That meueth youre foole eloquence
That iangleth euer in audience
And on the folke areyseth blame
And doth hem dishonour and shame
For thyng that maye haue no preuyng
But lykelynesse, and contryuyng.

For I dare sayne, that reason demeth
It is not al soth thynge that semeth
And it is synne to controue
Thyng that is to reproue
Thys wote ye wele, and syr: therfore
Ye arne to blame the more
And nathlesse, he recketh lyte
He yeueth nat nowe therof a myte
For yf he thought harme parfaye
He wolde come and gone al daye
He coulde him selfe not abstene
Nowe cometh he not, and that is sene
For he ne taketh of it no cure
But yf it be through auenture
And lasse than other folke algate
And thou her watchest at the gate
wyth speare in thyne arest alwaye
There muse musarde al the daye
Thou wakest nyght and daye for thought
Iwys thy traueyle is for nought
And Jelosy wythouten fayle
Shal neuer quyte the thy trauayle
And skath is, that fayre welcomyng
wythout any trespassyng
Shal wrongfully in prison be
There wepeth and languysheth he
And though thou neuer yet ywys
Agyltest man no more but thys
Take not a grefe it were worthy
To put the out of thys bayly
And afterwarde in prison lye
And fettre the tyl that thou dye
For thou shalt for thys synne dwelle
Ryght in the dyuels arse of helle
But yf that thou repent the

Wakaye

Malaye, thou lyest falsely (quod he)
what, welcome with mischaunce now
Haue I therfore herbered you
To saye me shame, and eke reproue
with sory hap to your behoue
Am I today your harbegere
Go herber you els where, than here
That han a lyer called me
Two tregetours art thou and he
That in myne house, do me this shame
And for my sothe sawe ye me blame
Is this the sermon that ye make
To all the deuyls I me take
Or els god thou me confounde
But er men dydden this castell founde
It passeth not ten dayes or twelue
But it was tolde ryght to my selue
And as they sayd, ryght so tolde I
He kyst the rose priuyly
Thus sayd I now, and haue sayd yore
I not where he dyd any more
why shulde men saye me such a thynge
Yf it had ben gabbynge
Ryght so sayd I, and woll say yet
I trowe I lyed not of it
And with my bemes I woll blowe
To all neyghbours arowe
How he hath both cōmen and gone
Tho spake false semblaunt ryght anon
All is not gospell out of dout
That men sayne in the towne about
Laye no deefe ere to my speakyng
I swere you syr, it is gabbyng
I trowe ye wot well certaynly
That no man loueth hym tenderly
That sayth hym harme, yf he wote it
All be he neuer so poore of wyt
And sothe is also sykerly
This knowe ye syr, as well as I
That louers gladly woll vysiten
The places there her loues habyten
This man you loueth, and eke honoureth
This man to serue you laboureth
And clepeth you his frende so dere
And this man maketh you good chere
And euery where that you meteth
He you salweth, and he you greteth
He preseth not so oft as ye
Ought of his commyng encombred be
There presen other folke on you
Full ofter than he doth nowe
And yf his hert hym strayned so
Under the Rose for to go
Ye shulde hym sene so oft nede
That ye shulde take hym with the dede
He coude his commyng not forbeare
Though he hym thrilled with a speare
It nere nat than, as it is nowe
But trusteth well, I swere it you
That it is clene out of his thought
Syr, certes he ne thynketh it nought
Nomore ne doth Fayre welcomyng
That sore abyeth all this thynge
And yf they were of one assent
Full soone were the Rose hent
The maugre yours wolde be
And syr of o thyng herkeneth me
Syth ye this man, that loueth you
Han sayd suche harme, and shame now
wytteth well, yf he gessed it
Ye maye well demen in your wyt
He noulde nothynge loue you so
Ne callen you his frende also
But nyght and daye he wol wake
The castel to destroye and take
Yf it were soth as ye deuyse
Or some man in some maner wyse
Wyght it warne hym euery dele
Or by hym self perceyue wele
For syth he myght not come and gone
As he was whylom wont to done
He myght it soone wyte and se
But nowe all otherwyse wot he
Than haue we syr all vtterly
Deserued hell, and iolyly
The deth of hell doutlesse
That thrallen folke so gyltlesse

Alse semblaunte so proueth
this thynge
That he canne none answe-
rynge
And seeth alwaye, suche ap-
paraunce
That nygh he fell in repentaunce
And sayd hym, syr: it maye well be
Semblaunt, a good man semen ye
And Abstinence, full wyse ye seme
Of o talent you both I deme
what counsayle woll ye to me yeuen:
Ryght here anon thou shalt be shryuen
And say thy synne, without more
Of this shalt thou repent sore

For I am prest, and haue poste
To shryue folke of moost dignitie
That ben as wyde as worlde may dure
Of al this worlde I haue the cure
And that had neuer yet persoun
Ne vicarie of no maner toun
And god wot I haue of the
A thousande tymes more pytye
Than hath thy prest parochial
Though thy frende be specyall
I haue auauntage in o wyse
That your prelates ben not so wyse
Ne halfe so lettred (as am I)
I am lycenced boldly
In diuinitie for to rede
And to confessen out of drede
Yf ye woll you nowe confesse
And leaue your synnes more and lesse
without abode, knele downe anon
And you shall haue absolucion.

FINIS.

Here endeth the Romaunt of the Rose: And here folowyth the boke of Troylous and Creseyde.

¶ Troylus and Creseyde.

THe double sorow of Troilus to tellen
That was kynge Priamus sonne of Troy
In louyng, how his aduentures fellen
From woo to wele, and after out of ioye
My purpose is, er that I parte froye
Thou Thesiphon thou helpe me for tendite
These woful verses, that wepen as I write

To the I clepe, thou goddesse of tourment
Thou cruel furye, sorowyng euer in payne
Helpe me that am the sorowful instrument
That helpeth louers, as I can complayne
For well syt it, the soth for to sayne
A woful wyght to haue a drerie fere
And to a sorouful tale a sorye chere

For I that god of loues seruauntes serue
Ne dare to loue, for myne vnlykelynesse
Prayen for spede, al shulde I therfore sterue
So farre am I fro his helpe in derkenesse
But nathelesse, if this maye done gladnesse
To any louer, and his cause aueyle
Haue he my thāke, and myne be the trauyle

But ye louers that bathen in gladnesse
Yf any drope of pytie in you be
Remembreth you of passed heuynesse
That ye haue felte, and on the aduersitie
Of other folke, and thynketh how that ye
Han felt that loue durst you displease
Or ye han won hym with to great an ease

And prayeth for hem that ben in the case
Of Troylus, as ye maye after heare
That he hem bringe in heuen to solace
And eke for me prayeth to god so dere
That I haue might to shew in som manere
Such payne and wo, as loues folke endure
In Troylus vnsely aduenture.

And bydde eke for hem ȳ ben dispeyred
In loue, that neuer wyl recouered be
And eke for hem that falsely ben apeyred
Through wycked tonges, be it he or she
Thus bydde god for his benignitie
So graūt hem sone out of this world to pace
That ben dispayred out of loues grace.

And bydde eke for hem that bene at ease
That God hem graūt aye good perseueraūce
And sende hem grace her loues for to please
That it to loue be worshyp and pleasaunce
For so hope I my selfe best to auaunce
To praye for hem ȳ loues seruauntes be
And wryte her wo, and lyue in charitie

And for to haue of hem compassyoun
As though I were her owne brother dere
Now herkeneth with a good ententioun
For now wyll I go streyght to my matere
In which ye maye the double sorowes here
Of Troylus, in louyng of Creseyde
And how that she forsoke him er ȳ she dyed.

IT is well wyst, how that the Grekes stronge
In armes with a thousande shyppes went
To Troye wardes, and the cytie longe
Beliegeden nygh ten yeres er they stent
And in dyuers wyse, and one entent
The rauyshyng to wreke of quene Heleyne
By Parys don, they wroughtē al her peyne.

Now fell it so, that in ȳ towne there was
Dwellyng a Lorde of great authoritie
A great diuyne that cleped was Calcas
That in that science so expert was, that he
Knewe wel that Troye shulde destroyed be
By answere of his god that hyght thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus

So whā this Calcas knewe by calculing
And eke by the answere of this god Apollo
That grekes shulde such a people bryng
Thorowe which that Troye must be fordo
He cast anon out of the towne to go
For wel he wyst by sort, that Troye sholde
Destroyed be, yea wolde who so nolde.

wher

wherfore to departen softely
Toke purpose ful this for knowyng wyse
And to the Grekes host full priuyly
He stale anon, and they in curteys wyse
Dyd hym both worshyp and seruyce
In trust that he hath connyng hem to rede
In euery peryll, which that was to drede.

Great rumour rose whã it was fyrst espyed
In all the towne, and openly was spoken
That Calcas traytour fled was and alyed
To hem of Grece, & cast was to be wroken
On hym, that falsly hath his fayth broken
And sayd: he and all his kynne atones
were worthy to be brent both fel & bones.

Now had Calcas lefte in this mischaũce
Unwyst of this false and wycked dede
A doughter, whiche was in great penaunce
And of her lyfe she was ful sore in drede
And wyst neuer what best was to rede
And as a wyddowe was she, and al alone
And nyst to whõ she myght make her mone.

Creseyde was this ladyes name aryght
As to my dome, in al Troyes cytie
Most fayrest lady, fer passynge euery wight
So angelyke shone her natyfe beautie
That no mortall thyng semed she
And therwith was she so parfyte a creature
As she had be made in scornyng of nature

This lady that all daye herde at eare
Her fathers shame falsched, and traysoun
(Full nigh out of her wit for sorowe & feare
In widowes habite large of samite brown)
Before Hector on knees she fyl adowne
Her mercy bad her selfe excusyng
with pitious voyce, & tenderly weepynge

Now was this Hector pytious of nature
And sawe, that she was sorowful begone
And that she was so fayre a creature
Of his goodnesse he gladded her anon
And sayd: let your fathers trayson gone
Forthwith mischaũce, & ye your selfe in ioye
Dwelleth with vs, whyle you lyst in Troye

And all ý honour ý men may do you haue
As ferforth as thogh your father dweithere
Ye shull haue, and your body shull men saue
As fer as I may ought enquyre and here

And she him thãked with ful humble chere
And ofter wolde and it had ben his wyll
Toke her leaue, went home, & held her styll.

And in her house she abode w̃ suche meynye
As tyll her honour nede was to holde
And whyle she was dwellyng in that cytie
She kept her estate, & of yonge and olde
Full welbeloued, and well men of her tolde
But whether that she chyldren had or none
I rede it nat, therfore I let it gone

¶ The thynges fellen as they done of werre
Betwyxen hem of Troye and grekes ofte
For som day boughtẽ they of Troye it derre
And eft the grekes founden nothyng softe
The folke of Troye: & thus Fortune alofte
And vnder eft gan hem to whelmen both
After her course, aye whyle that they were (wroth

But how this towne came to distruction
Ne falleth not to purpose me to tell
For it were a longe digressyon
Fro my mater, and you to longe to dwell
But the Troyan iestes, as they fell
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dyte
who so ý can, may reden hem as they wryte

But though ý grekes hem of Troy shetten
And her cityе besieged all about
Her olde vsages nolde they not letten
As to honouren her goddes full deuoute
But aldermost in honour out of dout
They had a relyke hyght Palladion
That was her trust abouen euerychon

And so befyll whan cõmen was the tyme
Of Apyil, whan clothed is the mede
with newe grene, of lusty veer the pryme
And swete smellyng floures whyte and red
In sondry wyse shewed as I rede
The folke of Troy, theyr obseruaunces olde
Palladions feest went for to holde

Unto the temple in all theyr best wyse
Generallye there went many a wyght
To herken of Palladions seruyce
And namely many a lustye knyght
And many a lady fresh, and mayden bright
Full wele arayed both most and leest
Both for the season and the hye feest.

Amonge

Amonge these other folke was Creseyda
In wydowes habyt blacke:but nathelesse
Ryght as our fyrst letter is nowe an A
In beautie fyrst so stode she makelesse
Her goodly lokyng gladded all the prees
Nas neuer sene thyng to be prayled derre
Nor vnder cloude blacke so bryght a sterre.

As was Creseyd, they sayden euerychone
That her behelde in her blacke wede
And yet she stode full lowe and styl alone
Behynde other folke in lytle brede
And nye the dore vnder shames drede
Symple of attyre,and debonayre of chere
With full assured lokyng and manere

This Troylus,as he was wont to guyde
His yonge knyghtes lad hem vp & downe
In thylke large temple on euery syde
Beholdyng aye the ladyes of the towne
Now here now there,for no deuocioun
Had he to none,to reuen hym his rest
But ganne to prayse and lacke whom hym lest.

And in his walke ful fast he gan to wayten
Yf knyght or squyre of his company
Gan for to syke,or let his eyen bayten
Of any woman,that he coude espye
He wolde smyle,and holde it a folye
And saye hem thus:O Lord she slepeth soft
For loue of the whan thou turnest full ofte.

I haue herde tel pardieux of your lyuynge
Ye louers,and eke your leude obseruaunces
And which a labour folke haue in winnyng
Of loue,and in keppynge suche doutaunces
And whā your pray is lost, wo & penaūces
O very fooles,blynde and nyce be ye
There is not one can ware by another be

And with ý worde he gan cast vp the browe
Alcaunces lo,is this not well yspoken
At which the god of loue gan loken rowe
Ryght for despyte,and shope hym to be wro
He kyd anon his bowe was nat broken(ken
For sodaynly he hyt hym at the full
And yet as proude a peckoke gan he pull

O blynde worlde,o blynde ententioun
How often falleth all theffect contrayre
Of surquedie and foule presumtioun
For caught is proude, & caught is debonair
This Troylus is clomben on the stayre
And lytel weneth,that he mote discenden
But al day fayleth that fooles wenden

As proude bayarde begynneth for to skyp
Out of the waye, so prycketh hym his corne
Tyl he a lash haue of the longe whyppe
Thā thinketh he,though I praūce al beforn
Fyrst in the tracie,ful fat & newe ychorne
Yet am I but an horse,and horses lawe
I must endure, and with my feeres drawe.

So fared it by this fiers and proud knight
Though he a worthy kynges sonne were
And wende nothynge had had suche myght
Ayenst his wyl,that shulde his hert stere
Yet with a loke his hert wore on fyre
That he that now was most in pride aboue
Wore sodaynly most subiect vnto loue.

For thy ensample taketh of this man
Ye wyse,proude,and worthy folkes all
To scornen loue,which that so sone can
The fredom of your hertes to hym thrall
For euer it was,and euer it be shall
That loue is he that all thyng may bynde
For no man may fordo the lawe of kynde

That this be soth,hath preued, & doth yet
For this(trowe I)ye knowe all and some
Men reden nat that folke han greater wyt
Thā they,ý han ben most with loue ynome
And strengest folke ben therwith ouercome
The worthyest and greatest of degre
This was and is,and yet men shall it se.

And trulych that sytte well to be so
For alder wyseſt han therwith ben pleſed
And they that han ben aldermost in wo
With loue han ben comforted most and eſed
And oft it hath the cruell hert apeſed
And worthy folke made worthyer of name
And causeth mooste to dreaden vyce and (shame

Now syth it may not goodly be withstonde
And is a thyng so vertuous in kynde
Refuseth nought to loue,for to ben bonde
Syth as hym seluen lyst he may you bynde

The

The yerde is bet that bowen woll & wynde
Than that ý brest, and therfore I you reed
Nowe foloweth hym, that so well can you (lede

But for to tellen forth in specyall
As of this kynges son of which I tolde
And leuen other thyng collaterall
Of hym thynke I my tale forth to holde
Both of his ioye, and of his cares colde
And his werke as touchyng this matere
For I it gan, I wol therto refere

within the tẽple he went him forth playig
This Troylus, of euery wyght about
On this lady, and now on that lokyng
where so she were of towne, or of without
And vpon case befell, that through a rout
His eye perced, and so depe it went
Tyll on Creseyde it smote, and there it stent

And sodaynly for wonder wext astoned
And gan her bet beholde in thryfty wyse
o very god thouzt he, wher hast thou wõned
That art so fayre, and goodly to deuyse
Therwith his hert gan to spzede and ryse
And soft syghed, lest men myght hym here
And caught ayen his fyrst playing chere.

She nas nat with the most of her stature
But all her lymmes so wel answering
weren to womanhode, that creature
was neuer lasse mannysh in semyng
And eke the pure wyse of her meanyng
Shewed wel, that men myght in her gesse
Honour, estate, and womanly noblesse.

Tho Troylus, ryght wonder wel withall
Gan for to lyke her meanynge and her chere
which somdele deignous was, for she let fal
Her loke alyte asyde, in suche manere
Ascaunces, what maye I not stonden here
And after that her lokyng gan she lyght
That neuer thouzt hym sene so good a sight

And of her loke to him there gan to quyckẽ
So great desyre and suche affection
That in his hertes botom gan to stycken
Of her his fyre and depe impzessyon
And though he erst had pozed vp & doune
Than was he glad his hozne in to shzynke
Unethes wyst he how to loke oz wynke

Lo, he that lete hym seluen so connyng
And scozned hem that loues paynes dzyen
was full vnware ý loue had his dwellyng
within the subtyll stremes of her eyen
That sodaynly hym thought he felt dyen
Ryght with her loke, the spyzite in his herte
Blessed be loue that thus can folke conuerte

She this in blacke lyksyng to Troylus
Ouer al thyng he stode for to beholde
But his desyre, ne whefore he stode thus
He neyther chere made, ne wozde tolde
But from a ferre, his maner for to holde
On other thyng somtyme his loke he cast
And eftte on her, whyle that the seruyce last

And after this, not fullych all a whaped
Out of the temple all eselyche he went
Repentyng hym that he had euer iaped
Of loues folke, lest fully the discent
Of scozne fyl on him selfe, but what he ment
Lest it were wyst on any maner syde
His wo he gan dyssimulen and hyde

whan he was fro this tẽple thus departed
He streyght anon vnto his pallayes turneth
Right with her loke, thzugh shottẽ & darted
Al fayneth he in lust that he soiourneth
And al his chere & speche also he bourneth
And aye of loues seruauntes euery whyle
Hym selfe to wzie at hem he gan to smyle.

And sayd lozde, so they lyue all in lust
Ye louers for the conyngest of you
That serueth moost ententiflyche and best
Hym tyte as often harme therof as prowe
Your hyze is quyte ayen, yea god wot how
not wele for wele, but scozn for good seruice
In fayth your ozdze is ruled in good wyse

In no certayne bene your obseruaunces
But it a sely fewe poyntes be
Ne nothyng axeth so great atendaũces
As doth your laye, and that knowe all ye
But that is not the wozst, as mote I the
But tolde I you the wozst poynt, I leue
All sayde I soth, ye wolden at me greue

But take this, that ye louers oft eshewe

Or els done of good entention
Full ofte thy lady wol it mysse constrewe
And deme it harme in her opynion
And yet yf she for other encheson
Be wroth, thā shalt thou haue a groin anone
Lorde, wel is him that maye ben of you one

But for al this, whā that he seeth his tyme
He held his pees, non other bote him gayned
For loue began his fethers so to lyme
That wel vnneth vnto his folke he fayned
That other besy nedes hym distrayned
So wo was hym, that what to done he nyst
But bad his folke to gon where as hem lyst

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He downe on his beddes fete hym sette
And fyrst he gan to syke, and ofte to grone
And thought aye on her so withouten lette
That as he satte and woke, his spyrite mette
That he her saugh, and temple & all ŷ wyse
Ryght of her loke, and gan it newe auyse

Thus gā he make a myrrour of hys mynde
In whiche he saugh al holy her fygure
And that he wel coude in hys herte fynde
It was to him a right good auenture
To loue suche one, and yf he dyd hyscure
To seruen her, yet myght he fall in grace
Or els, for one of her seruauntes pace

Imaginyng, that traueyle nor grame
Ne myght, for so goodly one be lorne
As she, ne hym for hys desyre no shame
Al were it wyst, but in prise and vp borne
Of al louers, wel more than beforne
This argumented he, in hys gynnyng
Full vnauysed of hys wo commyng

Thus toke he purpose louers crafte to sewe
And thought he wolde worken priuely
Fyrst to hyde his desyre in mewe
From euery wight yborne, al ouerly
But he myght aught recouered ben therby
Remēbryng him, that loue to wyde yblowe
Yelte bytter fruit, though swete sede be sowe

And ouer al this, ful mokel more he thought
What for to speke, and what to holden inne
And what to arten, her to loue he sought
And on a songe anon right to begynne
And gan loude on hys sorowe for to wynne
For with good hope, he gan fully assente
Creseyde for to loue, and nought repente

And of his songe not onely his sentence
As writte myne auctour called Lollius
But playnly saue our tonges difference
I dare wel say, in all that Troylus
Said in his song, lo euery worde right thus
As I shall sayne, and who so lyste it here
Lo next this verse, he may it fynde here.

¶ The songe of Troylus.

If no loue is, o god what fele I so
And yf loue is, what thig and whiche is he
If Loue be good, frome whēce cometh my wo
If it be wycke, a wonder thynketh me
Whan euery turment and aduersyte
That cometh of him, may to me sauory thike
For aye thurst I the more that yche it drinke

And yf that at myne owne lust I brenne
Frō whēce cometh my wayling & my pleynte
If harme agree me, wherto playn I thenne
I not, ne why, vnwery that I feynte
O quicke dethe, o swete harme so queynte
Howe may of the in me, be suche quantyte
But yf that I consente that it so be

And yf that I consente, I wrongfully
Complayne ywis, thus posed to and fro
Al stereleſſe within a bote am I
Amydde the see, atwyxen wyndes two
That in contrarie stonden euer mo
Alas, what is thys wonder maladye
For heate of colde, for colde of heate I dye

And to the god of loue thus sayd he
wyth pytous voyce, O lorde nowe yours is
My spyrite, whiche that ought yours be
You thanke I lorde, ŷ hā me brought to this
But whether goddesse or woman ywis
Shee be, I not whiche, that ye do me serue
But as her man I wol aye lyue and sterue

Ye stonden in her eyen mightyly
As in a place to your vertue digne

wherfore lorde, yf my seruyce or I
May lyken you, so beth to me benigne
For myne estate royall here I resigne
In to her honde, and with full humble chere
Become her man, as to my lady dere

In hym ne deigned sparen bloode royall
The fyre of loue, wherfro god me blesse
Ne hym forbare in no degre for all
Hys vertue, or his excellent prowesse
But helde hym as his thrall lowe in distresse
And brende him so in sondrie wyse aye newe
That sixty tymes a day he lost his hewe

So mochel day fro day hys own thought
For luste to her, gan quicken and increase
That euerych other charge he set at nought
For thy full ofte, hys hotte fyre to cease
To sene her goodly loke he gan to prease
For therby to ben eased well he wende
And aye the nere he was, the more he brende

For aye the nere the fyre the hotter is
This (trowe I) knoweth all this companye
But were he ferre or nere, I dare say thys
By nyght or day, for wysedom or folye
His herte, whyche that is his brestes eye
was aye on her, that fayrer was to sene
Than euer was Heleyne, or Polixene

Eke of the day there passed not an houre
That to him selfe a thousande tyme he seyde
God goodly, to whom I serue and laboure
As I best can, nowe wolde god Creseyde
Ye wolden on me rewe, er that I deyde
My dere herte alas, myne heele and hewe
And lyfe is loste, but ye woll on me rewe

Al other dredes weren from hym fledde
Bothe of thassiege, and hys sauacion
Ne in desyre non other fownes bredde
But argumentes to hys conclusyon
That she on hym wolde han compassyon
And he to ben her man, whyle he may dure
Lo here hys lyfe, and from his dethe his cure

The sharpe shoures fell, of armes preue
That Hector or hys other bretherne dydden
Ne made hym only therfore ones meue
And yet washe, where so mē went or rydden
Founde one ȳ beste, and lengest tyme abyden
There peryl was, and dyd eke such trauayle
In armes, that to thynke it was meruayle

But for none hate he to the grekes had
Ne also for the rescous of the toun
Ne made hym thus in armes for to mad
But onely lo, for thys conclusyoun
To lyken her the bette for hys renoun
Fro day to day in armes so he spedde
That the Grekes as the dethe hym dredde

And fro this forth to reste him loue his slepe
And made his meate his foe, & eke his sorow
Gan multiplye, that who so toke kepe
It shewed in his hewe both eue and morow
Therfore a tytle he gan hym for to borowe
Of other sicknesse, leste men of hym wende
That the hotte fyre of loue hym brende

And sayd he had a feuer, and fared amys
But were it certayne I can nat say
If that hys lady vnderstode nat thys
Or fayned her she nyste, one of the twey
But well rede I, that by no maner wey
Ne semed it, that she on hym rought
Or of hys payne, what so euer he thought

But than felte this Troylus suche wo
that he waswel nigh wode, for aye his drede
was this, that she some wyght loued so
That neuer of hym she wolde han takē hede
For which him thought he felt his hert blede
Ne of hys wo ne durst he nought begynne
To tellen her, for all thys worlde to wynne

But whan he had a space from his care
Thus to hym selfe full ofte he gan to playne
He sayd, o foole nowe arte thou in the snare
That whylom iapedest at loues payne
Now art ȳ hēt, now gnaw thyn own chayn
Thou were aye woned eche louer reprehede
Of thing fro which thou canst ȳ not defende

What wol nowe euery louer sayne of the
If this be wyst, but euer in thyne absence
Laughen in scorne, & sayne lo there gothe he
That is the man of great sapience
That helde vs louers leste in reuerence
Now thākedbe god, he may gon on ȳ dauce
Of hem that loue lyste febly auaunce

But o thou wofull Troylus, god wolde
Syth thou must louen, through thy destyne
That

That thou beset were on suche one, ý sholde
Knowe all thy wo, all lacked her pyte
But also colde in loue towardes the
Thy lady is, as froste in wynter moone
And thou fordo, as snowe in fyre is soone

God wolde I were arrued in the porte
Of dethe, to whiche my sorowe wol me lede
Ah lorde, to me it were a great comforte
Than were I quyt of languyssyng in drede
For be my hyd sorowe yblowe in brede
I shall beiaped ben a thousande tyme
More than ý foole, of whose folye men ryme

But now helpe god, and ye swete, for whō
I playne, ycaught ye neuer wight so faste
O mercy dere herte, and helpe me from
The dethe, for I, while ý my lyfe may laste
More than my selfe wol loue you to my laste
And with some frēdly loke gladeth me swete
Though neuer more thyng ye me byhete

¶ These wordes, & ful many an other mo
He spake, and called euer in hys compleynte
Her name, for to tellen her hys wo
Tyll nyghe that he in salte teeres dreynte
Al was for naught, she herde not his pleynte
And whan that he bethought on that folye
A thousande folde hys wo gan multiplye

Bewaylyng in hys chambre thus alone
A frende of hys, that called was Pandare
Came ones in vnware, and herde him grone
And sawe hys frende in suche distresse & care
Alas (q he) who causeth all thys fare
O mercy god, what vnhap may this mene
Han nowe thus sone grekes made you lene

Or haste thou some remorse of cōscience
And arte nowe fall in some deuocioun
And waylest for thy synne and thyne offence
And hast for ferde caught a contricioun
God saue hem, that besteged han our toun
That so can lay our folyte on presse
And brynge our lusty folke to holynesse

These wordes sayd he for the nones all
That w̄ such thing he mizt him angry make
And with his anger don his sorowe fal
As for a tyme, and hys corage awaken
But wel wyste he, as ferre as tonges spaken
There nas a man of greter hardynesse
Than he, ne more desyred worthynesse

¶ What cas (q Troylus) or what auenture
Hath gyded the to sene me languyssyng
That am refuse of euery creature
But for the loue of god, at my prayeng
Go hence away, for certes my deyeng
Woll the disese, and I mote nedes dey
Therfore go way, there nys no more to sey

But yf thou wene I be thus sycke for drede
It is nat so, and therfore scorne nought
There is an other thyng I take of hede
Well more thā aught ý grekes hā yet wrought
Which cause is of my deth for sorow & thought
But though that I nowe tell it the ne leste
Be thou not wrothe, I hyde it for the beste

This Pādare, ý nygh molte for wo & routh
Ful often sayd alas, what may this be
Nowe frende (q he) yf euer loue or trouthe
Hath ben er this betwyxen the and me
Ne do thou neuer suche a cruelte
To hyden fro thy frende so great a care
Woste thou nat well that I am Pandare

I woll parten with the all thy payne
If it so be I do the no comforte
As it is frendes right, sothe for to sayne
To enterparten wo, as glad disporte
I haue and shall, for trewe or false reporte
In wronge and right yloued the al my lyue
Hyde nat thy wo fro me, but tell it blyue

Than gan this sorowfull Troylus to syke
And said him thus, God leue it be my best
To tellen the, for sythe it may the lyke
Yet wol I tell it, though my herte brest
And well wote I, thou mayste do me no rest
But leste thou deme I truste nat to the
Nowe herke frend, for thus it stant with me

Loue, ayenst the whych who so defendeth
Hym seluen moste, hym alder leest auayleth
With dispeyre so sorowfully me offendeth
That streight vnto ý deth myne hert sayleth
Therto desyre, so brennyngly me assayleth
That to ben slayne it were a greater ioye
To me, than kyng of Grece be and of Troye

Suffyseth this, my full frende Pandare
That I haue said, for now woost thou my wo

And for the loue of god my colde care
So hyde it well, I tolde it neuer to mo
For harmes myghten folowen mo than two
If it were wyst, but be thou in gladnesse
And let me sterue vnknowe of my distresse

Howe hast thou thus vnkyndly & longe
Hyd this fro me, thou fole: (q Pandarus)
Parauenture thou mayst after such one lōge
That myn auyse anon may helpen vs
This were a wonder thyng (q Troylus)
Thou couldest neuer in loue thy selfen wysse
How dyuel mayst thou bringen me to blysse:

Cyea Troylus, now herke (q Pandare)
Though I be nyce, it happeth often so
That one that ares dothe full yuell fare
By good coūsayle can kepe his frende therfro
I haue my selfe seyne a blynde man go
There as he fell, that coude loken wyde
A foole may eke a wyse man ofte gyde

A whetstone is no keruyng instrument
But yet it maketh sharpe keruyng tolis
And ther ꝑ wost that I haue aught miswent
Eschue thou that, for suche thyng to schole is
This often wyse men ben ware by foolis
If thou so do, thy wyt is well byware
By his contrarye is euery thyng declared

For how might euer swetnesse haue be know
To hym, that neuer tasted bytternesse:
Ne no man wote what gladnesse is I trow
That neuer was in sorowe, or some distresse
Eke white by blacke, by shāe eke worthinesse
Eche set by other, more for other semeth
As men may sene, and so the wyse it demeth

Sythe thus of two contraries is o lore
I that haue in loue so ofte assayed
Greuaunces, ought connen well the more
Counsaylen the, of that thou arte dismayed
And eke the ne ought nat ben yuell apayed
Though I desyre wyth the for to bere
Thyne heuy charge, it shall the lasse dere

I wote well that it fared thus by me
As to thy brother Paris, an hierdesse
whyche that cleped was Denone
wrote in a complaynte of her heuynesse
Ye sawe the letter that she wrote, I gesse
Nay neuer yet iwys (q Troylus)
Nowe (q Pandare) herkeneth it was thus

Phebus, that fyrst fonde arte of medicyne
(Quod she) and coude in euery wightes care
Remedy and rede, by herbes he knewe fyne
Yet to hym selfe hys connyng was ful bare
For loue had hym so bounden in a snare
All for the doughter of the kyng Admete
That all hys craft ne coude hys sorowe bete

Right so fare I, vnhappy for me
I loue one best, and that me smerteth sore
And yet parauenture can I reden the
And nat my selfe, reprenue me no more
I haue no cause I wot well for to sore
As dothe an hauke, that lysteth for to play
But to thyne helpe, yet somwhat can I say

And ofo thyng, right syker mayst thou be
That certayne, for to dyen in the payne
That I shall neuer mo discouer the
Ne by my trouhe, I kepe not restreyne
The fro thy loue, all though it were Heleyne
That is thy brothers wyfe, yf yche it wyste
Be what she be, and loue her as the lyst

Therfore, as frendfullyche in me assure
And tell me platte, what is thyn enchelon
And fynall cause of wo, that ye endure
For douteth nothyng, myne entencion
Nas nat to you of reprehensyon
To speke as nowe, for no wight may bereue
A man to loue, tyll that hym lyst to leue

And weteth wel, that both two ben vyces
Mystrusten all, or elles all leue
But well I wot, the meane of it no vyce is
As for to trusten some wight is a preue
Of trouth, and for thy wold I fayne remeue
Thy wronge cōceyte, & do ꝑ som wight trust
Thy wo to tell, and tell me yf the lust

The wyse eke sayth, wo hym that is alone
For and he fall, he hath none helpe to rise
And sythe thou haste a felowe, tell thy mone
For thys nys nought certayne the next wyse
To wynnen loue, as techen vs the wyse
To walowe and wepe, as Niobe the quene
whose teeres yet in marble ben ysene

Let be thy wepyng, and thy dreynesse
And let vs lyssen wo, wyth other speche

So may

So may thy wofull tyme seme lesse
Delyte naught in wo, thy wo to seche
As don these fooles, that her sorowes eche
wyth sorowe, whan they han misauenture
And lusten nought to sechen other cure

Men sayne to wretche is consolacion
To haue another felawe in his payne
That ought well ben our opinyon
For bothe thou and I of loue playne
So full of sorowe am I, sothe to sayne
That certainly, no more harde grace
May syt on me, for why there is no space

If god woll, thou art nought agast of me
Leste I wolde of thy lady the begyle
Thou wost thy selfe, whō that I loue parde
As I best can, gon sythen longe whyle
And sythen thou wost, I do it for no wyle
And sythe I am he, that thou trustest moste
Tel me somwhat, sens al my wo thou woste

Cyet Troylus, for al thys no word sayde
But longe he lay styll, as he deed were
And after thys, wyth sykyng he abrayde
And to Pandarus voyce he lente hys eere
And vp his ayen caste he, and than in feere
was Pandarus, leste that in frenseye
He shulde fall, or els sone deye

And said awake, ful wonderlyche & sharpe
what slombrest thou as in a lytargye
Or arte thou lyke an asse to the harpe
That hereth soun, whā men ȳ stringes plye
But in hys mynde, of that no melodye
Maye synke him to gladen, for that he
So dull is, in hys bestyalite

And with this, Pādare of his wordes stent
But Troylus to hym no thyng answerde
For why, to tel was nought hys entent
Neuer to no man, for whom that he so ferde
For it is sayd, men maken ofte a yerde
wyth whiche the maker is hym selfe ybeten
In sondrie maner, as these wyse treten

And namelyche in hys counsayle tellyng
That toucheth loue, that ought ben secre
For of hym selfe it woll ynough out spryng
But yf that it the bet gouerned be
Eke somtyme it is crafte to seme slee
For thyng, whiche in effecte men huntē faste

All this gan Troylus in hys herte caste

But natheleſſe, whā he had herde him crye
A wake he gan, and syke wonder sore
And sayd frende, though that I styl lye
I nam nat deefe, nowe peace & crye no more
For I haue herde thy wordes, and thy lore
But suffre me my fortune to bewaylen
For thy prouerbes may nought me auaylen

Nor other cure canst thou none for me
Eke I nyl not ben cured, I woll dey
what knowe I of the quene Niobe
Let be thyne olde ensamples, I the prey
No frende (q̄ Pandarus) therfore I sey
Suche is delyte of fooles to bewepe
Her wo, but seken boote they ne kepe

Nowe knowe I that reson in the fayleth
But tell me, yf I wyste what she were
For whom that the all misauenture ayleth
Durste thou that I tolde it in her eere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy self for feere
And her besought, on the to han some routhe
why nay (q̄ he) by God and by my trouthe

What, not as besily (q̄ Pandarus)
As though myne owne lyke lay in this nede
why no parde sir (q̄ thys Troylus)
And why for that thou shuldest neuer spede
woste thou that well ye that is out of drede
(q̄ Troylus) for al that euer ye conne
She wol to no such wretche as I be wonne

(q̄ Pandarus) alas what may this be
That thou dispayred arte, thus causelesse
what, lyueth nat thy lady, benedicite
Howe wost thou so, that thou arte graceleſſe
Suche yuel is not alwaye boteleſſe
why put nat impossible thus thy cure
Sythe thyng to come is ofte in auenture

I graunt wel that thou endurest wo
As sharpe as dothe he Tesiphus in hel
whose stomake foules tyren euer mo
That hyghten vultures, as bokes tell
But I may not endure that thou dwell
In so vnskylfull an opinyon
That of thy wo nys no curacion

But ones nyll thou, for thy cowarde herte
And for thyne ire, & folyshe wylfulnesse

For wantrust tellen of thy sorowes smerte
Ne to thyne owne helpe, do besynesse
As moche as speke a worde, ye more or lesse
But lyest as he that of lyke nothyng retche
what woman coude loue suche a wretche

what may she demen other of thy dethe
If thou thus dye, and she not why it is
But that for feare, is yolden vp thy brethe
For grekes han besieged vs ywis
Lorde which a thāke shalt ÿ haue thā of this
Thus woll she sayne, & all the towne atones
The wretche is deed, ÿ diuel haue his bones

Thou mayst alone here wepe, crye, & knele
But loue a woman that she wote it nought
And she wol quite it that thou shalte nat fele
Unknowe vnkyst, and lost that is vnsought
what many a man hath loue full dere abourt
Twenty wynter that hys lady ne wyste
That neuer yet hys ladys mouth he kyste

what, shuld he therfore fallen in dispayre
Or be recreaunt for hys owne tene
Or slayne hym selfe, all be hys lady fayre
Nay nay: but euer in one be fresh and grene
To serue and loue, hys dere hertes quene
And thynke it is a guerdone her to serue
A thousande parte more, than he can deserue

And of that worde toke hede Troylus
And thought anone, what folye he was in
And howe that sothe hym sayde Pandarus
That for to sleen him self, might he nat wyn
But bothe done vnmanhode and a syn
And of hys dethe hys lady nought to wyte
For of hys wo, god wote she knewe full lyte

And with ÿ thought, he gan full sore syke
And sayd, Alas: what is me best to do
To whom Pandare sayd, yf the lyke
The best is, that thou tell me thy wo
And haue my trouth, but yf thou fynde it so
I be thy bote, or it be full longe
To peces do me drawe, and sythen honge

Ye, so sayst thou (q Troylus) alas:
But god wote it is naught the rather so
Full harde it were to helpen in thys caas
For well fynde I, that fortune is my foe
Ne all the men that ryde conne or go
Nay of her cruell whele the harme withstōd
For as her lyst, she playeth wyth fre & bonde

(q Pandarus) thā blamest thou fortune
For thou arte wroth, ye nowe at erst I se
wost thou nat well that fortune is cōmune
To euery maner wight, in some degree
And yet thou hast thys comforte, lo parde
That as her ioyes moten ouergone
So mote her sorowes passen euerichone

For yf her whele stynt, any thyng to tourn
Than cesseth she fortune anone to be
Now sith her whele by no way may soiourn
what woste thou yf her mutabylite
Right as thy seluen lust woll don by the
Or that she be nought ferre fro thyn helping
Parauenture thou haste cause for to synge

And therfore woste thou what, I ÿ beseche
Let be thy wo, and turnyng to the grounde
For who so lyst haue healyng of hys leche
To hym byhoueth first vnwrie hys wounde
To Cerberus in hell aye be I bounde
were it for my suster all thy sorowe
By my wyl she shulde be thyn to morowe

Loke vp I say, and tel me what she is
Anon, that I may gon aboute thy nede
Know ych her aught, for my loue tel me this
Than wolde I hope rather for to spede
Tho gan the veyne of Troylus to blede
For he was hyt, and wore all reed for shame
A ha (q Pandare) here begynneth game

And with ÿ worde, he gā him for to shake
And sayd thefe, thou shalte her name tell
But tho gan sely Troylus for to quake
As though men shulde han had him in to hel
And sayd alas, of all my wo the well
Than is my swete foe called Creseyde
And wel nigh w̄ the word for feare he deyde

And whā ÿ Pādare herde her name neuen
Lorde he was glad, and sayd, frende so dere
Nowe fare a ryght, for Joues name in heuē
Loue hath beset the wel, be of good chere
For of good name, & wysedom, and manere
She hath ynough, and eke of gentyllesse
If she be fayre, thou woste thy selfe I gesse

Ne neuer sey a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne a gladder: ne of speche
A frendlyer,

A frendlyer, ne more gracious
For to do well, ne lasse had nede to seche
What for to done, and all thys bet to eche
In honour, to as farre as she maye stretche
A kynges herte semeth by hers a wretche

And for thy loke of good comforte thou be
For certayuly the fyrst poynt is thys
Of noble corage, and well ordayne the
A man to haue peace wyth hym selfe ywys
So oughtest thou, for nought but good it is
To louen well, and in a worthy place
The ought not clepe it happe, but grace

And also thynke, and therwyth glad the
That syth thy lady vertuous is all
So foloweth it, that there is some pyte
Amonges all these other in generall
And for they se that thou in speciall
Requyre nought, that is ayen her name
For vertue stretcheth not hym selfe to shame

But well is me that euer I was borne
That thou beset arte in so good a place
For by my troth i loue I durst haue sworne
Thou shuld neuer haue tyde so fayre a grace
And wost ÿ why: for ÿ were wont to chace
At loue in scorne, and for dyspyte hem call
Saynt Idiote, lorde of these foles all

How often hast thou made thy nyce iapes
And sayd, that loues seruauntes euerychone
Of nycete, ben very goddes apes
And some wolde mench her meate alone
Lyggynge a bedde, & make hem for to grone
And some thou saydest had a blaūche feuere
And praydest god, they shulde neuer keuere

And some of hem, toke on hem for ÿ colde
More then ynough, so saydest thou full ofte
And some han fayned ofte tyme and tolde
Howe that they waken, when they slepe soft
And thus they wold haue set hem selfe alofte
And natheleſſe were vnder at the last
Thus saydest thou, and iapedest full fast

Yet saydest thou, that for the more parte
These louers wolde speake in generall
And thoughten it was a syker arte
For faylynge for to assayen ouer al
Nowe maye I iape of the, yf that I shall
But natheles, though that I shulde dey
Thou arte none of tho, I dare well sey

Nowe bete thy brest, & say to god of Loue
Thy grace lorde, for nowe I me repent
Yf I myspake, for nowe my selfe I loue
Thus saye w̄ all thyne herte, in good entent
(Quod Troylus) ah lorde, I me consent
And pray to the, my iapes thou forgyeue
And I shal neuer more whyle I lyue

Thou sayst wel, q̄ Pādare, & nowe I hope
That thou the goddes wrath hast al apesed
And syth thou haste wepten many a drope
And said such thig, wherw̄ thy god is plesed
Nowe wolde neuer god, but ÿ were eased
And thyncke wel she, of whom tryst al thy wo
Here after may thy comforte ben also

For thylke groūde, ÿ beareth ÿ wedes wycke
Beareth eke these holsome herbes, as ful ofte
Next the foule nettle, rough and thycke
The rose wexeth, soote, smoth, and softe
And Next the valey ys the hyll a lofte
And next the derke nyght the glad morowe
And also ioye is next the fyne of sorowe

Nowe loke that attempre be thy brydelle
And for the best aye suffre to the tyde
Or els all our labour is on ydell
He hasteth well, that wysely can abyde
Be dyligent and trewe, and aye well hyd
Be lusty, free, perseuer in thy seruyse
And all is well, yf thou werke in thys wyse

But he that departed is in euery place
Is no where hole, as wyten clerkes wyse
What wonder is, if suche one haue no grace
Eke wost thou how it fareth of some seruyse
As plante a tre or herbe, in sondrie wyse
And on the morowe pull it vp as blyue
No wonder is, though it may neuer thriue

And syth ÿ god of loue hath the bestowed
In place digne vnto thy worthynesse
Stonde fast, for to good porte hast ÿ rowed
And of thy selfe, for any heuenesse
Hope alwaye well, for but yf drerynesse
Or ouerhast our both labour shende
I hope of thys to maken a good ende

And wost ÿ why, I am the lasse afered
Of thys mater, wyth my nece trete

For thys haue I herde saye of wyse lered
was neuer man of woman yet beyete
That was vnapte to suffre loues hete
Celestiall, or els loue of kynde
For the some grace I hope in her to kynde

And for to speake of her in speciall
Her beauty to bethynken, and her youth
It syt her nought, to ben celestiall
As yet, though that her lyst both and kouth
And truely it syt her well ryght nouth
A worthy knyght to louen and cheryce
And but she do, I holde it for a vyce

wherfore I am, and woll ben aye redy
To payne me to do you thys seruyce
For both you to please, thys hope I
Here after, for ye ben both wyse
And conne it counsayle kepe in suche a wyse
That no man shall the wyser of it be
And so we maye ben gladed all thre

And by my trouth I haue ryght nowe of the
A good conceyt, in my wytte as I gesse
And what it is, I woll nowe that thou se
I thynke that syth Loue of hys goodnesse
Hath the conuerted out of wyckednesse
That thou shalt ben the best post I leue
Of all hys laye, and moste hys foes greue

Ensample why, se now these great clerkes
That erren aldermost ayen a lawe
And ben conuerted from her wycked werkes
Through grace of god, ꝑ lest hem to withdraw
Then arne they folke ꝑ han most god in awe
And strengest faythed ben I vnderstande
And conne an errour alderbest wythstonde

whē Troylus had herde Pandare assented
To ben hys helpe, in louynge of Creseyde
wert of hys wo, as who sayeth vnturmēted
But hotter wert hys loue, and then he sayd
wyth sobre chere, as though hys hert playde
Nowe blyssful Venus helpe, er that I sterue
Of ꝑ Pandare, I mowe some thāke deserue

But dere frende, howe shal my wo be lesse
Tyll thys be done, and good eke tel me thys
How wylt thou sayne of me & of my dystresse
Lest she be wrothe, thys drede I most ywys
Or woll not heren all, howe it is
All thys drede I, and eke for the manere
Of the her eme, she nyll no suche thynge here

(Quod Pandarus) ꝑ hast a full great care
Lest the chorle maye fall out of the moone
why lorde? I hate of the the nyce fare
why, entremete of that thou hast to doone
For goddes loue, I bydde the a boone
So let me al one, and it shalbe thy beste
why frende (q̃ he) then done ryght as ꝑ leste

But herke Pandare o worde, for I nolde
That thou in me wendest so great foly
That to my lady I desyren shulde
That toucheth harme, or any vylany
For dredlesse me were leuer dye
Then she of me ought els vnderstood
But that, that myght sownen into good

Tho lough this Pādarus, & anon answerde
And I thy borow, fye no wyght doth but so
I raught not though she stode and herde
Howe ꝑ thou sayest, but fare well I woll go
A dieu, be glad, god spede vs both two
Yeue me thys labour, and thys busynesse
And of my spede, be thyne all the swetnesse

Tho Troylus gan downe on knees to fal
And Pandare in hys armes hente faste
And sayd, nowe fye on the grekes all
Yet parde, god shall helpen at laste
And dredlesse, yf that my lyfe maye laste
And god to forne, lo some of hem shall smerte
And yet me athinketh ꝑ this auaūt masterte

Nowe Pandare, I can no more say
Thou wyse, thou wost, thou mayst, ꝑ art all
My lyfe, my death, hole in thyne hōde I lay
Help me now (q̃ he) yes by my trouth I shal
God yelde the frende, & thys in specyall
(Quod Troylus) that thou me recōmaunde
To her that maye me to the death cōmaunde

¶ Thys Pandarus tho, desyrous to serue
Hys full frende, he sayd in thys manere
Farewell, & thynke I wol ꝑ thāke deserue
Haue here my trouth, & that thou shalt here
And went his way, thynking on this matere
And how he best might besechen her of grace
And fynde a tyme therto, and a place

For euery wight that hath a house to foūde
He renneth not the worke for to begynne
wyth

wyth rakel hande, but he woll byde a stoōde
And sende hys hertes lyne out fro wythin
Alderkyrst hys purpose for to wynne
All thys Pandare in hys herte thought
And cast his werke ful wisely er he wrought

But Troylus lay tho no lenger downe
But anone vpon hys stede baye
And in the felde he played the lyoun
Wo was ý greke, ý wyth hym met that daye
And in the towne, his maner tho forth aye
So goodly was, and gat hym so in grace
That eche hym loued, that loked in hys face

For he bycame the frendlyest wyght
The gentylest, and eke the moste fre
The thryftyest, and one the best knyght
That in hys tyme was, or myght be
Deed were hys iapes and hys cruelte
Hys hygh porte, and hys maner straunge
And eche of hem, gan for a vertue chaunge

Nowe let vs stynte of Troylus a stounde
That fareth lyke a man, that hurte is sore
And is somedele of akynge of hys wounde
Ylessed well, but healed no dele more
And as an easy pacient the lore
Abyte, of hym that goeth aboute hys cure
And thus he dryueth forth hys auenture

Explicit liber primus.

Out of these black wawes for to sayle
O wynde, the weder gyn neth clere
For in thys see, the bote hath suche trauayle
Of my connynge, that vnneth I it stere
Thys see clepe I the tempestous matere
Of dyspayre, that Troylus was in
But nowe of hope the kalendes begyn

O lady myne that called arte Cleo
Thou be my spede fro thys forth, & my muse
To ryme well thys boke tyll I haue do
Me nedeth here none other arte to vse
For why, to euery louer I me excuse
That of no sentement I thys endyte
But out of latyn, in my tonge it wryte

wherfore I nyl haue neither thāke ne blame
Of all thys worke, but pray you mekely
Dysblameth me, yf any worde be lame
For as myne auctour sayd, so say I
Eke though I spake of loue vnkelyngly
No wonder is, for it no thynge of newe is
A blynde man can not iugen well in hewis

I knowe ý in forme of speche is chaunge
Wythin a thousande yere, and wordes tho
That haddē pryse, now wōder nyce & strāge
Thynketh hem, and yet they spake hem so
And spedde as well in loue, as men nowe do
Eke for to wynnen loue, in sondrye ages
In sondrye londes, sondrye ben vsages

And for thy, yf it happe in any wyse
That here be any louer in thys place
That herkeneth, as the story woll deuyse
Howe Troylus came to hys ladyes grace
And thynketh, so nolde I not loue purchace
Or wondreth on hys speche or hys doynge
I not, but it is to me no wondrynge

For euery wight, which that to Rome went
Halte not o path, ne alwaye o manere
Eke in some lande were all the gamen shent
Yf that men farde in loue, as men done here
As thus, in open doynge or in chere
In vsityng, in forme, or sayd our sawes
For thy mē sayne, ech coūtre hath his lawes

Eke scarsely ben there in thys place thre
That haue in loue sayd lyke, and done in all
For to thys purpose thys maye lyken the
And the ryght nought, yet all is done or shall
Eke some mē graue in tre, some in stone wall
As it betyde, but syth I haue begonne
Myne authour shal I folowe, as I konne.

Explicit prohemium.

N May that mother is of monthes glade
That fresche floures, blewe, whyte, and rede
Ben quycke ayen, that wynter deed made
And full of baume is fletynge euery mede
Whē Phebus doth her bryght beames spede
Ryght in the whyte Bole, it so betydde
As I shal synge, on Mayes daye the thrydde

That

That Pandarus for all hys wyse speche
Felte eke hys parte of loues shottes kene
That coude he neuer so wel of louyng preche
It made hys hewe a daye full ofte grene
So shope it, that hym fyll that daye a tene
In loue, for whych in wo to bedde he wente
And made er it were daye full many a wente

The swalowe Proigne, with a sorowful lay
whē morow come, gan make her waimēting
why she forshapen was, and euery lay
Pandare a bedde, halke in a slomberyng
Tyl she so nygh hym made her waymētyng
Howe Thereus gan forth her suster take
That wyth the noyse of her he gan awake

And to call, and dresse hym vp to ryse
Remēbrynge hym, hys arande was to done
From Troylus, and eke hys great emprysse
And cast, & knewe in good plyte was ý mone
To done voyage, and toke hys way full sone
Unto hys neces paleys, there besyde
Nowe Janus god of entre, thou hym gyde

when he was come vnto hys neces place
where is my lady, to her folke (quod he)
And they him tolde, and in forth he gan pace
And founde two other ladyes syt and she
wythin a paued parlour, and they thre
Herden a mayden hem reden the geste
Of the siege of Thebes, whyle hem leste

(Quod Pandarus) madame god you se
wyth your boke, and all the companye
Eygh vncle myne, welcome ywys (quod she)
And vp she rose, and by the honde in hye
She toke hym faste, & sayd, thys nyght thrye
To good mote it turne, of you I mette
And w̄ that word, she down on bēch him set

Yea nece, ye shul faren well the bet
yf God woll all thys yere (quod Pandarus)
But I am sory that I haue you let
To herken of your boke ye prayseu thus
For goddes loue what sayeth it, tel it vs
Is it of loue, or some good ye me lere
Uncle (q̄ she) your maystresse is not here

wyth ý they gonnen laugh, & tho she seyde
Thys romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede
And we haue herd how ý kyng Layus deyde
Through Edippus hys sonne, & al the deede
And here we stynten, all these letters reede
Howe the bysshop, as the boke can tell
Amphiorar, fyl through the grounde to hell

(Quod Pādarus) al thys knowe I my selue
And all thassiege of Thebes, and the care
For herof ben there maked bokes twelue
But let be thys, and tell me howe ye fare
Do way your barbe, & shewe your face bare
Do way your boke, ryse vp & let vs daunce
And let vs done to May some obseruaunce

Eygh, god forbyd (q̄ she) be ye mad
Is that a wydowes lyke, so god you saue
By god ye maken me ryght sore adrad
Ye ben so wylde, it semeth as ye raue
It sate me well bet aye in a caue
To byde, and rede in holy sayntes lyues
Let maydens gone to daūce, & yonge wyues

As euer thryue I (quod thys Pandarus)
Yet coulde I tell a thynge, to done you playe
Nowe vncle dere (quod she) tell it vs
For goddes loue, is then thassiege aweye
I am of grekes ferde, so that I deye
Nay nay (q̄ he) as euer mote I thryue
It is a thynge well bet then suche fyue

Yea holy god (q̄ she) what thynge is that
what bet then suche fyue: eygh nay ywys
For al thys worlde, ne can I reden what
It shulde ben, some iape I trowe it is
And but your seluen tell vs what it is
My wyt is for to arede it all to leene
As helpe me god, I not what that ye meene

And I your borowe, ne neuer shall (q̄ he)
This thing be told to you, as mote I thryue
And why vncle myne, why so (q̄ she)
By god (q̄ he) that woll I tell as blyue
For prouder woman is there none on lyue
And ye it wyste, in al the towne of Troye
I iape not, so euer haue I ioye

Tho gan she wondren more then before
A thousande folde, & downe her eyen caste
For neuer syth the tyme that she was bore
To knowen thynge, desyred she so faste
And wyth a syke, she sayd hym at the laste
Nowe vncle myne, I nyll you not dysplese
Nor asken more, that may do you dysese

So

So after thys, wyth many wordes glade
And frendly tales, and wyth mery chere
Of thys & that they speake, & gonnen wade
In many an vnkouth glad & depe matere
As frendes done, when they bethe yfere
Tyll she gan asken hym howe Hector ferde
That was the townes wall, & grekes yerde

Ful wel I thanke it god, sayd Pandarus
Saue in hys arme he hath a lytel wounde
And eke hys freshe brother Troylus
The wyse worthy Hector the seconde
In whome that euery vertue lyst habounde
As all trouth, and all gentylnesse
wysedome, honoure, fredom, & worthynesse

In good fayth eme (q̃ she) that lyketh me
They faren well, god saue hem both two
For truelych, I holde it great deynte
A kynges sonne in armes well to do
And be of good condicions therto
For great power, and moral vertue here
Is selde ysene in one persone yfere

In good fayth that is soth (q̃ Pandarus)
But by my trouth, ý kinge hath sonnes twey
That is to meane, Hector and Troylus
That certaynly though that I shulde dey
They ben as boyde of vyces, dare I sey
As any men that lyuen vnder sonne
Her might is wide yknow, & what they cõne

Of Hector nedeth it nomore for to tell
In all this worlde, there nys a better knight
Then he that is of worthynes the well
And he well more vertue hath then myght
Thys knoweth many a wise & worthy knizt
The same pryse of Troylus I sey
God helpe me so, I knowe not suche twey

By god (q̃ she) of Hector that is soth
Of Troylus the same thynge trowe I
For drede lesse, men telleth that he doth
In armes daye by daye, so worthely
And beareth hym here at home so gentilly
To euery wyght, that all pryse hath he
Of hem that me were leuest prayse de be

Ye say ryght soth ywys (q̃ Pandarus)
For yesterday, who so had wyth hym ben
Wyght haue wondred vpon Troylus
For neuer yet so thycke a swarme of been
Ne flewe, as grekes fro hym gan fleen
And through the feld in euery wyghtes eere
There was no crye, but Troylus is there

Now here, now there, he hunted hem so fast
There nas but grekes blode, and Troylus
Nowe hem he hurte, & hym al downe he cast
Aye where he went it was arayed thus
He was her dethe, and shelde & lyke for vs
That as ý day, there durst him none wstõde
whyle ý he helde hys blody swerde in honde

Vherto he is the frendlyest man
Of great estate, that euer I sawe my lyue
And where hym lyst, best felowshyp can
To suche as hym thynketh able for to thryue
And wyth ý worde, tho Pandarus as blyue
He toke hys leaue, and sayd I woll gon hen
Nay, blame haue I vncle (q̃ she then)

what ayleth you to be thus wery soone
And namelyche of women, woll ye so?
Naye sytteth downe, by god I haue to done
wyth you, to speake of wysedome er ye go
And euery wyght that was about hem tho
That herde that, gan ferre awaye to stonde
whyle they two had al that hem lyst in hõde

when ý her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her estate, and of her gouernaunce
(Quod Pandarus) now tyme is ý I wende
But yet I say, aryseth let vs daunce
And cast your wydowes habyt to mischaũce
what lyst you thus your selfe to dysfygure
Syth you is tydde so glad an aduenture

But well bethought, for loue of god (q̃ she)
Shall I not weten what ye meane of thys
No, thys thyng asketh leyser tho (q̃ he)
And eke me wolde moche greue ywys
Yf I it tolde, and ye it toke amys
Yet were it bet my tonge to holde styll
Then saye a soth, ý were ayenst your wyll

For nece, by the goddesse Mynerue
And Jupiter, that maketh the thõder rynge
And the blysfull Venus, that I serue
Ye ben the woman in thys worlde lyuynge
wythouten paramours, to my wetynge
That I best loue, and lothest am to greue
And that ye weten well your selfe I leue

Iwys

Iwys myne vncle(quod she)graũt mercy
Your frendshyp haue I founden euer yet
I am to no man holden truely
So moche as you,and haue so lytell quyt
And wyth the grace of god,emforth my wyt
As in my gylte,I shall you neuer offende
And yf I haue er thys I woll amende

But for the loue of god,I you beseche
As ye be he,that I loue moste and tryste
Let be to me your fremed maner speche
And saye to me your nece,what ye lyste
And wyth ỳ worde,her vncle anone her kyst
And sayd,gladly my leue nece dere
Take it for good,that I shall saye yon here

wyth that she gan her eyen downe to cast
And Pandarus to cough gan a lyte
And sayd: Nece alwaye lo,to the laste
Howe so it be,that some men hem delyte
wyth subtel arte her tales for tendyte
Yet for all that in her entencioun
Her tale is all for some conclusioun

And syth thende is euery tales strength
And thys mater is so behouely
what shulde I paynt,or drawen on length
To you that ben my frende so faythfully
And with that word he gan ryght inwardly
Beholden her,and loken in her face
And sayd,on suche a myrrour good grace

Then thought he thus, yf I my tale endyte
Aught harde,or make a processe any whyle
She shall no sauour haue therin but lyte
And trowe I wolde her in my wyll begyle
For tendre wyttes wenen all be wyle
where as they can not playnlych vnderstõde
For thy her wyt to seruen woll I fonde

And loked on her in a besy wyse
And she was ware that he beheld her so
Ah lorde(qy she)so fast ye me auyse
Sawe ye me neuer er now,what say ye no-
Yes yes(qy he)and bet woll er I go
But by my trouth I thought nowe,yf ye
Be fortunate,for nowe men shall it se

For euery wyght,some goodlye auenture
Somtyme is shape, yf he it can receyuen
But yf he nyll take of it no cure
when that it cometh,but wilfully it weyuen
Lo,neyther case nor fortune hym deceyuen
But ryght hys owne slouth ⁊ wretchydnesse
And such a wyght is for to blame I gesse

Good auenture,O belle nece haue ye
Full lyghtly founden,and ye conne it take
And for the loue of god,and eke of me
Catche it anone,lest auenture slake
what shulde I lenger processe of it make
Yeue me your hõde for in this world is none
Yf that you lyst a wyght so well begone

And syth I speake of good ententioun
As I to you haue tolde well here before
And loue as well your honour and renoun
As any creature in all the worlde yborne
By all the othes that I haue you sworne
And ye be wroth therfore,or wene I lye
Ne shall I neuer sene you efte wyth eye

Beth not agast,ne quaketh not,wherto
Ne chaungeth not for feare so your hewe
For hardely the worst of thys is do
And though my tale as now be to you newe
Yet trust alwaye,ye shall me fynde trewe
And were it thynge ỳ me thought vnsyttyng
To you wolde I no suche tales bryng

Nowe my good eme,for goddes loue I pray
(Quod she)come of and teil me what it is
For both I am agast what ye woll say
And eke me longeth it to wete ywys
For whether it be well,or be amys
Say on,let me not in thys feare dwell
So woll I done,nowe herkeneth I shal tel

Nowe nece myne,the kynges dere sonne
The good wyse worthy,fresche and free
whych alwaye for to done wel is his wonne
The noble Troylus so loueth the
That but ye helpe it woll hys bane be
Lo here is all,what shulde I more sey
Doth what you lyst,to make him lyue or dey

But yf ye let hym dye,I woll steruen
Haue here my trouth,nece I nyl not lyen
All shuld I with thys knyfe my throte kerue
wyth that the teeres burst out of hys eyen
And sayd,yf that ye done vs both dyen
Thus gyltlesse,then haue ye fyched fayre
what mende ye,though ỳ we both apayre

Alas

Alas, he which that is my lorde so dere
That true man, that noble gentle knyght
That nought desyreth, but your frendlye
I se him dyen, there he goth vpright (chere
And hasteth hym with al his full myght
For to ben slayne, yf hys fortune assent
Alas that god you suche a beautye sent

Yf it be so, that ye so cruell be
That of his deth you lysteth nought to rech
That is so true and worthy as we se
Nomore than of a iaper or a wretche
Yf ye be suche, your beautie may not stretch
To make a mendes of so cruell a dede
Auysement is good before the nede.

Wo worth the fayre Geme vertulesse
Wo worth that herbe also that doth no bote
Wo worth the beautie that is routhlesse
Wo worth ý wyght ý trede eche vnder fote
And ye that ben of beautye crop and rotte
Yf therwithall in you ne be no routh
Than is harme ye lyuen by my trouth

And also thynke wel, that this is no gaude
For me were leuer, thou I and he
Wer hãged, than I shuld be his baude
As hygh as men myght on vs all yse
I am thyne Eme, the shame were to me
As well as the, yf that I shulde assent
Thrugh myne abet, that he thyne honoure (shent
Now vnderstõd, for I you nought requyre
To bynde you to hym through no behest
Saue only that ye make hym better chere
Than ye han done er this, & more feest
So that his lyke saued at the leest
This all and some, and playnly our entent
God helpe me so, I neuer other ment

Lo, this request is nought but skyll iwys
Ne dout of reson parde is there none
I set the worst, that ye dreden this
Yen wold wõdre to sene hym come & gone
Therayenst answer I this anon
That euery wight, but he be foole of kynde
Wol deme it loue of frẽdship in his mynde

What, who woll demen though he se a man
To temple gon, that he the ymages eeteth
Thynke eke, howe wel and wysely ý he can
Souerne hym selfe, ý he nothinge forzeteth
That where he cõmeth he pris & thõk hi gete
And eke therto he shal com here so seld (teth
What force were it, though all the towne be (helde.
Such loue of frendes reigneth al this toun
And wrye you in that mantell euermo
And god so wys be my sauacion
As I haue sayd, your best is to do so
But good nece alway to stynt his wo
So let your daunger, sugred ben alyte
That of his death ye be nat all to wyte

¶ Creseyde which ý herd hym in this wyse
Thought, I shal kele what he meneth iwis
Now Eme (q̃ she) what wolde ye deuyse
What is your rede, I shulde done of this
That is well sayd (q̃ he) certayne best is
That ye hym loue ayen for his louyng
As loue for loue is skylfull guerdonynge

Thynke eke how elde wasteth euery houre
In eche of you a parte of beautye
And therfore er that age the deuoure
Go loue, for olde there woll no wyght of ý
Let this prouerbe, a lore vnto you be
To late yware, q̃ bautie, whan it past
And elde counteth daunger at the last

The kynges foole is wont to crye loude
Whã ý him thinketh a womã bereth her hye
So longe mote ye loue, and all proude
Tyll crowes feet growe vnder your eye
And send you than a myrrour in to prye
In which ý ye maye se your face a morowe
Nece, I byd wysh you nomore sorowe

With this he stynt, and cast downe the heed
And she began to breest awepe anon
And sayd alas for wo, why nere I deed
For of this worlde, the fayth is all agone
Alas, what shulden straunge to me done
Whan he that for my best frende I wende
Rate me to laue, and shulde it me defende.

Alas, I wolde haue trusted doutlesse
That yf that I, thrugh my disaduenture
Had loued eyther hym or Achilles
Hector, or any maner creature
Ye nolde haue had no mercy ne measure
On me, but alwaye had me in repreue
This false worlde alas who may it leue

what-is this all the ioye and all the feest-
Is this your rede-is this my blysful caas-
Is this the very mede of your behest-
Is all this paynted processe sayd(alas)
Ryght for this fyne, O lady myne Pallas
Thou in this drede full case for me purueye
For so astonyed am I, that I dye.

With that she gan full sorowfully to syke
Ne may it be no bet(quod Pandarus)
By god I shal nomore come here this weke
And god toforne, that am mystrusted thus
I se well nowe, ye setten lyght of vs
Or of our death, alas I wofull wretche
Myght he yet lyue, of me were nought to (retche.

O cruell god, O dispytous Marte
O furies thre of hell, on you I crye
So let me neuer out of this house departe
Yf that I ment harme or vyllanye
But syth I se my lorde mote nedes dye
And I with hym here I me shryue and sey
That wyckedly ye done vs both dey

But syth it lyketh you that I be deed
By Neptunus that god is of the see
Fro this forth shall I neuer eten breed
Tyll I myne owne hert bloude maye se
For certayne I woll dye as sone as he
And vp he stert, & on his waye he raught
Tyll she agayne hym by the lappe caught.

Creseyde, which ý welnygh starke for feare
So as she was the fearfullest wyght
That might be and herde eke with her eare
And sawe the sorowful ernest of the knight
And in his prayer sawe eke none vnryght
And for the harme eke that might fall more
She gan to rewe, & dred her wonder sore

And thought this, vnhappes fallen thycke
All day for loue, and in suche maner caas
As men ben cruell in hem selfe and wicke
And yf this man slee here hym selfe alaas
In my presence, it nyl be no solace
what men wolde of it deme, I can nat saye
It nedeth me ful slyghly for to playe

And with a sorowfull sygh she sayd thrye
Ah lorde, what me is tyd a sory chaunce
For myne astate lyeth in a ieopardye
And eke myne emes lyfe lyeth in balaunce
But natheleſſe, with gods gouernaunce
I shall so done, myne honour shal I kepe
And eke his lyfe, and stynt for to wepe

Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese
Yet had I leuer maken hym good chere
In honour, than myne emes lyfe to lese
Ye sayne ye nothyng els me requere-
No wys(q̃ he) myne owne nece dere
Now wel(q̃ she) & I wyll do my payne
I shal myne hert ayen my lust constrayne

But ý I nyll nat holden hym in honde
Ne loue a man, that can I nought ne maye
Ayenst my wyll, but els wol I fonde
Myn honor saue, plese him from day today
Therto nolde I nat ones haue sayde naye
But that I dred, as in my fantasye
But cesse cause, aye cesseth maladye.

But here I make a protestation
That in his processe yf ye deper go
That certaynly, for no sauacion
Of you, thoug̃ that ye steruen both two
Though all the worlde on a day be my fo
Ne shall I neuer on hym haue other routh
I graũt wel(q̃ Pandare) by my trouth.

But maye I trust wel to you(quod he)
That of this thyng ý ye han hyght me here
Ye woll it holde truly vnto me
yea doutlesse(quod she) myne vncle dere
Ne that I shal haue cause in this matere
(Quod he) to playne, or ofter you to preche
why no parde, what nedeth more speche.

Tho fyll they in other tales glade
Tyll at the last, O good eme(quod she tho)
For loue of god which that vs both made
Tell me how fyrst ye wysten of his wo
wot none of it but ye, he sayd no
Can he wel speke of loue(q̃ she) I prey
Tel me, for I the bet me shal purueye

Tho Pandarus a lyte gan to smyle
And sayd: By my trouth I shall now tell
This other daye nat gone full longe whyle
within the paleyes garden by a well
Gan he and I, well halfe a daye to dwell
Ryght for to speken of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekes mitghten disauaunce.

Soone

Soone after that we gone for to lepe
And casten with our dartes two and fro
Tyll at the last he sayd, he wolde slepe
And on the grasse adowne, he layd him tho
And I after gan to romen to and fro
Tyll that I herde, as I walked alone
How he began full wofully to grone

Tho gan I stalke hym softly behynde
And sekerly the soth for to sayne
As I can clepe ayen now to my mynde
Right thus to loue he gan hym for to playn
He sayd: lorde, haue routh vpon my payne
All haue I ben rebell in myne entent
Nowe (Mea culpa) Lorde I me repent

O god, that at thy disposition
Ledest the fyne, by iust purueyaunce
Of euery wyght, my lowe confession
Accept in gree, & sende me suche penaunce
As lyketh the, but from diseseperaunce
That may my goost depart alway fro the
Thou be my shylde for thy benignitie.

For certes lord so sore hath she me woūded
That stode in black: with lokyng of her eyē
That to my hertes botom it is yfounded
Thrugh which I wot ý I mot nedes dyen
This is ý worst, I dar me nought bewreyē
And well the hoter ben the gledes red
That men hem wren w̄ ashen pale & deed.

With that he smot his heed adowne anon
And gan to muttre, I nat what truly
And I with that gan styll away to gone
And let thereof, as nothyng wyst had I
And came agayne anon & stode hym by
And sayd awake, ye slepen all to longe
It semeth nought ý loue doth you wronge.

That slepen so, that nomā may you awake
Whosey euer or this, so dull a man
Ye frende (quod he) do ye your heedes ake
For loue, and let me lyuen as I can
But lord that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as fresh a countenaunce
As though he shuld haue led the new daūce

This passed forth, tyll now this other daye
It fell that I come runnyng all alone
Into his chāber, & founde how ý he laye
Vpon his bed: but man so sore grone
Ne herde I neuer and what was his mone
Ne wyst I nought, for as I was cōmynge
Al sodaynly, he left his complaynyng

Of which I toke somwhat suspectioun
And nere I come, & founde hym wepe sore
And god so wyse be my sauatioun
As neuer of thyng had I no routh more
For neyther wyth engyn, ne with no lore
Unnethes myght I fro the deth hym kepe
That yet feie I myne hert for hym wepe

And god wot neuer syth that I was borne
was I so busy noman for to preche
Ne neuer was to wyght so depe sworne
Er he tolde who myght ben his leche
But now to you rehersen all his spech
Or al his wofull wordes for to sowne
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll se me swon

But for to saue his lyfe, and els nought
And to non harm of you, thus am I driuen
And for ý loue of god that vs hath wrought
Such chere him doth, that he & I may liuē
Now haue I plat to you myne hert shryuē
And syth ye wot that myne entent is clene
Take hede therof, for none euyll I mene

And rizt good thrift, I pray to god haue ye
That han such one ycaught withouten net
And be ye wyse, as ye be fayre to se
wel in the rynge, than is the Ruby set
There were neuer two so well ymet
whan ye ben his all hole, as he is your
Ther mighty god yet graūt vs se that hour

Nay therof spake I nat: Aha (quod she)
As helpe me god, ye shenden euery dele
A mercy dere nece, anon (quod he)
whatso I spake I ment nought but wele
By Mars the god, that helmed is of stele
Now beth not wroth my blod, my nece dere
Nowe well (quod she) forgeuen be it here.

With this he toke his leue, & home he wēt
yea lord how he was glad, and wel bygon
Creseyde arose, and lenger she ne stent
But streyght into her closet went anon
And set her downe, as styll as any stone
And euery worde gan vp & down to wynde
That he had sayd, as it came her to mynde.

And wore somdele astoned in her thought
Ryght for the newe case, but whan ý she
was ful auysed, tho founde she ryght nought
Of peryll, why that she ought aferde be
For man maye loue of possibilitie
A woman so his hert may to brest
And she nat loue ayen, but if her leste

But as she sate alone, and thought thus
Thascrye arose at scarmoche al without
And men cryed in the strete, se Troylus
Hath right now put to flyght ý grekes rout
with that gonne al her meyne for to shoute
A, go we se, cast vp the yates wyde
For through this strete he mot to palys ryde

For other waye is fro the yates none
Of dardanus there open is the cheyne
with that come he, and al his folke anone
An easy pace rydyng, in routes tweyne
Right as his happy day was sothe to seyne
For whiche men sayth may nat disturbed be
That shal betyde of necessyte

This Troylus sate on his baye stede
Al armed saue his heed, ful rychely
And wounded was his horse, & gan to blede
On whiche he rode a pace ful softely
But suche a knyghtly syght trewly
As was on him, was nat withouten fayle
To loke on Mars, that god is of batayle

So lyke aman of armes, and a knyght
He was to sene, fulfylled of hygh prowesse
For bothe he had a body, and myght
To don that thyng, as wel as hardynesse
And eke to sene him in his geare dresse
So fresche, so yonge, so weldy semed he
It was an heuen vpon him for to se

His helme to hewen was in twenty places
That by a tyssue honge, his backe behynde
His shelde to dasched w̄ swerdes & w̄ maces
In whiche men myght many an arowe fynd
That thyrled had horne, nerfe and rynde
And aye the people cried here cometh our ioy
And next his brother, holder vp of Troye

For whiche he wert a lytel reed for shame
whan he so herd the people vpon him cryen
That to be holde, it was a noble game
How sobrelych he cast adowne his eyen
Cresceyde anon gan all his chere espyen
And let it so softe in her hert synke
That to her selfe she sayde, who yaue me (drynke.

For al her owne thought, she wore all red
Remembryng her ryght thus, lo this is he
which ý myne vncle swereth he mot be deed
But I on hym haue mercy and pytie
And with ý thought for pure ashamed she
Gan in her heed to pull, and that as fast
whyle he and all the people forth by past

And gan to cast, and rollen vp and downe
within her thought his excellent prowesse
And his estate, and also his renowne
His wyt, his shap, and eke his gentyllesse
But most her fauour was for his distresse
was al for her, & thought it were a routh
To sleen suche one, yf that he ment trouthe.

¶ Now myght some enuyous iangle thus
This was a sodayn loue, how might it be
That she so lyghtly loued Troylus
Ryght for the fyrst syght: yea parde
Now whoso sayd so, mote he neuer the
For euery thynge a gynnyng hath it nede
Er al be wrought, withouten any drede

For I saye nat, that she so sodaynly
Yafe hym her loue, but that she gan enclyne
To lyken hym tho, & I haue tolde you why
And after that, his manhod and his pyne
Made that loue within her gan to myne
For which by processe, and by good seruyce
He wan her loue, and in no sodayne wyse.

And also blyssfull Venus wele arayed
Sat in her seuenth house of heuen tho
Disposed wele, and with aspectes payed
To helpe sely Troylus of his wo
And soth to sayne, she nas nat al a fo
To Troylus in his natiuitie
God wote, that wele the sooner sped he

Now let vs stynt of Troylus a throwe
That rydeth forth, and let vs turne fast
Unto Cresceyde, ý henge her heed full lowe
There as she sat alone, and gan to cast
wheron she wolde apoynt her at the last
If it so were, her Eme ne wolde cesse
For Troylus, vpon her for to presse

And

And lorde so she gan in her thought argue
In this matter of which I haue you tolde
And what to don best wer, & what to eschue
That plyted she full oft in many solde
Now was her hert warme, now was it cold
And what she thought, sōwhat shal I write
As myne autor lysteth for tendyte

She thought fyrst, that Troylus persone
She knewe by syght, & eke his gentelnesse
And thus she sayd, al wer it nought to don
To graūt him loue, yet for his worthynes
It wer honour with play & with gladnesse
In honestie, with suche a lorde to dele
For myne estate, and also for his heale.

Eke wel wot I, my kynges sonne is he
And syth he hath to se me suche delyte
Yf I wolde vtterlyche his syght flye
Peradventure he might haue me in despite
Through which I mizt stōd in worse plyte
Now were I wyse, me hate to purchace
without nede, there I may stonde in grace.

In euery thyng, I wot there lyeth mesure
For though a man forbyd dronkenesse
He nought forbyddeth that euery creature
Be drynlesse for alwaye as I gesse
Eke syth I wot for me is his distresse
I ne ought nat for that thyng hym despyse
Syth it is so, he meaneth in good wyse

And eke I knowe, of longe tyme agone
His thewes good, and that he nys nat nyce
No vauntour sayne men, certayn he is non
To wyse is he, to done so great a vyce
Ne als I nyl hym neuer so cherice
That he shall make auaunt by iust cause
He shall me neuer bynde in suche a clause

Now set I case, the hardest is iwys
Yen myght demen that he loueth me
what dishonour were it vnto me this:
Nay iche him let of that, why nay parde:
I knowe also, and alwaye here and se
Yen louen women al this towne about
Be they the werse: why nay without dout:

I thynke eke how, he worthy is to haue
Of al this noble towne the thryftyest
That woman is, yf she her honour saue
For out and out he is the worthyest
Saue onely Hector, which that is the best
And yet his lyfe lyeth al nowe in my cure
But suche is loue, and eke myne auenture.

Ne me to loue a wondre is it nought
For well wot I my selfe so god me spede
All woll I that none wyst of this thought
I am one the fayrest out of drede
And goodlyest, whoso that taketh hede
And so men sayne in al the towne of Troye
what wōder is: though he of me haue ioye.

I am myne owne woman well at ease
I thanke it god, as after myne estate
Right yonge, & stond vntyed in lusty lese
withouten ielousye and suche debate
Shal no husbond sayne to me checke mate
For eyther they ben full of ielousye
Or masterfull, or louen nouelry

what shal I don: to what fyne lyue I thus
Shal I nat loue, in case yf that me lest:
what pardieux I am not religious
And though that I myne hert set at rest
Upon this knyght that is the worthyest
And kepe alway myne honour & my name
By all ryght it may do me no shame

But right as whan the son shyneth bright
In Marche, ý chaungeth oft tyme his face
And that a cloude is put vp wynde to flight
which ouerspraat the sonne, as for a space
A cloudy thought gā through her soul pace
That ouerspraad her bryght thoughtes all
So that for feare almoost she gan to fall

That thoust was this: Alas syth I am fre
Sulde I now loue, and put in ieopardye
My sykernesse, and thrallen lybertye
Alas, how durst I thynken that follye:
May I not well in other folke aspye
Her dredful ioy, her constreynt & her payne
There loueth non, that she ne hath waye to (playne.

For loue is yet the most stormy lyfe
Ryght of hym selfe, that euer was begon
For euer some mystrust, or nyce stryfe
There is in loue some cloude ouer the sun
Therto we wretched womē nothing cō
whan vs is wo, but wepe and syt & thynke
Our wrech is this, our owne wo to drynke

Also wycked tonges bene so prest
To speke vs harme, eke men be so vntrue
That ryght anon as cessed is her lest
So cesseth loue, and forth to loue anewe
But harme ydo is done, whoso it rewe
For thouz these mē for loue hem first to rēde
Full sharpe begynnyng breketh oft at ende

How ofte tyme maye men rede and sene
The treson that to women hath be do-
To what fyne is suche loue I can not sene
Or where becommeth it, whan it is go
There is no wyght that wote I trowe so
wher it becōmeth, lo, no wizt on it sporneth
That erst was nothynge, into nought tour-
(neth
How besy (yf I loue) eke must I be
To plesen hem, that iangle of loue, & demen
And coyen hem, that they say no harm of me
For though ther be no cause, yet hem semen
Al be for harme ẏ folke her frendes quemen
And who may stoppen euery wycked tonge
Or sowne of bels whyle ẏ they ben ronge-

And after that her thought gan for to clere
And sayd, he which ẏ nothyng vndertaketh
Nothyng acheueth, be hym loth or dere
And w̄ an other though her hert quaketh
Thā slepeth hope, and after drede awaketh
Now hote now cold but thus betwixē twey
She ryste her vp, and went her to pley

Adowne the stayre anonryght tho she went
Into her gardyn with her neces thre
And vp and downe they madē many a went
Flexippe & she, Tarbe, and Antigone
To playen, that it ioye was to se
And other of her women a great route
Her folowed in the garden all about.

This yerd was large, & rayled all the aleyes
& shaddowed wel, w̄ blosomy bowes grene
And benched newe, and sōded al the wayes
In which she walketh arm in arme betwene
Tyll at the last Antigone the shene
Gan on a Troyan songe to syngen clere
That it an heuen was her voyce to heare

She said: O loue, to whom I haue, & shall
Ben humble subiect, trewe in myne entent
As I best can, to you lorde yeue yche all
For euermore my hertes lust to rent
For neuer yet thy grace no wyght sent
So blysfull cause as me, my lyfe to lede
In al ioye and suretie out of drede.

The blysful god hath me so wel beset
In loue iwys, that all that bereth lyfe
Ymagynen ne coulde how to be bet
For lorde withouten ielousye or stryfe
I loue one, which that moost is ententyfe
To seruen wel, vnweryly or vnfayned
That euer was & lest with harme distayned

As he that is the well of worthynesse
Of trouth ground, myrrour of godlyheed
Of wyt Apollo, stone of sykernesse
Of vertue roote, of lust fynder and heed
Through which is all sorowe fro me deed
Ywys I loue hym best, so doth he me
Now good thrift haue he, wherfoeuer he be

whom shulde I thāken but you god of loue
Of all this blysse, in which to bath I gynne
And thanked be ye lorde, for that I loue
This is the ryght lyfe that I am in
To stemen al maner vyce and synne
This doth me so to vertue for to entende
That daye by day I in my wyll amende

And who that sayth ẏ for to loue is vyce
Or thraldome, though he fele in it distresse
He eyther is enuyous, or ryght nyce
Or is vnmyghty for his shreudnesse
To louen, for suche maner folke I gesse
Diffamen loue, as nothyng of him knowe
They speken, but they bent neuer his bowe

what is the sonne worse of kynde ryght-
Though ẏ a man for feblenesse of his eyen
May nat endure on it to se for bryght
Or loue the worse, that wretches on it cryen
No wele is worth, ẏ may no sorowe dryen
And for thy, who that hath a heed of verre
Fro cast of stones ware hym in the werre

But with al myne hert and al my myght
As I haue sayde, wol loue vnto my last
My dere hert, and all myne owne knyght
In which myne hert growen is so fast
And his in me, that it shall euer last
All dredde I fyrst loue hym to begyn
Now wot I well there is no peryll in.

And

And of her songe right wo the worde she stent
And therwithal, nowe nece (q Creseyde)
who made this song, now wo so good entent
Antygone answerde anone, and sayde
Madame ywys the goodlyest mayde
Of great estate in al the towne of Troye
And led her lyke in moost honour and ioye

For soth so semeth it by her songe
Quod tho Creseyde, & gan therwtih to sike
And said: Lorde is there such blysse amonge
These louers, as they can fayre endite
Yea wysse quod fresche Antygone the whyte
For al the folke that haue or bene on lyue
Ne conne wel the blysse of loue discryue

But wene ye that euery wretche wote
The parfyte blysse of loue, why nay ywys
They wenen al be loue, yf one be hote
Do way do way, they wote nothing of this
Wenne mote asken of sayntes, yf it is
Ought faire in heuē, & why-for they can tell
And aske fendes, yf it be foule in hell

Creseide vnto the purpose naught answerde
But sayd, ywys it wol be nyght as faste
But euery word, which that she of her herde
She gan to printen in her herte faste
And aye gan loue her lasse for to agaste
Than it dyd erst, and synken in her herte
That she ware somwhat able to conuerte

The dayes honour, and the heuens eye
The night foe, al thys clepe I the sunne
Gan westren fast, & downwarde for to wrie
As he that had hys dayes course yrunne
And whyte thinges woxen dymme & donne
For lacke of lyght, and sterres for to apere
That she and al her folke in went yfere

So whan it lyked her to gone to reste
And voyded weren they that voyden oughte
She sayd, that to slepen well her leste
Her women sone tyl her bed her broughte
whā al was hust, thā lay she styl & thoughte
Of al thys thynge the maner and the wyse
Reherce it nedeth nat, for ye bene wyse

A nyghtyngale vpon a Cedre grene
Under the chamber wal, there as she lay
Ful loude songe ayen the mone shene
Parauenture in hys bydes wyse a lay
Of loue, that made her herte fresche and gaye
That herkened she so longe in good entente
Tyl at the last the deed slepe her hente

And as she slept, anon ryght tho her mette
Howe that an Egle fethered white as boue
Under her brest hys longe clawes sette
And out her hert he rent, and that anone
And dyd his hert in to her brest to gone
of which she nought agrose, ne nothig smert
And forthe he flyeth, with hert lefte for herte

Nowe let her slepe, & we our tales holde
Of troylus, that is to paleys rydden
Fro the scarmyche of whych I tolde
And in hys chambre sate, and hath abydden
Tyl two or thre of his messangers yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him ful fast
Tyl they him found, & brought him at ỳ last

Thys Pandarus came leapyng in at ones
And sayd thus, who hath bene wel ybete
To daye wyth swerdes, and slonge stones
But Troylus, that hath caught him an hete
And gan to iape, & sayd, Lorde ye sweete
But ryse and let vs soupe, and go to reste
And he answerde him, do we as the leste

wyth al the hast goodly as they myght
They spedde hem fro the souper, & to bedde
And euery wyght out of the dore him dyght
And whyder him lyst, vpō his way him sped
But Troylus thought that his herte bledde
For wo, tyl that he herde some tydynge
And sayd frende, shall I now wepe or synge

(Quod Pandarus) be styll and let me slepe
And do on thyne hoode, thy nedes spedde be
And chese yf thou wolt syng, daunce, or lepe
At short wordes thou shalte trowe me
Sir, my nece wol done wel by the
And loue the beste, by god & by my trouthe
But lacke of pursute make it in thy slouthe

For thus forforth I haue thy werke begon
Fro day to daye, tyl this day by the morowe
Her loue of frendschyp haue I to the won
and therfore hath she laid her faith to borow
Algate a foote is hameled of thy sorowe
what shulde I lenger sermon of it holde
As ye haue herde before, al he him tolde

But right as floures through the colde of
Iclosed, stoupen in her stalkes low (night
Redressen hem ayen the sunne bryght
And spreden in her kynde course by rowe
Ryght so gan tho his eyen vp to throwe
Thys Troylus, and sayd: O Venus dere
Thy myght thy grace, yheryed be it here.

And to Pãdarus he helde vp both his hõdes
And sayd, lorde al thyne be that I haue
For I am hole, and brosten ben my bondes
A thousande Troyes, who so that me yaue
Eche after other, god so wys me saue
Ne might me so gladen, lo myne herte
It spredeth so for ioye it wol to sterte

But lord how shall I don: how shal I lyuen
whan shal I next my dere herte se:
Howe shal this longe time away be dryuen:
Tyl that thou be ayen at her fro me
Thou mayst answere, abyde abyde: but he
That hangeth by the necke: soth to sayne
In great disease abydeth for the payne

Al easely nowe, for the loue of Marte
(q Pãdarus) for euery thynge hath tyme
So longe abyde, tyll that the nyght departe
For al so syker as thou lyest here by me
And god to forme, I wol be there at prime
And for thy werke somwhat, as I shal saye
Or on some other wyght thys charge laye

For parde god wot, I haue euer yet
Ben redy the to serue, and this night
Haue I nat fayned, but emforth my wyt
Done al thy lust, and shal with al my might
Do nowe as I shal sayne, and fare aryght
And yf thou nylt, wyte al thy selfe thy care
On me is naught alonge thyne yuel fare

wote wel that thou wyser art than I
A thousande folde: but yf I were as thou
God helpe me so, as I wolde vtterly
Right of myne owne hande write her nowe
A lettre, in whiche I wolde her tellen howe
I farde amysse, and her beseche of routh
Nowe helpe thy selfe, & leaue it for no slouth

And I my selfe shal therwyth to her gon
And whã thou woste ꝑ I am with her there
worth thou vp on a courser ryght anon
Yee hardely, ryght in thy beste gere
And ride forth by ꝑ place, as naught ne were
And thou shalt fynde vs (if I may) syttyng
At some wyndowe, in to the strete lokyng

And if the lyst, than mayst thou vs salue
And vpon me make thou thy countenaunce
But by thy lyke beware, and faste eschue
to taryen ought, god shyld vs fro mischaũce
Ride forth thy waye & holde thy gouernaũce
And we shall speke of the somwhat I trowe
whan thou art gone, to do thyn eeres glowe

Touchyng thy lettre thou arte wyse ynough
I wot thou nylte it deignelyche endyte
As maketh it with these argumentes tough
Ne scryueynyshe or craftely thou it write
Beblotte it with thy teeres eke alyte
And thou write a goodly worde al softe
Though it be good, reherce it not to ofte

For though the best harpour vpon lyue
wolde on the beste sowned ioly harpe
That euer was, wyth al hys fyngers fyue
Touch aye o strynge, or aye o warble harpe
were hys nayles poynted neuer so sharpe
It shulde make euery wyght to duil
To here his gle, and of his strokes full

Ne iombre eke no discordans thing yfere
As thus, to vsen termes of physyke
In loues termes holde of thy matere
The forme alway, and do that it be lyke
For yf a peyntour wolde paynte a pyke
wyth asses fete, and heeded as an ape
It cordeth nat, so were it but a iape

This counsayle, lyked wel vnto Troylus
But as a dredeful louer, he sayd thys
Alas my dere brother Pandarus
I am ashamed for to write ywys
Leste of myne innocence I sayd amys
Or that she nolde it for dispyte receyue
thã were I deed, ther might nothing weyue

To that Pandare answerde, yf the lest
Do that I saye, and let me therwyth gon
For by that lorde that formed eest and west
I hope of it to bryngе answere anon
Right of her hande, & yf that thou nylt non
Let be, and sorye mote he ben hys lyue
Ayenst thy lust, that helpeth the to thryue

Quod

(Quod Troylus) depardieux yche assent
Syth that the lyst, I wol aryse and write
And blysful god pray yche with good entent
The vyage and the lettre I shal endyte
So spede it, and thou Mynerua the white
Yeue thou me wyt, my lettre to deuyse
& set him down, & wrote right in this wyse

Fyrst he gan her his right lady call
His hertes lyfe, his lust, his sorowes leche
His blysse, and eke these other termes all
That in such case ye louers al seche
And in ful humble wyse, as in his speche
He gan hym recōmaunde vnto her grace
To tel al howe, it asketh mokel space

And after thys full lowly he her prayde
To be nought wroth, though he of hys folye
So hardy was to her to write, and sayde
That loue it made, or els must he dye
And pitously gan mercy for to crye
And after that he sayd, and lyed full loude
Him selfe was lytle worth, & lasse he coulde

And that she wolde haue his cōning excused
That lytle was, and eke he drede her so
And his vnworthynesse aye he acused
And after that than gan he tel his wo
But that was endelesse wythouten ho
And said, he wold in trouth alwey him hold
And redde it ouer, and gan the lettre fold

And with his salte teeres gan he bath
The Ruby in his Signet, and it sette
Upon the wexe deliuerlyche and rath
Therwith a thousande tymes, er he lette
He kyste tho the lettre that he shette
And sayd, lettre a blysful destyne
The shapen is, my lady shal the se

Thys Pandare toke the lettre, & that betime
A morowe, and to hys neces paleys sterte
And fast he swore, that it was passed prime
And gan to iape, and said: ywys myne herte
So fresche it is, although it sore smerte
I may nat slepe neuer a Mayes morowe
I haue a ioly wo, a lusty sorowe

Creseyde, whan that she her vncle herde
wyth dredeful herte, and desyrous to here
The cause of his cōmyng, thus answerde
Now by your fayth myne vncle (q̃ she) dere
what maner wyndes gydeth you nowe here
Tel vs your ioly wo, and your penaunce
Howe ferforth be ye put in loues daunce

By god (q̃ he) I hope alwaye behynde
And to laugh, it thought her herte brest
(Quod Pādarus) loke alway that ye fynde
Game in myn hood, but herkeneth if you lest
Ther is ryght now come in to ꝑ town a gest
A greke espye, and telleth newe thynges
For whych I come to tel you new tydynges

In to the gardyn go we, and ye shal here
Al preuely of thys a longe sermoun
with that they wentē arme in arme yfere
In to the gardyn fro the chambre doun
And whan he was so farre, that the soun
Of that he spake, no man heren myght
He sayd her thus, and out the lettre plyght

Lo, he that is al hooly yours free
Him recōmendeth lowly to your grace
And sent you this lettre here by me
Auyseth you on it, whan ye han space
And of some goodly answere you purchace
Or helpe me god so, playnly for to sayne
He may not longe lyuen for his payne

Ful dredefully tho gan she stande styll
And toke it not, but al her humble chere
Gan for to chaunge, and sayd scripte nor byl
For loue of god, that toucheth such matere
Ne bryngeme none, and also vncle dere
To myne estate haue more regarde I pray
Than to his lust, what shulde I more say

And loketh nowe yf this be reasonable
And letteth not for fauour ne for slouth
To sayne a soth, nowe it is couenable
To myne estate, by god and by my trouth
To take it, or to haue of him routh
In harmyng of my selfe, or in repreue
Beare it ayen, for him that ye on leue

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare
And sayd, nowe is this the greatest wonder
That euer I sawe, let be this nyce fare
To deth mote I smytten be with thonder
If for the citye, whych standeth yonder
wolde I a lettre vnto you bryngeor take
To harm of you: what lyst you thus it make

But

But thus ye faren wel nyghe al and some
That he that moste desyreth you to serue
Of him ye retche lest where he become
And whether that he leue, or els sterue
But for al that, that euer I may deserue
Refuse it nat(q̃ he)and hente her fast.
And in her bosom ỳ letter dwone he tharste

And sayd her, nowe caste it away anon
That folke may tene, & gaurne on vs twey
(Quod she) I can abyde tyl they be gon
And gan to smyle, & sayd him, eme I pray
Suche answere as you list your selfe purvey
For trewly I wol no lettre write
No than wol I(quod he)so ye endyte

Therewith she lough, and sayd go we dyne
And he gan at him selfe iape faste
And sayd nece, I haue so great a pyne
For loue, that euerychе other day I faste
And gan his beste iapes forthe to caste
And made her so to laugh at his folye
That she for laughter wende for to dye

And whan that she was comen in to the hall
Nowe eme(q̃ she)we wol go dyne anon
And gan some of her women to her call
And streyght in to her chambre gan she gone
But of her besynesses this was one
Amonges other thynges, out of drede
Ful priuely this lettre for to rede

Auysed worde by worde in euery lyne
And foũde no lacke, she thought he coude his
And vp it put & went her in to dyne (goode
And Pandarus, that in a stodye stoode
Er he was ware, she toke him by the hoode
And sayd, ye were caught er that ye wyste
I vouchesafe (quod he) do what you lyste

Tho wyllhen they, and set hem downe & ete
And after noone ful slyghly Pandarus
Gã drawe him to ỳ wyndowe nye the strete
And sayd nece, who hath arayed thus
The yonder house, that stante afforyene vs
which house(q̃ she)and gan for to beholde
And knewe it wel, & who it was him tolde

And fellen forth in speche of thynges smale
And saten in the wyndowe both twey
whan Pandarus sawe tyme vnto his tale
And sawe wel that her folke were al away
Nowe nece myne tel on(quod he) I pray
Howe lyke you the letttre that ye wote
Can he theron, for by my trouth I not

Therwyth al rosy hewed tho woxe she
And gan to hym, and sayd, so I trowe
Aquyte him wel for goddes loue(q̃ he)
My selfe to medes wol the lettre sowe
And helde his handes vp, and sate on know
Nowe good nece, be it neuer so lyte
Yeue me the labour, it to sowe and plyte

Yea, for I can so writen(q̃ she)tho
And eke I not what I shulde to hym say
Nay nece(q̃ Pandare)say nat so
Yet at the lest, thonketh him I pray
Of his good wyl: O, doth hym not to dey
Nowe for the loue of me my nece dere
Refuseth not at this tyme my prayere

Depardieux(q̃ she)god leue all be wele
God helpe me so, this is the fyrst lettre
That euer I wrote, yee al or any dele
And in to a closet for to aduyse her bettre
She went alone, and gan her hert vnfettre
Out of disdaynes prison, but a lyte
And set her downe, and gan a lettre write

Of which to tell in short is myne entent
Theffecte, as ferre as I can vnderstonde
She thanked him, of al that he wel ment
Towardes her, but holden him in honde
She wolde not make her seluen bonde
In loue, but as his syster him to plese
She wold aye faine, to done his hert an ese

She shette it, and to Pandare in to gon
There as he sate, and loked in to strete
And downe she sette her by him on a stone
Of iaspre, vpon a quyshen of golde ybete
And sayde, as wysely helpe me god the gret
I neuer dyd a thyng wyth more payne
Than write this, to which ye me cõstrayne

And toke it hym: He thanked her, and sayd
God wote of thyng ful often loth begonne
Cometh ende good: and nece mine Creseyde
That ye to him of harde nowe bene ywonne
Ought he be glad, by god and yonder sonne
For why, men sayth impressions lyght
Full lyghtly ben aye redy to the flyght

But

But ye han played the tyraunt al to longe
And harde was it your herte for to graue
Nowe stynt that ye no lenger on it honge
Al wolden ye the forme of daunger saue
But hasteth you to done hym ioye haue
For trusteth wel, to longe ydone hardnesse
Causeth dispyte ful often for distresse

And ryght as they declared thys matere
Lo Troylus, right at the stretes ende
Came rydyng wyth his tenthe sōme yfere
Al softely, and thyderwarde gan bende
Ther as they sat, as was his way to wend
To paleys ward, And Pandare him aspide
And sayd, nece I se who cometh here ryde

O, stye nat in, he sethe vs I suppose
Leste he maye thynken that ye hym eschue
Nay nay (q̃ she) & wore as redde as rose
wyth that he gan her humbly salue
wyth dredful chere, and oft hys hewes mue
And vp hys loke debonairly he caste
And becked on Pandare, & forthe by paste

God wot yf he sate on his horse aryght
Or goodly was besene that ylke daye
God wot wher he were lyke a mãly knyght
what shulde I dretche, or tell of his aray
Creseyde, which that all these thynges say
To tel in shorte, her lyked al yfere
Hys person, hys aray, his loke, his chere

His goodly maner, and his gentyllesse
So wel, that neuer syth that she was borne
Ne had she such routh of his distresse
And how so, she hath hard ben here beforne
to god hope I, she hath now caught a thorn
She shal not pul it out this next wyke
God sende mo such thornes on to pyke

Pandare, whyche that stode her faste by
Felte yron hotte, and he beganne to smyte
And sayd, nece I pray you hertely
Tel me that I shal asken you alyte
A woman that were of hys deth to whyte
withoutē his gift, but for her lacke of routh
were it wel done (q̃ she) nay by my trouth

God help me so (q̃ he) ye say me soth
Ye felen wel your selfe that I naught lye
Lo, yonder he rydeth (q̃ she) ye so he doth
wel q̃ Pandare, as I haue tolde you thrie
Let be your nyce shame, and your folye
And speke with him, in eyslyng of his herte
Let nycete not do you both smerte

But theron was to heauen and to done
Consydryng althyng, it may nat be
And why-for shame, and it were eke to sone
To graunten him so great a liberte
For playnly her entent, as (sayd she)
was for to loue hym vnwyst, yf she myght
And guerdon him w̄ nothig but with syght

But Pandare thought, it shall not be so
If that I may, thys nyce opinyon
Shal not ben holden fully yeres two
what shuld I make of thys a long sermon-
He muste assent on that conclusion
As for the tyme, and whan that it was eue
And al was wel, he rose and toke hys leue

And on his way faste homwarde he sped
And ryght for ioye he felt his herte daunce
And Troylus he founde alone abed
That lay, as done these louers in a traunce
Betwixen hope and derke disesperaunce
But Pandare, ryght at hys in comyng
He song as who saith, lo, somwhat I bring

And sayd, who is in his bed so sone
yburyed thus-it am I frende (q̃ he)
who Troylus-nay, helpe me so the moone
(q̃ Pandarus) thou shalt vp ryse and se
A charme that was sent ryght nowe to the
The which can healen the of thyne axesse
If thou do forthwith al thy besynesse

Ye through the myght of god (q̃ Troylus)
And Pandarrus gan him the lettre take
And sayde, parde god hath holpen vs
Haue here a lyght, and loke on al these blake
But ofte gan the hert glade and quake
Of Troylus, whyle he it gan to rede
So as the wordes yaue him hope or drede

But finally he toke al for the beste
That she him wrote for somwhat he beheld
on which he thought he might hys hert rest
Al couered she the wordes vnder shelde
Thus to the more worthy parte he helde
That what for hope, & Pãdarus beheste
His great wo foryede he at the leste

But

But as we may al day our seluen se
Through wood or coole the more fyre
Ryght so encrease of hoope, of what it be
Therwyth he full ofte encreaseth eke desyre
Or as an oke cometh of a lytle spyre
So through this lettre, whiche ÿ she him sent
Encreasen gan desyre of which he brent

Wherfore I say alway, that day & nyght
This Troylus gan to desyren, more
Than he dyd erste through hoope, & did his
To preasō on, as by Pādarus lore (myght
And writen to her of his sorowes sore
Fro day to day, he lete it nought refreyde
That by Pādare he somwhat wrote or seid

And dyd also his other obseruaunces
That tyll a louer longeth in thys caas
And after that his dyce turned on chaunces
So was he eyther glad, or sayd alas
And helde after hys gestes aye his paas
And after such answers, as he had
So were his dayes sory eyther glad

But to Pādare was alwaye his recours
And pytously gan aye on him to playne
And him besought of rede, & some socours
And Pādarus, that saw his wode payne
Wert wel nygh deed for routh, soth to sayne
And besyly with al his herte caste
Some of his wo to sleen, and that as faste

And sayd, Lorde & frende, & brother dere
God wote that thy disease doth me wo
But wylt thou stynten al this woful chere
And by my trouth, er it be dayes two
And god to forne, yet shal I shape it so
That thou shalt come in to a certayne place
Ther as ÿ maist thy selfe prayen for grace

And certaynly I not yf thou it woste
But they that bene experte in loue, it say
It is one of the thynges forthereth moste
A man to haue a leyser for to pray
And syker place, his wo for to bewray
For in good hert it mote some routh impresse
To here and se the gyltlesse in distresse

Parauēture thinkest thou, though it be so
That kinde wolde her done for to begynne
To haue a maner routh vpon my wo
Sayth daūger nay, ÿ shalt me neuer winne
So ruleth her hertes goste within
That though she bende, yet she stont on rote
What in effecte is thys vnto my bote

Thinke here ayen, whan that the sturdy oke
On which men hacketh ofte for the nones
Receyued hath the happy fallyng stroke
The great sweyght doth it come all at ones
As done these rockes, or these mylne stones
For swyfter course cometh thig ÿ is of wight
Whan it discendeth, than done thinges light

But rede that boweth down for euery blast
Ful lyghtly cesse wynde, it wol aryse
But so nyl not an oke, whan it is cast
It nedeth me nought longe the forbyse
Men shal reioysen of a great empryse
Atcheued wel, and stant withouten dout
Al haue men ben the lenger there about

But Troylus, nowe tell me yf the lest
A thyng, which that I shal asken the
Which is thy brother, that thou louest best:
As in thy very hertes preuyte
I wys my brother Diephebus, tho (q̃ he)
Now (q̃ Pādare) er houres twyse twelue
He shal the ease, vnwyst of it him selue

Nowe let me alone, and worken as I maye
(Quod he) and to Deiphebus went he tho
Which had his lord, & great frende bene aye
Saue Troylus no man he loued so
To tel in shorte, without wordes mo
(Quod Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frende to a cause, which that toucheth me

Yes parde (q̃ Deiphebus) wel thou wost
Al that euer I may, and god to fore
Al nere it but for the man I loue moste
My brother Troylus, but say wherfore
It is, for syth the day that I was bore
I nas, ne neuer mo to bene I thynke
Ayenst a thyng that myght the forthynke

Pādare gan him thanke, and to him seyd
Lo sir, I haue a lady in thys towne
That is my nece, and called is Creseyd
Which some men wolde done oppressioun
And wrongfully haue her possessioun
Wherfore I of your lordshyp you beseche
To bene our frende, withouten more speche

Deiphebus

Deiphebus hym answerde: O, is not thys
That thou speakest of to me thus straũgely
Creseyde my frende? He sayd hym yes
Then nedeth (q̃ Deiphebus) hardely
Nomore of this to speke, for trusteth wel ý I
woll be her champion wyth spore and yerde
I ne rought not though al her foes it herde

But tel me howe, for thou wost thys matere
I myght best auaylen, nowe let se
(Quod Pandarus) yf ye my lorde so dere
wolden as now do thys honour to me
To prayen her to morowe, lo that she
Came vnto you, her playntes to deuyse
Her aduersaryes wolde of it agryse

And yf I more durst praye as nowe
And chargen you to haue so great trauayle
To haue some of your brethrẽ here with you
That myghten to her cause bet auayle
Then wote I well she myght neuer fayle
For to ben holpen, what at your instaunce
what wyth her other frendes gouernaunce

Deiphebus whych ý comen was of kynde
To all honoure and bounte to consente
Answerde, it shalbe done: And I can fynde
Yet greater helpe to thys in myne entent
what woldest ý sayne, yf for Heleyne I sent
To speake of thys, I trowe it be the best
For she maye leden Parys as her lest

Of Hector, whych ý is my lorde my brother
It nedeth not to praye hym frende to be
For I haue herde hym, o tyme and eke other
Speken of Creseyde such honour, that he
Nay sayne no bet, such hap to hym hath she
It nedeth not hys helpes more craue
He shalbe suche, ryght as we wol hym haue

Speake thou thy selfe also to Troylus
On my behalfe, and pray hym with vs dyne
Syr, all thys shalbe done (q̃ Pandarus)
And toke hys leaue, and neuer gan to fyne
But to hys neces house as streyght as lyne
He came, & founde her fro the meate aryse
And set hi downe, & spake ryght in this wyse

He sayd, O very God, so haue I ronne
Lo nece myne, se ye not howe I swete
I not where ye the more thanke me conne
Be ye not ware howe false Poliphete
Is nowe aboute eftsones for to plete
And bryngе on you aduocacies newe?
I, no (q̃ she) and chaunged al her hewe

what is he more about me to dretche
And done me wrouge, what shal I don, alas
Yet of hym selfe nothynge wolde I retche
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas
That ben hys frendes in such maner caas
But for the loue of god, myne vncle dere
No force of that, let hym haue all yfere

wythouten that, I haue ynough for vs
Nay (q̃ Pandare) it shall nothynge be so
For I haue ben ryght nowe at Deiphebus
At Hector, and myne other lordes mo
And shortly maked eche of hem hys foe
That by my thryfte, he shall it neuer wynne
For ought he can, when so that he begynne

And as they casten what was best to done
Deiphebus, of hys owne curtesye
Came her to praye, in hys propre persone
To holde hym on the morowe companye
At dyner, whych she nolde not denye
But goodly gan to hys prayer obey
He thanked her, and wente vpon hys wey

when thys was done, thys Pãdare anone
To tell in shorte, and forth he gan to wende
To Troylus, as styll as any stone
And al thys thyng he tolde him word & ende
And howe that he Deiphebus gan to blende
And sayd hym, nowe is tyme yf ý ye conne
To beare the well to morowe, & al is wonne

Now speke, now pray, now pitously cõplain
Let not for nyce shame, drede, or slouthe
Somtyme a man mote tell hys owne payne
Beleue it, and she woll haue on the routhe
Thou shalt ben saued by thy fayth in trouth
But well wote I, thou nowe arte in a drede
And what it is, I lay that I can arede

Thou thinkest now, how shuld I don al this
For by my cheres musten folke aspye
That for her loue is, that I fare amys
Yet had I leuer vnwyst for sorowe dye
Nowe thynke not so, for thou doest gret foly
For I ryght nowe haue founden a manere
Of sleyght, for to coueren all thy chere

Thou shalt gone ouernight, & that bylyue
Unto Deiphebus house, as the to play
Thy maladye away the bet to drye
For whych thou semest sycke soth for to saye
Sone after that, in thy bedde the laye
And saye thou mayst no lenger vp endure
And lye ryght there, and byde thyne auēture

Say that thy feuer is wōte the for to take
The same tyme, and laste tyl a morowe
And let se nowe how wel thou canst it make
For parde sycke is he that is in sorowe
So now farewell, & Venus here to borowe
I hope and thou thys purpose holde ferme
Thy grace she shall fully there conferme

(Quod Troylus) ywys thou nedelesse
Counsaylest me, that sycklyche I me fayne
For I am sycke in ernest doutlesse
So that well nygh I sterue for the payne
(q Pandarus) thou shalte the better playne
And haste the lesse nede to counterfete
For hym demeth mē hote, ý seeth hem swete

Lo, holde the at thy tryste close, and I
Shall well the deere vnto thy bowe drye
Therwyth he toke hys leaue al softely
And Troylus to paleys went blyue
So glad ne was he neuer in all hys lyue
And to Pandarus rede gan all assente
And to Deiphebus house at nyght he wente

what nedeth it you to tellen all the chere
That Deiphebus vnto hys brother made
Or hys axis, or hys sycklyche manere
Howe men gon hym with clothes for to lade
whē he was layd, & how mē wold him glade
But al for nought, he held forth aye the wyse
That ye han herde Pandare er thys deuyse

But certayne is, er Troylus hym leyde
Deiphebus had prayde hym ouernyght
To ben a frende, and helpynge to Creseyde
God wote that he graunted anone ryght
To ben her full frende wyth all hys myght
But such a nede was it to pray hym thenne
As for to bydde a woode man to renne

The morow came, & neyghen gan ý tyme
Of mealtyde, that the fayre quene Heleyne
Shope her to be an houre after prime
wyth Deiphebus, to whom she nolde fayne
But as hys suster, homely soth to sayne
She came to dyner, in her playne entente
But god & Pādare wyst al what this mente

Came eke Creseyde all innocent of thys
Antygone her nece, and Tarbe also
But flye we nowe prolixite best is
For loue of god, and let vs fast go
Ryght to theffecte wythouten tales mo
why all thys folke assembled in thys place
And let vs of her saluynges pace

Great honour dyd hem Deiphebus certayne
And fedde hem wel, wyth al that myght lyke
But euermo alas, was hys refrayne
My good brother Troylus the syke
Lyth yet, and therwythall he gan to syke
And after that he payned hym to glade
Hem as he myght, and chere good he made

Complayned eke Heleyne of hys sycknesse
So faythfully that it pyte was to here
And euery wyght gan wexen for axes
A leche anone, and sayd in thys manere
Men curen folke, thys charme I woll ý lere
But there sate one, all lyste her not to teche
That thought, yet best could I ben his leche

After cōplaynt hym gonnē they to prayse
As folk don yet whē some wyght hath begō
To prayse a mā, and wyth prayse hym rayse
A thousande folde yet hygher thē the son
He is, he can, that fewe lordes kon
And Pandarus of that they wolde afferme
He nought forgat her prayslynge to conferme

Herde al thys thyng Creseyd wel ynough
And euery worde gan for to notifye
For whych wyth sobre chere her herte lough
For who is that ne wolde her glorifye
To mowen suche a knyght done lyue or dye
But all passe I, lest ye to longe dwell
But for to fyne is all that euer I tell

The tyme came fro dyner for to ryse
And as hem ought, arysen euerychone
And gone a whyle of thys and that deuyse
But Pandarus brake all thys speche anone
And sayd to Deiphebus, woll ye gone
Yf your wyll be, as I you prayde
To speake of the nedes of Creseyde

Heleyne

Heleyne, whych that by ÿ honde her helde
Toke fyrst the tale and sayd, go we blyue
And goodly on Creseyde she beheld
And sayd, Joues let hym neuer thryue
That doth you harme, & ryue hym sone of
And ye me sorowe, but he shall it rue (lyue
yf that I maye, and all folke be true

Tel thou thy neces case (quod Deiphebus)
To Pandarus, for thou canst best it tell
My lordes and my ladyes, it stante thus
what shulde I lenger (q he) do you dwell
He ronge hem out a proces lyke a bell
Upon her foe, that hyght Poliphete
So heynous, that men myght on it spete

Answerd of this eche worse of hem thē other
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to waryen
An honged be suche one, were he my brother
And so he shall, for it ne maye nought varien
what shulde I lenger in thys tale taryen
Playnlyche all at ones they her hyghten
To ben her frēde, in all ÿ euer they myghten

Spake then Heleyne, and sayd Pandarus
wote aught my lord my brother of thys ma-
I meane Hector, or wote it Troylus (ter
He sayd yea, but woll ye me nowe here
Ye thinketh thus, syth that Troilus is here
It were good, yf that ye wolde assent
She tolde hym her selfe all thys er she went

For he woll haue the more her greke at herte
Bycause lo, that she a lady is
And by your wyl, I woll but in ryght sterte
And do you wete, and that anone ywys
yf that he slepe, or woll ought here of thys
And in he lepte, and sayd hym in hys eere
God haue thy soule, brought haue I thy bere

To smylen of thys gan tho Troylus
And Pandarus wythouten rekenynge
Out went anone to Heleyne & Deiphebus
And sayd hem, so there be no taryenge
Ne more prease, he woll well that ye brynge
Creseyde my lady, that is here
And as he maye enduren, he wol her here

But well ye wote the chambre is but lyte
And fewe folke may lyghtly make it warme
Nowe loketh ye, for I woll haue no wyte
To bryng in prease, ÿ myght don hym harme
Or hym dyseasen, for my better arme
Yet were it bet she bydde tyll eftsoonis
Nowe loke ye that knowen what to done is

I saye for me best is, as I can knowe
That no wyght in ne wende, but ye twey
But it were I, for I can in a throwe
Reherce her case, bnlyke that she can sey
And after thys she maye ones hym prey
To ben good lorde in shorte, & take her leue
Thys maye not mokell of hys ease hym reue

And eke for she is straūge, he woll forbere
Hys ease, whych that hym dare not for you
Eke other thynge that toucheth not to her
He woll it tell, I wote it well ryght nowe
That secrete is, and for the townes prowe
And they that knewe nothyng of hys entent
wythout more, to Troylus in they went

Heleyne in all her goodly softe wyse
Gan hym salue, and womanly to playe
And sayd ywys, ye mote algate aryse
Nowe fayre brother be all hole I praye
And gan her arme ryght ouer his sholder lay
And hym wyth all her wyt to recomforte
As she best coulde, she gan hym to dysporte

So after thys (q she) we you beseke
My dere brother Deiphebus and I
For loue of God, and so doth Pandare eke
To ben good lorde and frende ryght hertely
Unto Creseyde, whych that certaynly
Receiueth wrōge, as wote wel here Pādare
That can her case well bet then I declare

This Pādarus gan new his tonge affyle
And all her case reherce, and that anone
when it was sayd, sone after a whyle
(Quod Troylus) as sone as I may gone
I wol ryght fayne, with al my might bē one
Haue god my trouth, her cause to sustene
Now good thryft haue ye (q Heleyne) the (quene
(Quod Pandarus) and it your wyll be
That she maye take her leaue, er that she go
O, els god forbyd it (tho q he)
yf that she vouchsafe for to do so
And wyth that worde (q Troylus) ye two
Deiphebus, and my syster lefe and dere
To you haue I to speake of a matere

To ben aduysed by your rede the better
And founde(as hap was)at his beddes heed
The copye of a treatyse,and a lettre
That Hector had hym sent,to aske reed
Yf suche a man was worthy to ben deed
Wote I nought who,but in a grysly wyse
He prayde hem anone on it auyse

Deiphebus gan thys lettre for to vnfolde
In ernest great,so dyd Heleyne the quene
And romynge outward, kast it gone beholde
Downewarde a steyre, into an herber grene
Thys ylke thynge redden hem bytwene
And largely the mountenaũce of an houre
They gonne on it to reden and to pore

Nowe let hem rede,and turne we anone
To Pandarus,that gan full softe prye
That all was well,and out he gan to gone
Into the great chambre,and that in hye
And sayd,god saue all thys companye
Come nece myne,my lady quene Heleyne
Abydeth you,and eke my lordes tweyne

Ryse,take wyth you your nece Antigone
Or whome you lyst,or no force hardely
The lasse prease ý bet,come forth wyth me
And loke that ye thanken humbly
Hem all thre,and when ye maye goodly
Your tyme yse, taketh of hem your leue
Lest we to longe hys restes hym bereue

All innocent of Pandarus entente
(Quod tho Creseyde)go we vncle dere
And arme in arme,inwarde w̃ him she wẽte
Auysynge well her wordes and her chere
And Pandarns,in ernestfull manere
Sayd, all folke for goddes loue I praye
Stynteth ryght here,and softely you playe

Auyseth you what folke bene here wythin
And in what plyte one is,god hym amende
And inwarde thus full softely begyn
Nece I coniure,and hyghly you defende
On hys halfe,whych that soule vs al sende
And in the vertue of coronnes twayne
Slee not thys mã,ý hath for you this payne

Fye on the deuell,thynke whych one he is
And in what plyte he lyeth,come of anone
Thynke all suche taryed tyde but lost it nys
That woll ye both sayne,when ye ben one
Secondly,there yet deuyneth none
Upon you two,come of nowe yf ye conne
Whyle folke is blent,lo,all the tyme is wõne

In tyterynge and pursute,and delayes
The folke deuyne,at waggynge of a tree
And though ye wolde han after mery dayes
Then dare ye not,and why:for the and the
Spake suche a worde,thus loked he and he
Lest tyme be lost,I dare not wyth you dele
Come of therfore, and bryngeth hym to hele

But nowe to you, ye louers that ben here
Was Troylus not in a cankedorte
That lay,& might ý whysprynge of hem here
And thought o lorde,ryght now rẽneth my
Fully to dye,or haue anone comforte (sorte
And was the fyrst tyme he shulde her pray
Of loue,O myghty god what shall he saye

¶Explicit liber secundus.

Blysfull lyght,of which the bemes clere
Adorneth all the thyrde heuen fayre
O sonnes lefe, o Joues doughter dere
Pleasaunce of loue, o goodly debonayre
In gentyll hertes aye redy to repayre
O very cause of heale and of gladnesse
Yheryed be thy myght and thy goodnesse

In heauen and hell, in erthe,and salte see
Is felte thy myght,yf that I well dyscerne
As man,beest,fyshe,herbe,and grene tree
The fele in tymes wyth vapour eterne
God loueth,and to loue woll naught werne
And in thys worlde no lyues creature
Wythouten loue is worth,or maye endure

Ye Joues fyrst,to thylke affectes glade
Through whych that thynges lyuen al,& be
Cõmenden,and amorous hem made
On mortall thynge,and as you lyst aye ye
Yeue hem in loue,ease,or aduersyte
And in a thousand formes downe hym sente
For loue in erth,& whom you lyste he hente

Ye

ye fyrce Marce apealen of hys yre
And as you lyst, ye maken hertes dygne
Algates hem that ye woll set afyre
They dreden shame, and vyces they resygne
ye done hem curteys be, freshe, & benigne
And hye or lowe, after a wyght entendeth
The ioyes ý he hath, your myght it sendeth

ye holden reygne and house in vnite
ye sothfast cause of frendshyp ben also
ye knowen all thylke couered qualyte
Of thynges, whych that folke wondren so
when they can not construe howe it may go
She loueth hym, or why he loueth here
Is why this fyshe & not that cometh to were

ye folke a lawe haue set in vniuerse
And thys knowe I by hem that louers be
That who so strynyeth w̄ you hath ý werse
Nowe lady bryght, for thy benignite
At reuerence of hem that seruen the
whose clerke I am, so techeth me deuyse
Some ioye of that is felt in thy seruyce

yea, in my naked herte sentement
I hylde, and do me shewe of thy swetnesse
Caliope, thy voyce be nowe present
For nowe is nede, seest thou not my dystresse
Howe I mote tell anone ryght, the gladnesse
Of Troylus, to Venus heryngc
To whych who nede hath, god hym bryngc.

Incipit liber tertius.

Ay all thys meane whyle Troylus
Recordynge hys lesson in thys manere
Wakey thought he, thus wol I say and thus
Thus woll I playne vnto my lady dere
That worde is good, & thys shalbe my chere
Thys nyll I not forzeten in no wyse
God lene hym werken as he can deuyse

And lorde so that hys herte gan to quappe
Heryngc her come, and shorte for to syke
And Pandarus that ledde her by the lappe
Came nere, and gan in at the curteyn pyke
And sayd, god do bote on all syke
Se who is here, you comen to bysyte
Lo, here is she that is your death to wyte

Therwyth it semed as he wepte almoste
A, a, (quod Troylus) so routhfully
where me be wo, o myghty god thou woste
who is all there, I se not truly
Syr (q̃ Creseyde) it is Pandare and I
ye swete herte alas, I maye not ryse
To knele, and do you honoure in some wyse

And dressed hym vpwarde, & she ryght tho
Gan both her hondes sokte vpon hym ley
O for the loue of god, do ye not so
To me (quod she) ey what is thys to sey
Syr, comen am I to you for causes twey
Fyrst you to thanke, and of your lordshyp eke
Continuaunce I wolde you beseke

Thys Troylus that herde hys lady praye
Of lordship, him wore neither quicke ne deed
Ne myght o worde for shame to it saye
All though men shulden smyten of hys heed
But lorde so he wore sodeynlyche reed
And syr, hys lesson that he wende conne
To prayen her, is through hys wyt ronne

Creseyde all thys aspyed well ynough
For she was wyse, & loued hym neuer ý lasse
All nere he in all aperte, or made it tough
Or was to bolde, to synge a foole a masse
But when hys shame gan somwhat to passe
hys resons, as I may my rymes holde
I woll you tell, as techen bokes olde

In chaũged voyce, ryght for hys very drede
whych voyce eke quoke, & therto hys manere
Goodly abasht, and nowe hys hewes rede
Nowe pale, vnto Creseyde hys lady dere
wyth loke downe cast, & humble ryoldē chere
Lo, the alderfyrst worde that hym after
was twyse, mercy, mercy swete herte

And stynt a while, & whē he might out bryng
The next worde was, god wote for I haue
As faythfully as I haue had konnynge
Ben yours all, god so my soule saue
And shal, tyl that I wofull wyght be graue
And though I dare ne can vnto you playne
I wys I suffre not the lasse payne

Thus moch as nowe, ah, womālyche wyke
I maye out bryngc, and yf thys you dysplese

That shall I wreke vpon myne owne lyke
Ryght sone I trowe, and do your hert an ese
Yf wyth my death, your herte maye apese
But sens that ye han herde me somwhat sey
Nowe retche I neuer howe sone that I dey

Therwyth hys manly sorowe to beholde
It myght haue made an hert of stone to rew
And Pandare wept as he to water wolde
And poked euer hys nece newe and new
And sayd, wo begon ben hertes trewe
For loue of god, make of thys thinge an ende
Or slee vs both at ones, er that ye wende

I, what (q̃ she) by God and by my trouth
I not nat what ye wyne that I sey
Ey, what (q̃ he) that ye haue on hym routh
For goddes loue, and doth hym not to dey
Nowe then thus (q̃ she) I wolde hym prey
To tell me the fyne of hys entente
Yet wyst I neuer well what that he mente

what that I meane, O swete herte dere
(Quod Troylus) o goodly fresche free
That wyth the stremes of your eyen clere
Ye wolden somtyme frendly on me se
And then agreen that I may ben he
wythouten braunche of vyce, on any wyse
In trouth alwaye, to do you my seruyse

As to my lady ryght, and chefe resorte
wyth all my wytte and all my diligence
And to haue ryght as you lyst comforte
Under your yerde egall to myne offence
As death, yf that I breake your defence
And that ye deygne me so moche honour
Ye to cõmaunden aught in any hour

And I to ben your very humble trewe
Secrete, and in my paynes pacient
And euer to desyren freshly newe
To seruen, and to ben aye ylike dilygent
And with good herte, al holy your talent
Receyuen wel, howe sore that me smerte
Lo, this meane I, myne owne swete hert

(Quod Pandarus) lo here an hard request
And reasonable, a lady for to warne
Nowe nece myne, by Natall Joues feeste
were I a god, ye shulde sterue as yerne
That heren wel this man wol nothyng yern
But your honour, ȝ sene him almost sterue
And ben so lothe to suffre him you to serue

wyth that she gan her eyen on him cast
Full easely, and full debonairly
Auysyng her, and hyed not to fast
wyth neuer a worde, but sayd hym softely
Myn honour safe, I wolde wel truly
And in such forme, as I can now deuyse
Receyuen him fully to my seruice

Besechyng hym for goddes loue, that he
wolde in honour of trouthe and gentellesse
As I wel meane, eke meanen wel to me
And myn honour, with wit and besynesse
Aye kepe, and if I maye done him gladnesse
From hence forthe, iwys I nyl nat fayne
Nowe bethe al hole, no lenger ye ne playne

But nathelesse, this warne I you (q̃ she)
A kynges sonne although ye be ywis
Ye shal no more haue souerayne
Of me in loue, than right in that case is
Ne nyl forbeare if that ye done amys
To wrathe you, and whyle that ye me serue
Cherysshen you, right after that ye deserue

And shortly dere hert, and al my knyght
Beth glad, and draweth you to lustynesse
And I shal trewly, with al my ful myght
your bytter turnen al to swetenesse
If I be she, that may do you gladnesse
For euery wo ye shal recouer a blysse
And him in armes toke, and gan him kysse

Fyl Pandarus on knees, and vp his eyen
To heuen threw, and helde his hondes hye
Immortal god (q̃ he) that mayst nat dyen
Cupide I meane, of this mayste glorifye
And venus, thou mayste maken melodye
withouten honde, me semeth that in towne
For this myracle yche here eche bell sowne

But ho, no more nowe of this matere
For why this folke wol comen vp anone
That haue the lettre redde, lo I hem here
But I coniure the Creseyde, and one
And two, thou Troylus whã ÿ mayst gone
That at myn house ye ben at my warnyng
For I ful wel shal shapen your cõmyng

And easeth there your hertes right ynough
And let se whiche of you shal beare the bel

To speke of loue aright, & therwith he lough
For there haue I a leyser for to tell
(Quod Troylus) howe long shal I dwell
Er this ben done: q̃ he, whē thou maist ryse
This thyng shal be right as you list deuyse

With that Heleyne, and also deiphebus
Tho comen vpward, right at ỳ stayres ende
And lorde so tho gan gronen Troylus
His brother and his sylter for to blende
(q̃ Pandarus) it tyme is that we wende
Take nece myn your leaue at al thre
And let hem speake, & cometh forth with me

She toke her leaue at hem ful thryftely
As she wel coulde: & they her reuerence
Unto the ful dydden hardely
And wonder wel speaken in her absence
Of her, in praysyng of her excellence
Her gouernaunce, her wyt, and hyr manere
Comendeden, that it ioye was to here

Nowe let her wende vnto her owne place
And turne we to Troylus agayne
That gan ful lightly of the lettre pace
That deiphebus had in the gardyn seyne
And of Heleyne and hem he wolde feyne
Deleuered ben, and sayd that hem leste
To slepe, and after tales haue a reste

Heleyne him kyste, and toke her leue blyue
Deiphebus eke, & home wente euery wight
And Pandarus, as faste as he may driue
To Troylus tho came, as lyne ryght
And on a paillet, al that gladde nyght
By Troylus he lay, with mery chere
To tale, & wel was hem they were ykere

Whē euery wight was voyded, but they two
And al the dores weren faste yshette
To tel in shorte, without wordes mo
This Pandarus, without any lette
Up rose, and on his beddes syde him sette
And gan to speaken in a sobre wyse
To Troylus, as I shal you deuyse

Myn alderleuest lorde, and brother dere
God wot and thou, that it sate me so sore
Whan I the sawe so languyschyng to here
For loue of which thy wo wore alway more
That I with al my might, and al my lore
Haue euer sythen done my besynesse
To bringe the to ioye out of distresse

And haue it brought to such plyte as ỳ woste
So ỳ through me thou stondest now in way
To faren wel, I say it for no boste
And woste thou why, but shame it is to say
For the haue I begon a gamen play
Whiche that I neuer done shal efte for other
Al tho he were a thousande folde my brother

That is to say, for the am I becomen
Betwyxen game and ernest, suche a mene
As maken women vnto men to comen
Al say I nat, thou woste well what I mene
For the haue I my nece, of vyces clene
So fully made thy gentyllesse tryst
That all shal ben, ryght as thy selfe lyste

But god, ỳ al wotteth take I to wytnesse
That neuer I thys for couetyse wrought
But onely for to abredge that distresse
For which wel nye thou dydest, as me thought
But good brother, do nowe as the ought
For goddes loue, and kepe her out of blame
Sens thou art wyse, & saue alway her name

For wel thou wost, the name as yet of her
Amōges ỳ people, as (who sayd) haloweds is
For that man is vnbore I dare wel swere
That euer wyste that she dyd amys
But wo is me, that I that cause al thys
May thynken that she is my nece dere
And I her eme, and traytour eke ykere

And were it wyste ỳ I through myn engyn
Had in myne nece yput this fantasye
To done thy lust, and holly to be thyn
Why: al the worlde wolde vpon it crye
And say, that I the worste trecherye
Dyd in thys case, that euer was begonne
And she fordone, & thou right naught ywōne

Wherfore er I wol ferther gone or paas
Yet efte I the beseche, and fully say
That priuyte go with vs in thys caas
That is to sayne, that thou vs neuer wray
And be nat wrothe, though I the ofte pray
To holden secre suche an hygh matere
For skylfull is (thou woste well) my prayere

And thinke, what wo ther hath betyd er this
For makyng of auauntes, as men rede

And what myschaunce in this worlde yet is
Fro day to day, right for that wycked dede
For whiche these wyse clerkes that ben dede
Haue euer thys prouerbed to vs yonge
That the fyrst vertue is to kepe the tonge

And nere it that I wylne as now abredge
Diffusyon of speche, I coulde almost
A thousande olde stories the aledge
Of women loste, through false & fooles boste
Prouerbes canste thy selfe ynowe, & woste
Ayenst that vyce for to ben a blabbe
Al sayd men sothe, as often as they gabbe

O tonge alas, so often here beforne
Haste thou made many a lady bright of hewe
Sayd, welaway the day that I was borne
And many a maydens sorowe for to newe
And for the more parte al is vntrewe
That mē of yelpe, & it were brought to preue
Of kynde, none auauntour is to leue

Auauntour and a lyer, al is one
As thus: I pose a woman graunt me
Her loue, and sayth that other woll she none
And I am sworne to holden it secre
And after I tel it two or thre
I wys I am auauntour at the leest
And lyer eke, for I breke my beheest

Now loke thā, if they be nat to blame (what
Suche maner folke, what shall I clepe hem
That hem auaunte of women, and by name
That yet behyght hem neuer this ne that
Ne knowe hem more than myne olde hat
No wonder is, so god me sende heele
Though womē dreden with vs men to deele

I say nat thys for no mistrust of you
Ne for no wyse men, but for fooles nyce
And for the harme that in ẏ worlde is nowe
As wel for folye ofte, as for malyce
For wel wote I, in wyse folke that vyce
No woman dredeth, yf she be well auysed
For wyse ben by fooles harme chastysed

But nowe to purpose, leue brother dere
Haue all this thyng ẏ I haue sayd in mynde
And kepe the close, and be now of good chere
For all thy dayes thou shalt me trewe kynde
I shall thy processe set in suche a kynde
And god toforne, that it shall the suffyse
For it shall be, right as thou wolte deuyse

For wel I wote, thou meanest well parde
Therfore I dare this fully vndertake
Thou woste eke, what thy lady graunted the
And day is set the chartres to make
Haue now good night, I may no lēger wake
And byd for me, syth thou arte now in blysse
That god the sende dethe, or soone lysse

Who might tellen halfe the ioye or feest
whych that the soule of Troylus tho felte
Heryng the effect of Pandarus beheest
His olde wo, that made his herte swelte
Gan tho for ioye wasten, and to melte
And all the richesse of his syghes sore
At ones fledde, he felte of hem no more

But right so as these holtes, & these hayes
That han in wynter deed ben and drie
Reuesten hem in grene, whan that may is
whan euery lusty lysteth to play
Right in that selfe wyse, sothe to say
wore sodainly his herte full of ioye
That gladder was there neuer mā in Troye

And gan his loke on Pandarus vp caste
Ful soberly, and frendly on to se
And sayd, frende, in April the laste
As well thou woste, yf it remembre the
Howe nyghe ẏ dethe for wo thou founde me
And howe thou dyddest all thy besynesse
To knowe of me the cause of my distresse

Thou woste how longe I it forbare to say
To the, that arte the man that I best tryst
And peryll none was it to the to bewray
That wyst I well: but tel me yf the lyste
Sythe I so loth was, that thy selfe it wyste
Howe durste I mo tellen of this matere
That quake nowe, & no wight may vs here

But natheleſſe, by that god I the swere
That as him lyst may al this world gouerne
And yf I lye, Achylles wyth his spere
Myne herte cleaue, al were my lyke eterne
As I am mortal, yf I late or yerne
wolde it bewray, or durst, or shulde conne
For al the good that god made vnder sonne

That rather dye I wolde, and determyne
As thynketh me nowe, stocked in prison
In wret-

In wretchydnesse, in fylthe, and in vermyne
Captyfe to cruell kyng Agamenon
And this in all the temples of this towne
Upon the goddes all, I woll the swere
To morowe day, yf that the lyketh here

And that thou haste so moche ydon for me
That I ne may it neuer more deserue
This know I well, all might I now for the
A thousande tymes on a morowe sterue
I can no more, but that I woll the serue
Ryght as thy slaue, whyther so thou wende
For euer more, vnto my lyues ende

But here with al myn herte I the beseche
That neuer in me thou deme suche folye
As I shall sayne, me thought by thy speche
That this whiche thou me doest for cõpanye
I shulde wene it were a baudrye
I am nat woode, all yf I leude be
It is nat so, that wot I well parde

But he that gothe for golde, or for rychesse
On suche messages, call him what ye lyste
And this that thou doest, call it gentylnesse
Compassyon, and felawshyp, and tryste
Departe it so, for wyde where is wyste
Howe that there is dyuersyte required
Betwixen thynges lyke, as I haue lered

And ẏ thou knowe I thynke nat ne wene
That thys seruyce a shame be or iape
I haue my fayre suster Polixene
Cassandre, Heleyne, or any of the frape
Be she neuer so fayre, or well yshape
Tel me, whiche thou wylte of euerychone
To haue for thyne, and let me than alone

Buth syth ẏ thou hast done me this seruyce
My lyfe to saue, and for non hope of mede
So for the loue of god, this great emprise
Parfourme it out, nowe is the moste nede
For hygh and lowe, withouten any drede
I wol alway thyne hestes al kepe
Haue nowe good nyght, & let vs bothe slepe

Thus helde hem eche of other well apayde
That all the worlde ne might it bet amende
And on the morowed whã they were arayde
Eche to hys owne nedes gan entende
But Troylus, though as the fyre he brende
For sharpe desyre of hope, and of pleasaunce
He nat forgate his good gouernaunce

But in him selfe, wo mãhode gan restreyne
Eche rakel dede, and eche vnbridled chere
That all that lyuen sothe to sayne
Ne shulde haue wyst, by word or by manere
What that he mente, as touching this matere
From euery wyght, as ferre as is the cloude
He was so wyse, and wel dissymulen coulde

And al ẏ whyle which that I now deuyse
Thys was hys lyfe, with all his full myght
By day he was in Martes hyghe seruyce
That is to sayne, in armes as a knyght
And for the more parte the longe nyght
He lay and thought how that he might serue
His lady best, her thanke for to deserue

Nyll I nat sweare, all though he lay softe
That in his thought he nas somwhat diseled
Ne that he turned on his pillowes ofte
And wolde of that him missed haue ben eased
But in suche case, men be nat alwaye pleased
For naught I wot, no more than was he
That can I deme of possibylyte

But certayne is, to purpose for to go
That in this whyle, as written is in geste
He sawe his lady somtyme, and also
She wyth him spake, whã ẏ she durst & leste
And by her bothe auyse, as was the beste
Apoynteden ful warely in this nede
So as they durste, howe they wold procede

But it was spoken in so shorte a wyse
In suche awayte alway, and in suche fere
Leste any wight deuynen or deuyse
wolde of hem two, or to it lay an eere
That all this worlde so lefe to hem ne were
As that Cupyde wolde hem grace sende
To maken of her speche right an ende

But thylke lytel that they spake or wrought
Hys wyse goste toke aye, of all suche hede
It semed her he wyste what she thought
withouten worde, so that it was no nede
To bydde hym aught to dõ, or aught forbede
For which she thought ẏ loue, al come it late
Of al ioye, had opened her the yate

And shortly of thys processe for to pace
So wel his werke and wordes he besette

That

That he so ful stode in his ladys grace
Twenty thousande tymes er she lette
She tonked god she euer with hym mette
So coulde he hym gouerne in suche seruyce
That al the worlde ne might it bet deuyse

For she founde him so discrete in all
So secrete, and of suche obeysaunce
That well she felte he was to her a wall
Of steele, and shelde of euery displesaunce
That to ben in hys good gouernaunce
So wyse he was, she was nomore afered
I meane as ferre as ought ben required

And Pandarus to quicke alway the fyre
was euer ylyke prest and dyligent
To ease his frende was set al hys desyre
He shoue aye on, he to and fro was sent
He letters bare whan Troylus was absent
That neuer man, as in hys frendes nede
Ne bare hym bet than he, withouten drede

But now parauēture som mā wayte wold
That euery worde or sonde, loke or chere
Of Troylus, that I rehercen shulde
In all this whyle, vnto hys lady dere
I trowe it were a longe thyng for to here
Or of what wight ỳ stante in suche disioynte
His wordes al, or euery loke to poynte

For sothe I haue nat herde it done er this
In storye none, ne no man here I wene
And though I wolde, I coulde nat ywys
For there was some epystel hem betwene
That wold (as saith mynauctour) wel cōtene
Nye halfe this boke, of which hi lyst nat write
Howe shulde I than a lyne of it endyte

But to the great effecte, than say I thus
That stondyng in concorde and in quyete
Thys ylke two, Creseyde and Troylus
As I haue tolde, and in this tyme swete
Saue onely often might they nat mete
Ne leyser haue, her speches to fulfell
That it befyl, ryght as I shall you tel

That Pandarus, that euer dyd his might
Right for the fyne that I shall speke of here
As for to bryngen to his house some nyght
His fayre nece, and Troylus yfere
where as at leyser al thys hygh matere
Touchyng her loue, were at ỳ ful vp bounde
Had out of doute a tyme to it founde

For he with great delyberation
Had euery thyng that therto might auayle
Forne caste, and put in execution
And neyther lefte for coste ne for trauayle
Come yf hem lyste, hem shuld nothyng fayle
And for to ben in aught aspyed there
That wyste he wel an inposlyble were

Dredelesse it clere was in the wynde
Of euery pye, and euery let game
Nowe al is wel, for al the worlde is blynde
In this mater, bothe fremed and tame
This tymber is al redy vp to frame
Vs lacketh naught, but that weten wolde
A certayne houre, in which she comen shulde

And Troylus, that all this purueyaunce
knewe at the full, and wayted on it aye
And here vpon eke made great ordynaunce
And founde hys cause, & therwith his aray
If that he were myssed nyght or day
There whyle he was aboute this seruyce
That he was gone to done hys sacrifyce

And muste at suche a temple alone wake
Answered of Apollo for to be
And fyrst to sene the holy laurer quake
Er that Apollo spake out of the tree
To tell hym next whan grekes shulde flye
And for thy let hym no man, god forbede
But pray Apollo helpe in thys nede

Nowe is there lytell more for to done
But Pandare vp, and shortly for to sayne
Right sone vpon the chaungyng of ỳ moone
whā lightlesse is ỳ world a night or twayne
And that the welken shope hym for to rayne
He streyght a morowe vnto hys nece wente
Ye haue well herde the fyne of hys entente

Whā he was comē, he gan anon to playe
As he was wonte, and of hym selfe to iape
And fynally he swore, and gan her say
By this and that, she shulde hym nat escape
No lenger done hym after her to cape
But certaynly, she muste by her leue
Come soupen in hys house wyth hym at eue

At which she lough, & gan her fyrst excuse
And sayd: it rayneth: lo, howe shulde I gone
Let be

Let be(q̃ he)ne stonde nat thus to muse
This mote be done, ye shal come there anone
So at the laste, herof they fell at one
Or els faste he swore her in her eere
He nolde neuer comen there she were

Sone after this, she to hym gan rowne
And asked hym yf Troylus were there
He swore her nay, for he was out of towne
And sayd, nece: I pose that he were there
you durste neuer haue the more feere
For rather than men might hym there aspye
He were leuer a thousande fold to dye

Naught lyst myne auctour fully to declare
what that she thought, whan he sayd so
That Troylus was out of towne yfare
And yf he sayd therof sothe or no
But that wythouten awayte with him to go
She graũted him, syth he her that besought
And as hys nece obeyed as her ought

But natheleſſe, yet gan she hym beseche
(All though w̃ him to gone it was no feere)
For to beware of gofyche peoples speche
That dremẽ thynges, which that neuer were
And well auyse him whom he brought there
And sayd him eme, sens I muste on you tryst
Loke al be wel, and do nowe as you lyst

He swore her this, by stockes and by stones
And by the goddes that in heuen dwell
Or els were him leauer soule and bones
wyth Pluto kyng, as depe ben in hell
As Tantalus, what shulde I more tell
whan al was well, he rose and toke his leue
And she to souper came whan it was eue

wyth a certayne of her owne men
And with her fayre nece Antigone
And other of her women nyne or ten
But who was glad nowe, who as trowe ye
But Troylus, that stode and myght it se
Throughout a lytel wyndowe in a stewe
There he beschet, sith midnight was in mewe

Unwyst of euery wight, but of Pandare
But to the poynt, nowe whan ẏ she was cõe
wyth all ioye, and all frendes fare
Her eme anone in armes hath her nome
And than to the supper all and some
whan tyme was, ful softe they hem sette
God wote there was no deynte ferre to fette

And after supper gannen they to ryse
At ease well, with hert freshe and glade
And wel was him that coude best deuyse
To lyken her, or that her laughen made
He songe, she playde, he tolde a tale of wade
But at the laste, as euery thyng hath ende
She toke her leaue, and nedes wolde wende

But o fortune, executrice of wyerdes
O influentes of these heuens hye
Sothe is, that vnder god ye ben our hierdes
Though to vs beestes, ben the causes wrie
This mene I now, for she gã homward hye
But execute was al besyde her leue
At the goddes wil, for which she muste bleue

The bente moone with her hornes pale
Saturnus and Jone, in Cãcro ioyned were
That suche a rayne from heuen gan auale
That euery maner woman that was there
Had of that sinoky rayne a very feere
At whiche Pandare tho lough, & sayd thenne
Nowe were it tyme a lady to gon henne

But good nece, yf I might euer please
You any thyng, than pray I you(q̃ he)
To don myne herte as nowe so great an ease
As for to dwell here al this nyght wyth me
For why this is your owne house parde
For by my trouhe, I say it nat in game
To wende as nowe, it were to me a shame

Creseyde, which that could as moche good
As halfe a worlde, toke hede of hys prayere
And sens it rayned, and al was in a flode
She thought, as good chepe may I dwel here
And graunt it gladly with a frendes chere
And haue a thonke, as grutche & than abyde
For home to gone it may nat wel betyde

I woll(q̃ she) myne vncle liefe and dere
Sens that you lyst, it skyll is to be so
I am ryght glad with you to dwellen here
I sayd but agame I wolde go
I wys graunt mercy nece(q̃ he) tho
were it a game or no, sothe to tell
Now am I glad, sens that you lyste to dwel

Thus al is wel, but tho began aright
The newe ioye, and all the feest agayne

But

But pandarus, yf goodly had he myght
He wolde haue hyed her to bedde fayne
And sayd, lorde this is an huge rayne
Thys were a wether for to slepen in
And that I rede vs soone to begyn

And nece, wote ye where I wol you lay
For that we shul nat lyggen ferre a sonder
And for ye neyther shullen, dare I say
Here noyse of rayne, ne of thonder
By god ryght in my closet yonder
And I wol in that vtter house alone
Ben wardayne of your women euerychone

And in this myddel chambre that ye se
Shall your women slepen, wel and softe
And there I sayd, shall your seluen be
And yf ye lyggen well to nyght, come ofte
And careth nat what wether is a lofte
The wyne anon, and whan so you leste
Go we to slepe, I trowe it be the beste

There nys no more, but herafter sone
They voyde, dronke, & trauers drawe anon
Gan euery wyght that had naught to done
More in the place, out of the chambre gon
And euermore so sternelyche it rone
And blewe therwyth so wonderlyche loude
That wel nyghe no man heren other coulde

Tho Pãdarus her eme, right as him ought
with women, suche as were her most aboute
Ful glad vnto her beddes syde her brought
And toke his leaue, and gan full lowe loute
And sayd, here at this closet dore wythout
Right ouertwharte your women lyggen all
That whom you lyst of hem, ye may sone cal

So whan that she was in the closet layde
And all her women forth by ordynaunce
A bedde weren, there as I haue sayde
There nas no more to skippẽ nor to praunce
But boden go to bedde with mischaunce
If any wyght sterynge were any where
And let hem slepen, that a bedde were

But Pandarus, ẏ wel couthe eche adele
The olde daunce, and euery poynte therin
whan that he sawe that all thyng was wele
He thought he wolde vpon his werke begyn
And gan the stewe dore al softe vnpyn
As styl as stone, without lenger lette
By Troylus adown right he him sette

And shortly to the poynte right for to gon
Of al thys werke he tolde him worde & ende
And sayd, make the redy right anon
For thou shalt in to heuen blysse wende
Now blyssful Venus, thou me grace sende
(q̃ Troylus) for neuer yet no dede
Had I er nowe, ne halfendele the drede

(q̃ Pandarus) ne drede the neuer adele
For it shal be right as thou wolte desyre
So thriue I, this nyght shal I make it wele
Or casten al the gruel in the fyre
Yet blissfull Venus, this nyght ÿ me enspyre
(q̃ Troylus) as wys as I the serue
And euer bet and bet shal tyll I sterue

And yf I had, O Venus full of myrthe
Aspectes badde of Mars, or of Saturne
Or thou combuste, or let were in my byrthe
Thy father pray, al thylke harme disturne
Of grace, and that I glad ayen may turne
For loue of hym thou louedest in the shawe
I meane Adon, that with ẏ bore was slawe

Joue eke, for the loue of fayre Europe
The which in forme of a bulle away thou fet
Now helpe, O Mars, thou w̃ thy blody cope
For loue of Cipria, thou me naught ne let
O Phebus, thilke whã Daphne her seluẽ shet
Under the barke, and Laurer wore for drede
Yet for her loue, o helpe nowe at thys nede

Mercurye, for the loue of her eke
For which Pallas was w̃ Aglauros wrothe
Nowe helpe, and eke Dyane I the beseke
That thys vyage be nat to the lothe
O fatall sustren, whyche or any clothe
Me shapen was, my destyne me sponne
So helpeth to thys werke that is begon

(q̃ Pãdarus) thou wretched mouces herte
Arte thou agast so that she wol the byte
why, do on this furred cloke vpon thy sherte
And folowe me, for I wol haue the wyte
But byde, and let me gon before a lyte
And wyth that he gan vndone a trappe
And Troylus he brought in by the lappe

The sterne wynde so loude gan to route
That no wight other noyse might here
And they

And they that layen at the dore without
Ful sykerly they slepten al yfere
And Pandarus, with ful sobre chere
Gothe to the dore anon withouten lette
There as they laye, and softely it shette

And as he came ayenwarde priuely
Hys nece awoke, & asketh, who goth there
Hy dere nece (quod he) it am I
Ne wondreth nat, ne haue of it no feere
And nere he came, and sayd her in her eere
No worde for loue of god I you beseche
Let no wyght aryse, & heren of our speche

what, which way be ye comen, benedicite,
(Quod she) and howe vnwyst of hem al
Here at this secrete trappe dore (q̃ he)
(Quod tho Creseide) let me some wight cal
Eygh, god forbyde that it shulde so fal
(q̃ Pandarus) that ye such foly wrought
they might demē thing they neuer er thought

It is nat good a slepyng hounde to wake
Ne yeue a wyght a cause for to deuyne
Your women slepyng al I vndertake
So ý for hem the house men myght myne
And slepen wollen tyl the sunne shyne
And whan my tale is brought to an ende
Unwyst right as I came, so woll I wende

Nowe nece myne, ye shul wel vnderstande
(q̃ he) so as ye women demen al
That for to holde in loue a man in honde
And hym her lefe and dere herte call
And maken hym an howue aboue a call
I mene as loue an other in this mene while
She doth her selfe a shame, and him agyle

Nowe wherby that I tel you al thys
Ye wote your selfe, as wel as any wyght
Howe that your loue al fully graunted is
To troylus, the worthyest wyght
One of the worlde, & therto trouth yplyght
That but it were on him alonge, ye nolde
Him neuer falsen, whyle ye lyuen sholde

Nowe stonte it thus, ý syth I fro you went
Thys Troylus, ryght platly for to seyne
Is through a gutter by a priuy went
In to my chambre come in al thys reyne
Unwyste of euery maner wyght certeyne
Saue of my selfe, as wysely haue I ioye
And by the fayth I owe Priam of Troye

And he is come in such payne and distresse
That but he be al fully woode by thys
He sodaynly mote fal in to woodnesse
But yf god helpe: and cause why is thys
He sayth him tolde is of a frende of hys
How ý ye shuld loue one, that hyght Horast
For sorow of which this nyzt shal be his last

Creseyde, which that al thys wonder herde
Gan sodaynly aboute her herte colde
And with a syghe she sorowfully answerde
Alas, I wende who so tales tolde
Hy dere herte wolde me nat holde
So lyghtly false, alas conceytes wronge
What harme they done: for nowe lyue I to (lōge

Horaste alas, and falsen Troylus
I knowe hym not, god helpe me so (q̃ she)
Alas, what wycked spyrite tolde hym thus
Nowe certes eme, to morowe and I him se
I shal therof as fully excused me
As euer dyd woman, yf him lyke
And with that worde she gan ful sore syke

O god (q̃ she) so wordley selynesse
whych clerkes callen false felicite
ymedled is with many a bytternesse
Full anguyshous, than is god wot (q̃ she)
Condicion of veyne prosperyte
For eyther ioyes comen nat yfere
Or els no wyght hath hem alway here

O brotyl wele of mannes ioye vnstable
with what wyght so to be, or howe ý play
Eyther he wot, that ioye arte muable
Or wote it not, it mote bene one of tway
Now yf he wote it nat, howe may he say
That he hath very ioye and selynesse
That is of ignorauncе aye in derkenesse

Nowe yf he wote that ioye is transitorye
As euery ioy of worldly thyng mote flye
Than euery tyme, he that hath in memorye
The dred of lesyng, maketh him, that he
May in no parfyte sykernesse be
And yf to lese his ioye, he set a myte
Thā semeth it, that ioye is worth ful lyte

wherfore I wolde deffine in thys matere
That treuly for aught I can espye

There is no bery wele in thys worlde here
But O thou wycked serpent ielousye
Thou misbeleued, and enuyous folye
why hast thou Troylus made to me vntrist
That neuer yet agylte, that I wyst

(Quod Pãdarus) thus fallen is thys caas
why vncle myn (q̃ she) who tolde hym thys
why doth my dere hert thus alas.
Ye wote, ye nece myne (q̃ he) what is
I hope al shal be wel, that is amys
For ye may quench al thys, if that you leste
And doth ryght so, I holde it for the beste

So shal I do to morowe, ywys (q̃ she)
And god to forne, so that it shal suffyse
To morowe alas, that were fayre (q̃ he)
Nay nay, it may nat stonden in this wyse
For nece myne, this writen clerkes wyse
That peryl is wyth dretchyng in drawe
Nay, soch abodes be nat worth an hawe

Nece, al thynge hath tyme I dare auowe
For whan a chambre a fyre is, or an hal
wel more nede is, it sodaynly rescowe
Than to desputen and asken amonges al
Howe the candel in the strawe is fal
Ah benedicite, for al amonge that fare
The harme is done, and farwell feldefare

And nece myne, ne take it nat a greke
If that ye suffre hym al nyght in thys wo
God helpe me so, ye had him neuer leke
That dare I saine, now ther is but we two
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do
Ye bene to wyse to done so great folye
To put hys lyfe al nyght in ieopardye

Had I hym neuer lefe. by god I wene
Ye had neuer thyng so lefe (quod she)
Nowe by my thryfte (q̃ he) ẏ shal be sene
For syth ye make thys ensample of me
If iche al nyght wolde him in sorowe se
For al the treasour in the towne of Troy
I bydde god, I neuer mote haue ioye

Nowe loke than, yf ye that bene hys loue
Shulde put hys lyfe al nyght in ieopardy
For thyng of nought, now by ẏ god aboue
Nat onely thys delay cometh of foly
But of malice, yf that I shulde nat lye
what platly and ye suffre hym in distresse
ye neyther bounte done ne gentylleſſe

(Quod tho Creseyde) wol ye done o thyng
And ye therwyth shal stynte al his disease
Haue here and bere hym this blewe ryng
For there is nothing might him better plese
Saue I my selfe, ne more his herte apese
And saye my dere herte, that is sorowe
Is causeleſſe, that shal he sene to morowe

A rynge (q̃ he) ye haselwodes shaken
ye nece myne, ẏ ryng must hane a stone
That myght deed men alyue maken
And such a ryng trowe I that ye haue none
Discrecion out of your heed is gone
That fele I nowe (q̃ he) and that is routh
O time ylost, wel maist thou cursen slouth

wote ye not wel that noble & hye courage
Ne sorowetb not, ne stynteth eke for lyte
But yf a fole were in a ielous rage
I nolde setten at hys sorowe amyte
But fesse hym with a fewe wordes whyte
An other day, whã that I might him fynde
But thys thyng stant al in another kynde

Thys is so gentyl and so tender of hert
that w̃ his deth he wol hys sorowes wreke
For trust wel, howe sore that him smert
He wol to you no ialous wordes speke
And for thy nece, er that his herte breke
So speke your selfe to hym of this matere
For wyth a worde ye may hys hert stere

Nowe haue I tolde what peryl he is in
And hys comyng vnwyst is to euery wight
Ne parde harme may there be none, ne syn
I wolde my selfe be wyth you al this night
Ye knowe eke howe it is your owne knyght
And that by ryght, ye must vpon hym tryste
And I al prest to fetche hym whã you lyste

This accident so pytous was to here
And eke so lyke a soth, at prime face
And Troylus her knyght, to her so dere
His priue cõmyng, and the syker place
That though she dyd him as than a grace
Consydred al thynges as they stode
No wonder is, sens he dyd al for goode

Creseyde answerde, as wyselye god at reste
My soule bryng, as me is for him wo

And

And eme ywys fayne wolde I done the best
If that I a grace had for to do so
But whether that ye dwell, or for hym go
I am, tyl god me bettre mynde sende
At Dulcarnon, ryght at my wyttes ende

(Quod Pandarus) yea nece wol ye here
Dulcarnon is called flemyng of wretches
it semeth hard, for wretches woll nauȝt lere
For very slouth, or other wylful tetches
this is sayd by hem, ý be nat worth two fet-
But ye ben wise, & ý ye han on honde (ches
Nys neyther hard, ne skylful to withstonde

Thã eme (q̃ she) doth here of as you lyst
But er he come, I wol vp fyrst arysse
And for the loue of god, sens al my tryst
Is on you two, and ye bethe bothe wyse
So werketh nowe, in so discret a wyse
That I honour may haue and he plesaunce
For I am here, al in your gouernaunce

That is wel sayd (q̃ he) my nece dere
There good thryfte on that wyse gẽtyl hert
But lyggeth styl, & taketh hym ryght here
It nedeth not no ferther for hym skert
And ech of you easeth other sorowes smert
For loue of god, and Venus I the herye
For sone hope I, that we shal ben merye

This Troylus ful sone on knees him sette
Ful sobrely, ryght by her beddes heed
And in his best wyse hys lady grette
But lorde he wore sodaynlyche reed
Ne thoughe men shulde smyten of her heed
She colde not a worde aright out brynge
So sodaynly for hys sodayne comyng

But Pandarus, that so wele coulde fele
In euery thyng, to play anon began
And said, nece, se how this lorde can knele
Nowe for your trouth, se thys gentyll man
And with that word, he for a quyshen ran
And said, kneleth now whyle that you leste
There god your hertes brynge sone at reste

Can I naught sayn, for she bad him nat rise
If sorowe it put out of her remembraunce
Or els that she toke it in the wyse
Of duetie, as for his obseruaunce
But wel kynde I, she did hym this plesaũce
That she hym kyst, al though she syked sore
And bade him sytte adowne withoutẽ more

(Quod Pandarus) now wol ye well begyn
Nowe doth him sytte, good nece dere
Vpon your beddes syde, al therwythin
That eche of you the bet may other here
And ẃ that worde he drew him to the syere
And toke a light, & fonde his countenaunce
As for to loke vpon an olde romaunce

Creseyde that was Troylus ladye ryght
And clere stode in a grounde of sykernesse
Al thought she her seruaunt & her knyght
Ne shulde non vntrouth in her gesse
That nathlesse, consydred hys distresse
And that loue is in cause of such foly
Thus spake she to hym of his ialousy

Lo hert myne, as wolde the excellence
Of loue, ayenst the which that no man may
Ne ought eke goodly maken resistence
And eke bycause I felte wel and say
Your great trouth and seruyce euery day
And ý your hert al myn was soth to sayne
This droue me for to rew vpon your payne

And your goodnes haue I foũdẽ alway yet
Of which my dere hert, and all my knyght
I thanke it you, as ferre as I haue wyt
Al can I not as moche as it were ryght
And I emforth my cõnyng and my myght
Haue, & aye shal, howe sore that me smert
Ben to you trewe & hole wythall myne hert

And dredelesse that shal be founden at preue
But herte myne, what al thys is to sayne
Shal wel be told, so ý ye nought you greue
Though I to you right on your self cõplain
For there wyth meane I finally payne
That halte your hert and mine in heuynesse
Fully to slayne, and euery wronge redresse

My good myne, not I, for why ne howe
That ielousy alas, that wycked wyuere
Thus causelesse is cropen in to you
The harme of which I wold faine deliuere
Alas, that he al hole or of him slyuere
Shulde haue hys refute in so digne a place
That Ioue, him sone out of your hert race

But O thou, O auctour of nature
Is thys an honour to thy dignyte

That folke vngylty suffre here iniure
And who that gylty is, al quyte goth he
O were it leful for to playne of the
That vndeserued suffrest ialousy
O, that I wolde vpon the playne and crye

Eke al my wo is this, that folke nowe vsen
To sayne ryght thus: yee, ialousy is loue
And wolde a bushel of venym al excusen
For whã that a graine of loue is on it shoue
But wote hygh Ioue that sytte aboue
If it be lyker loue, hate or grame
And after that it ought beare hys name

But certayne is, some maner ialousye
Is excusable, more than some ywys
As whan cause is, and some such fantasye
wyth pyte so wel expressed is
That it vnneth doth or sayth amys
But goodly drynketh vp al hys distresse
And that excuse I for the gentyllesse

And some so full of furye is, and dispyte
That it surmounteth hys repression
But hert myne, ye be nat in that plyte
That thonke I god, for which your passion
I wyl not cal it but illusion
Of habundaunce of loue, and besy cure
That doth your herte this disese endure

Of which I am sory, but not wroth
But for my deuoure and your hertes rest
where so you lyst, by ordal or by othe
By sorte, or in what wyse so you leste
For loue of god, let preue it for the best
And yf that I be gylty, do me dey
Alas what myght I more done or sey

wyth that a fewe bryght teeres newe
Out of her eyen fel, and thus she seyde
now god ÿ wost, in thouzht ne dede vntrew
To Troylus was neuer yet Creseyde
wyth ÿ her heed downe in the bed she leyde
And with the shete it wrigh, & syghed sore
& held her peace, nat a word spake she more

But now help god, to quench all this sorow
So hope I that he shal, for he best may
For I haue sene of a ful misty morowe
Folowen ful ofte a mery sommers day
And after wynter foloweth grene May
Men sene alday, and reden eke in stories
That after sharpe shoures bene victories

Thys Troylus, whan he her wordes herde
Haue ye no care, him lyste not to slepe
For it thought hym no strokes of a yerde
To here or se Creseyde hys lady wepe
But wel he felte aboute hys herte crepe
For euery teare whych that Creseyde astert
The crãpe of dethe, to strayne him by ÿ hert

And in hys mynde he gan the tyme acurse
That he came there, and that he was borne
For nowe is wycke turned in to worse
And al that labour he hath done beforne
he wend it lost, he thought he nas but lorne
O Pandarus thought he, alas thy wyle
Serueth of naught, so welaway the whyle

And there withal he hynge adown his heed
And fel on knees, and sorowfully he syght
what might he saine: he felt he nas but deed
For wroth was she ÿ shuld his sorowes lizt
But natheleſſe, whan that he speken myght
Thã saide he thus, god wot ÿ of this game
whan al is wyst, than am I not to blame

Therwyth the sorowe of his hert shette
That from hys eyen fyl there nat a teere
And euery spyrit his vygour in knette
So they astonyed or oppressed were
The felyng of sorowe, or of hys feere
Or of aught els, sledde were out of towne
Adowne he fyl al sodaynly in swoune

Thys was no lytle sorowe for to se
But al was hushte, & Pandarus vp as faste
O nece peace, or we be lost (q̃ he)
Bethe not agaste, but certayne at laste
For thys or that, he in to bedde hym caste
And sayd, O theſe, is this a mannes herte
And he rent al to his bare sherte

And sayd nece, but ye helpe vs nowe
Alas your owne Troylus is lorne
Iwys so wolde I, and I wyste howe
Ful fayne (q̃ she) alas that I was borne
Yee nece, wol ye pullen out the thorne
That stycketh in his herte (q̃ Pandare)
Say al forgeue, and stynt is al thys fare

Yea that to me (quod she) ful leuer were
Than al the good the sunne aboute goth

And

And there wythal she swore him in hys eere
I wys my dere herte I am not wrothe
Haue here my trouth, & many an other othe
Nowe speke to me, for I am I Creseyde
but all for naught, yet might he nat abreyde

Therwith his pouce, & paumes of his handes
They gan to frote, & wete his tēples twayn
And to deliuer hym fro bytter bandes
She ofte hym kyste, & shortly for to sayne
Him to rewaken she dyd al her payne
And at the last he gan his breth to drawe
And of his swoune sone after that adawe

And gan bet mynde, and reason to hym take
But wonder sore he was abashed ywys
And with a sygh whan he gan bet awake
He said, O mercy god, what thing is this
why do ye wyth your seluen thus amys
(Quod tho Creseyde) is this a mans game
what Troylus, woll ye do thus for shame

And therwal her arme ouer hym she layde
And al forgaue, and oft tyme him keste
He thonked her, and to her spake and sayde
As fyl to purpose, for his hertes reste
And she to that answerde hym as her leste
And with her goodly wordes hym disporte
She gan, and ofte hys sorowes to comfort

(Quod Pandarus) for aught I can espyen
This light nor I ne seruen here of naught
Lyght is not good for sycke folkes eyen
But for the loue of god, sens ye ben brought
in thus good plyte, let now non heuy thought
Ben hangyng in the herts of you twey
And bare the candel to the chymeney

Soone after this, though it no nede were
whan she suche othes as her lyste deuyse
Had of him take, her thought tho no feere
Ne cause eke none, to byd hym thence ryse
Yet lesse thyng than othes may suffyse
In many a case, for euery wyght I gesse
That loueth wel, meaneth but gentyllesse

But in effecte she wolde wete anon
Of what man, and eke where, and why
He ialous was, sens there was cause non
And eke the signe that he toke it by
She bade him that to tel her besyly
Or els certayne she bare hym on honde
That thys was done of malyce her to fonde

wythouten more, shortly for to sayne
He must obey vnto thys ladyes heest
And for the lasse harme he must fayne
He sayd her, whan she was at such a feest
She myght on him haue loked at the leest
Not I nat what, al dere ynough a rysche
As he that nedes must a cause fysche

And she answerde, swete, al were it so
what harme was ý sens I non yuell meane
For by that god that bought vs both two
In al thynge is myne entent cleene
Such argumentes ne be not worth a beene
wol ye the chyldysche ialous counterfete
Nowe were it worthy that ye were ybete

Tho Troylus gan sorowfully to syke
lest she be wroth, hym thought hys hert deyde
And sayde, alas, vpon my sorowes syke
Haue mercy swete herte myne Creseyde
And yf that in tho wordes that I seyde
Be any wronge, I wol no more trespace
Doth what you lyst, I am al in your grace

And she answerde, of gylte mysericorde
That is to sayne, that I forgeue al thys
And euermore on thys nyght you recorde
And bethe wel ware ye do nomore amys
Nay dere herte myne (q̃ he) ywys
And now (q̃ she) that I haue you do smerte
Forgeue it me, myne owne swete herte

This Troylus with blisse of that suppriseb
Put al in goddes hande, as he that mente
Nothyng but wel, and sodaynly auysed
He her in armes faste to hym hente
And Pandarus, with a ful good entente
Layde him to slepe, and sayde, yf ye be wyse
Sweueneth not now lest mo folke aryse

what might or may the sely larke say
whan the sperhauke hath him in his fote
I can no more, but of these ylke tway
To whom thys tale sugre be or sote
Though I tarye a yere, somtyme I mote
After myne auctour tellen her gladnesse
As wel as I haue tolde her heuynesse

Creseyde, which that felte her thus ytake
(As writen clerkes in her bokes olde)

Ryght as an aspen leefe she gan to quake
whan she hym felte her in hys armes folde
But Troylus al hole of cares colde
Gan thanken tho the blysful goddes seuen
through sodry paines to bring folke to heuē

This Troylus in armes gan her straine
And sayd swete, as euer mote I gone
Now be ye caught, here is but we twayne
Nowe yeldeth you, for other boote is none
To that Creseyde answerde thus anone
Ne had I er nowe, my swete herte dere
Ben yolde ywys, I were nowe nat here

O, soth is sayd, that healed for to be
As of a feuer, or other great sicknesse
Yen must drynken, as we ofte se
Ful bytter drynke, and for to haue gladnesse
Yen drynken oft payne, and great distresse
I meane it here by, as for thys auenture
that through a paine hath foūdē al his cure

And nowe swetnesse semeth more swete
That bytternesse assayed was byforne
For out of wo in blysse nowe they flete
None such they felten sens they were borne
Nowe is thys bet, than both two be lorne
For loue of god, take euery woman hede
To werken thus, yf it come to the nede

Creseyde al quite from euery drede and tene
As she that iust cause had him to tryste
Made him such feest, it ioye was to sene
whan she his trouth and clene entent wyst
And as about a tre wyth many a twyste
Bytrent and writhe the swete wodbynde
Can eche of hem in armes other wynde

And as the newe abashed nyghtyngale
that stynteth first, whā she begynneth sing
whan that she hereth any heerdes tale
Or in the hedges any wyght steryng
And after syker doth her voice out ryng
Ryght so Creseyde, whan her drede stent
Opened her hert, and tolde him her entent

And right as he ý seeth hys deth yshapen
And dyen mote, in aught that he may gesse
And sodaynly rescous doth him escapen
And from his deth is brought in sykernesse
For al this worlde, in such present gladnesse
was Troylus, and hath his lady swete
wyth worse happe god let vs neuer mete

Her armes smal, her streyght backe & soft
Her sydes longe, fleshly, smoth, and whyte
He gan to stroke, & good thrifte bade full oft
Her snowysse throte, her brestes round & lite
Thus in thys heuen he gan him to delyte
And therwithal a thousande tymes her kyst
That what to done for ioye vnneth he wyst

Than sayd he thus, O loue, O charite
Thy mother eke, Citheria the swete
That after thy selfe, next heryed be she
Venus I meane, the wel wylly planete
And next that, I meneus I the grete
For neuer man was to you goddes holde
As I which ye haue brought fro cares cold

Benigne loue, thou holy bonde of thynges
who so wol grace, & lyste the nat honouren
Lo, thys desyre wol flye wythouten wyngē
For noldest thou of bountie hem socouren
That seruen best, and most alway labouren
Yet were al loste, ý dare I well sayne certes
But yf thy grace passed our desertes

And for thou me ý leste thōke coulde deserue
Of hem that nombred ben vnto thy grace
Hast holpen, ther I lykely was for to sterue
And me bestowed in so hygh a place
That thylke boundes may no blysse pace
I can no more, but laude and reuerence
Be to thy bounte and thyne excellence

And therwithal Creseyde anone he kyst
Of which certayne she felte no disease
And thus sayd he, nowe wolde god I wyst
Myne hert swete, howe I you might please
what man (q̃ he) was euer thus at ease
As I, on which the fayrest, and the best
That euer I sey, deyneth her to rest

Here may men sene that mercy passeth right
The experience of that is felte in me
That am vnworthy to so swete a wyght
But herte myne, of your benignite
So thynke, that though I vnworthy be
Yet mote I nede amenden in some wyse
Ryght through ý vertue of your hye seruice

And for the loue of god my lady dere
syth he hath wrought me for I shall you serue
As

As thus I meane: woll ye be my feere
To do me lyue, yf that you lyst, or sterue
So teacheth me, howe that I may deserue
Your thōke, so ý I thrugh myne ignorauce
Ne do nothyng that you be displeasaunce

For certes fresh womanlyche wyfe
This dar I saye, that trouth and diligence
That shall ye fynden in me all my lyfe
Ne I woll nat certayn breken your defence
And yf I do present or in absence
For loue of god let slee me with the dede
Yf that it lyke vnto your womanhede.

Iwys (q̃ she) myne owne hertes lust
My grounde of ease & all myne hert dere
Graunt mercy, for on that is all my trust
But let vs fal awaye fro this matere
For it suffyseth, this that sayd is here
And at o worde, withouten repentaunce
welcome my knyght, my peace, my suffy-
saunce

Of her delyte or ioyes one of the leest
were impossyble to my wyt to saye
But iudgeth ye that haue ben at the feest
Of such gladnesse, yf that hem lyst playe
I can nomore, but thus these ylke tway
That nigh betwixen drede and sykernesse
Felten in loue the great worthynesse

O blysful nyght, of hem so longe ysought
How blyth vnto hem both two thou wer-
why ne had I such feest w̄ my soul ybought
Yea, or the leest ioye that was there
Away thou foule daūger and thou feere
And let hem in this heuen blysse dwell
That is so hygh, that all ne can I tell.

But soth is, though I can not tellen all
As can myne auctour of his excellence
Yet haue I sayd, and god toforne shall
In euery thyng all holly his sentence
And yf that I at loues reuerence
Haue any worde in eched for the best
Doth therwithal ryght as your seluen lest.

For my wordes here, and euery parte
I speke hem all vnder correction
Of you that felyng haue in loues arte
And put it all in your discrettion
To entreate or make diminition
Of my langage, and that I you beseche
But now to purpose of my rather speche

These ylke two that beth in armes last
So loth to hem a sonder gon to were
That eche from other wenden ben bryaft
Or els lo, this was her moost feere
That all this thing but nyce dreames wer
For which ful oft eche of hem sayd, o swete
Clyppe I you thus, or els do I it mete

And lorde so he gan goodly on her se
That neuer his loke ne bleynt frō her face
And sayde, O dere hert maye it be
That it be soth that ye ben in this place
Yea hert myne, god thanke I of his grace
(q̃ tho Creseyde) & therwithal hym kyst
That where her spyrite was, for ioye she
(nyst

This Troylus full oft her eyen two
Gan for to kysse, and sayd: O eyen clere
It weren ye that wrought me suche wo
Ye humble nettes of my lady dere
Though ther be mercy writtē in your chere
God wot the text full harde is for to fynde
How coude ye, withouten bonde me bynde.

Therwith he gan her fast in armes take
And well an hundred tymes gan he syke
Nat such sorowfull syghes as men make
For wo, or els whan that folke be syke
But easy syghes suche as ben to lyke
That shewed his affection within
Of suche syghes coulde he nat blyu.

Sone after this, they spake of sondry thin-
As fyll to purpose of this auenture (ges
And playing, enterchaungeden her rynges
Of which I can not tellen no scripture
But well I wot, a broche of golde & asure
In which a ruby set was lyke an herte
Creseyde him yaue, & stacke it on his sherte.

Lorde trowe ye that a couetous wretche
That blameth loue, and halte of it despyte
That of tho pens ý he can muckre & ketche
was euer yet yeue to him suche delyte
As is in loue, in o poynt in some plyte
Nay doutlesse, for also god me saue
So parfyte ioye may no nygarde haue.

They woll say yes, but lorde so they lye
Tho busy wretches ful of wo and drede

That callen loue a woodnesse of follye
But it shall fall hem as I shall you rede
They shall forgon the whyte & eke the rede
And lyue in wo, ther god yeue hem mysfe
and euery louer i his trouth auaũce (chaũce

As wolde god tho wretches that dispyse
Seruyce of loue, had eares also longe
As had Mida, full of couetyse
And therto dronken had as hote & stronge
As Creſus dyd, for his affectes wronge
To teachen hem, that they ben in the vyce
And louers nat although they holde hem nyse

These ylke two of whom ẏ I you say
whan that her hertes wel assured were
Tho gonnen they to speake and to playe
And eke rehersen how, whan, and where
They knewe fyrst, & euery wo or fere
That passed was, but all suche heuynesse
I thonke it god, was turned to gladnesse

And euer more, whan that hem fyll to speke
Of any thyng of suche a tyme agon
with kyssyng all that tale shulde breke
And fallen into a newe ioye anon
And dyddẽ al her myght, syns they wer one
For to recoueren blysse, and ben at ease
And payſed wo with ioye countrepeyse.

Reason woll not that I speake of slepe
For it accordeth not to my matere
God wot they toke of it full lytle kepe
But lest this night that was to hem so dere
Ne shulde in vayne escape in no manere
It was beset in ioye and besynesse
Of all that sowneth into gentylnesse.

But whan the cocke, cõmune astrologer
Gan on his breest to beate, and after crowe
And Lucifer, the dayes messaunger
Gan for to ryse, and out her beames throw
And estward rose to him that that coulde it
Fortuna maior, thã anon Creseyde (knowe
with hert sore to Troylus thus seyde.

Myne hertes lyke, my trust, all my plesaũce
That I was borne alas, that me is wo
That day of vs mote make disceueraunce
For tyme it is to ryse, and hence go
Or els I am lost for euer mo
O nyght alas, why wilt thou ouer vs houe
As longe as whan Alemena laye by Joue.

O blacke nyght, as folke in bookes rede
That shapen art by god this world to hyde
At certayne tymes, with thy darke wede
That vnder that men myght in rest abyde
wel oughtẽ beestes to playn, & folk to chyde
That ther as day w̃ labour wold vs brest
That thou thus flyest, & deynest vs nat rest

Thou doest alas, to shortly thyne offyce
Tho rakle night, ther god maker of kynde
The for thyne haste, & thyne vnkynde vyce
So fast aye to our hemispery bynde
That neuermore vnder ẏ groũd thou wind
For now for thou so hyest out of Troye
Haue I forgone thus hastily my ioye

This Troylus that with tho wordes felte
As thought hym tho, for pitous distresse
The blody teares from his hert melt
As he that yet neuer suche heuynesse
Assayed had, out of so great gladnesse
Gan therwithall Creseyde his lady dere
In armes strayne, & holde in louely manere

O cruell daye, accuser of the ioye
That night & loue haue stole & fast ywryen
Accursed be thy cõmyng into troye
For euery bore hath one of thy bryght eyen
Enuyous day, what lyst the so to spyen
what hast thou lost, why sekest thou this (place
There god thy light so quẽche for his (grace.

Alas, what haue these louers the agylt
Dispytous day, thyne be the payne of hell
For many a louer hast thou slayne, & wylt
Thy poring in wol nowhere let hem dwell
what profrest thou thy lyght here for to sel
So sell it hem that smal seales graue
we woll the not, vs nedeth no daye haue

And eke the sunne Tytan gan he chyde
And sayd, O foole, well may mẽ the despise
That hast al night the dawning by thy side
And suffrest her so soone vp fro the ryse
For to disease vs louers in this wyse
what hold your bed, ther thou & thy morow
I byd god so yeue you both sorowe.

Therwith ful sore he syghed, & thus he seyd
My lady ryght, and of my wele or wo

The well & roote, o goodly myne Creseyde
And shall I rysse alas, and shall I so:
Now fele I that my hert mote a two
And how shulde I my lyfe an houre saue
Syns that with you is all the lyfe I haue:

what shall I done: for certes I not how
Ne whan alas, I shall the tyme se
That in this plyte I may ben eft w̃ you
And of my lyfe god wote, how shall that be
Syns that desyre ryght nowe so byteth me
That I am deed anon, but I retourne
How shuld I long alas, fro you soiourne:

But nathelesse, myne owne lady bryght
were it so that I wyst vtterly
That your humble seruaunt, & your knight
were in your hert yset so fermely
As ye in myne, the which truly
We leuer were than these worldes twayne
Yet shulde I bet enduren all my payne

To that Creseyde answered ryght anon
And with a sygh she sayd: O hert dere
The game ywys so ferforth now is gone
That fyrst shall Phebus fallen fro the spere
And euerych the Egle ben the doues fere
And euery rocke out of his place sterte
Er Troylus go out of Creseydes hert.

Ye ben so depe within my hert graue
That tho I wold it turne out of my thouzt
As wysely very god my soule saue
To dyen in the payne, I coulde nought
And for ỳ loue of god ỳ vs hath wrought
Let in your brayne none other fantasy
So crepe, that it cause me to dye.

And that ye me wolde haue as fast in mind
As I haue you, that wolde I you beseche
And yf I wyst sothly that to fynde
God myght not apoynt my ioyes eche
But hert myne withouten more speche
Beth to me true, or els were it routh
For I am thyne, by god & by my trouth.

Beth glad for thy, and lyue in sykernesse
Thus sayd I neuer er this, ne shall to mo
And yf to you it were a great gladnesse
To turne ayen sone after that ye go
As fayne wolde I as ye, it were so
As wysely god myne hert bryng to rest
And hym in armes toke, and oft kest

Ayenst his wyll, syth it must nedes be
This Troylus vp rose, and fast hym cledde
And in his armes toke his lady free
An hundred tymes, & on his waye him sped
And with suche wordes as his hert bledde
He sayd: farewell my dere hert swete
That god vs graũt sounde & sone to mete

To which no worde for sorow she answerd
So sore gan his partyng her distrayne
And Troylus vnto his palleys ferde
As wo begon as she was, soth to sayne
So hard him wrõg of sharpe desire ỳ payn
For to ben efte there he was in pleasaunce
That it may neuer out of his remẽbraunce.

Returned to his royal palleys sone
He soft vnto his bed gan for to slynke
To slepe longe, as he was wont to done
But al for nouzt he may wel lyg and wynke
But slepe may ther non in his hert synke
Thinking how she, for whõ desire him bred
A Y.folde was worth more than he wend

And in his thouzt gan vp & down to winde
Her wordes al, and euery countenaunce
And fermely impressen in his mynde
The lest poynt, that to him was plesaunce
And verely of thylke remembraunce
Desyre al newe him brende, & lust to brede
Gan more than erst & yet toke he non hede

Creseyde also, ryght in the same wyse
Of Troylus gan in her hert shette
His worthynesse, his lust, his dedes wyse
His gentlenesse, and how she with him met
Thonkyng loue, he so well her beset
Desyrynge oft to haue her hert dere
In such a place as she durst make him chere

Pandare a morow which that cõmen was
Unto his nece, and gan her fayre grete
And sayd: all this nyght so rayned it alas
That al my drede is, that ye nece swete
Haue lytle leyser had to slepe and mete
al this night (q̃ he) hath rainso do me wake
That some of vs I trowe her heedes ake

And nere he came, & sayd how stant it now
This mery morowe nece how can ye fare

Creseyde

Creseyde answered: neuer the bet for you
Fore that ye ben, god yeue your hart care
God helpe me so, ye caused all this fare
Trow I (q̃ she) for al your wordes whyte
O who so seeth you, knoweth you full lyte

with that she gan her face for to wry
with the shete, and wore for shame al reed
And Pandarus gan vnder for to prye
And sayd, yf that I shall ben deed
Haue here a sworde, and smyt of my heed
with that his arme, all sodaynly he thryst
Under her necke, and at the last her kyst.

I passe al ý which chargeth nought to saye
what, god forgaue his deth, and she also
Forgaue: and with her vncle gan to play
For other cause was there none, than so
But of this thyng ryght to theffect to go
whã tyme was, home to her house she went
And Pandare hath fully his entent.

Now turne we ayen to Troylus
That restlesse full longe a bedde laye
And pryuily sent after Pandarus
To hym to come in all the haste he may
He came anon, not ones sayd nay
And Troylus full sobrely he gret
And downe vpon the beddes syde hym set

This Troylus with all thaffectioun
Of frendly loue, that hert maye deuyse
To Pandarus on knees fyll adowne
And er that he wolde of the place aryse
He gan hym thanken on his best wyse
An hundred tyme he gan the tyme blesse
That he was borne to bring him to distresse

He sayd: O frende of frendes, the alderbest
That euer was, the soth for to tell
Thou hast in heuẽ ibrought my soule at rest
Fro Phlegeton the fyrye floud of hell
That though I might a thousãd tymes sel
Upon a daye my lyfe in thy seruyse
It myght not a mote in that suffyse.

The sun which that all the worlde may se
Sawe neuer yet, my lyfe that dare I leye
So ioly, fayre, and goodly as is she
whose I am all, and shall tyll that I dye
And that I thus am hers dare I seye
That thanked be the hygh worthynesse
Of loue, and eke thy kynde besynesse

Thus hast thou me no lytle thyng iyeue
For why, to the obleged be for aye
My lyfe & why: for thrugh thyn help I liue
Or els deed had I ben ago many a day
And w̃ that worde downe in his bed he lay
And Pandarus full soberly hym herde
Tyll all was sayd: & than he hym answerd.

My dere frende, I haue done for the
In any case god wot it is me lefe
And am as glad as man maye of it be
God helpe me so, but take nowe nat agrefe
That I shall sayn, beware of this mischefe
That ther as now brought art to thy blysse
That thou thy selfe, ne cause it nat to mysse.

For of fortunes sharpe aduersitie
The worst kynde of infortune is this
A man to haue ben in prosperitie
And it remembre whan it passed is
Thou art wyse ynough for thy do nat amys
Be nat to rakel though thou syt warme
For yf thou be, certayne it woll the harme

Thou art at ese, and holde the well therin
For also sure as red is euery fyre
As great a craft is to kepe well, as wynne
Bridle alway well thy speche & thy desyre
For wordly ioye holdeth nat but by a wyre
That preueth well it brest alday so oft
For thy nede is to werken with it so ft

(Quod Troylus) I hope, and god toforne
My dere frende, that I shall so me bere
That in my gilt there shal nothing ben lorn
Ne I nyll nat rakle, as for to greuen here
It nedeth nat this mater oft tere
For wistest thou myne hert wel Pandare
God wot of this thou woldest lyte care

Tho gan he tell hym of his glad nyght
And wherof first his hert drad, and how
And sayd frende, as I am true knyght
And by that fayth I owe to god and you
I had it neuer halfe so hote as now
And aye the more that desyre me byteth
To loue her best the more it me delyteth.

I nat my selfe nat wysely what it is
But now I fele a newe qualitie

yea all an other than I dyd or this
Pandare answered and sayd thus, that he
That ones may in heuen blysse be
He feleth other wayes dare I laye
Than thilke tyme he first herde of it saye

This is a worde for all, that Troylus
was neuer full to speke of this matere
And for to praysen vnto Pandarus
The bountie of his ryght lady dere
And Pandarus to thank, and maken chere
This tale was aye span newe to begyn
Tyll that the nyght departed hem atwyn

Sone after this, for that fortune it wolde
Icomen was the blysfull tyme swete
That Troylus was warned, ý he sholde
Ther he was erst, Creseyde his lady mete
For which he felte his hert in ioye flete
And faythfully gan al the goddes hery
And let se now, yf that he can be mery

And holden was the forme and all the gyse
Of her cõmyng, and of his also
As it was erst which nedeth nought deuise
But playnly to theffect ryght for to go
In ioye and suretie Pandarus hem two
Abed brought whan hem both lest
And thus they ben in quyet and in rest

Naught nedeth it to you, syth they ben met
To aske at me, yf that they blythe were
For it erst was well, tho was it bet
A thousand folde, this nedeth not enquere
Ago was euery sorowe and euery fere
And both ywys they had, and so they wend
As moche ioye as hert maye comprehende.

This nys no lytle thynge of for to sey
This passeth euery wyt for to deuyse
For eche of hem gan other lustes obey
Felicitie, which that these clerkes wyse
Cõmenden so, ne may nat here suffyse
This ioye may not wrytten be with ynke
This passeth all that hert may bethynke

But cruel day, so welaway the stounde
Gan for to aproch, as they by signes knewe
For which hem thought felen dethes woũd
So wo was hem, ý chaungen gan her hew
And day they gonnen to despyse all newe
Calling traytour, enuyous and worse
And bytterly the dayes lyght they curse.

(Quod Troylus) alas, now am I ware
That Pyrous, and tho swyft stedes thre
which that drawen forth the sonnes chare
Han gon some bypath in despyte of me
And maketh it so soone daye to be
And for the sunne hym hasteth thus to ryse
Ne shall I neuer don hym sacrifyce

But nedes day depart hem must sone
And whan her speche don was & her chere
They twyn anon, as they wer wont to don
And setten tyme of metyng eft yfere
And many a night they wrought in this ma-
And thus fortune a tyme lad in ioye (nere.
Creseyde, & eke this kynges son of Troye.

In suffysaunce, in blysse, & in syngynges
This Troylus gan al his lyfe to lede
He spendeth, iusteth, & maketh feestynges
He yeueth frely oft, and chaungeth wede
He helde about hym alway out of drede
A world of folke, as com him well of kynde
The freshest and the best he coulde fynde.

That suche a voyce was of him, & a steuen
Throughout ý worlde of honour & largesse
That it vp ronge vnto the yate of heuen
And as in loue he was in suche gladnesse
That in his hert, he demed as I gesse
That there nis louer in this worlde at ease
So wel as he, and thus gan loue him plese

The goodlyhed or beautie, which ý kynde
In any other lady had ysette
Can nat ý moũtenaunce of a gnat vnbynde
About his hert of all Creseydes nette
He was so narowe ymasked and yknette
That is vndon on any maner syde
That nyll nat ben for ought ý maye betyde

And by the honde full oft he wolde take
This Pandarus, and into garden lede
And suche a feaste, and such a processe make
Hym of Creseyde, and of her womanheed
And of her beautie, that withouten drede
It was an heuen his wordes for to here
And than he wolde synge in this manere

Loue that of erth, & see hath gouernaũce
Loue, that his heestes hath in heuen hye

Loue

Loue, that with an holesome alyaunce
Halt people ioyned, as hym lyst hem gye
Loue, that knytteth lawe and company
And couples doth in vertue for to dwell
Bynde this accorde, ý I haue tolde, & tell.

That ý the world w̄ faith which ý is stable
Dyuerseth so his stoundes accordyng
That elementes that beth so discordable
Holden abonde perpetually duryng
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth brig
And ý the mone hath lordship ouer ý nightes
All this doth loueaye heried be his mightes

That ý the see, that gredy is to flowen
Constrayneth to a certayne ende so
His floudes, that so fersly they ne growen
To drenchen erth and all for euermo
And yf that loue ought let his bydle go
All that now loueth asondre shulde lepe
And lost wer al, ý loue halt nowe to hepe

So wolde to god, that authour is of kynde
That with his bonde, loue of his vertu lyst
To serchen hertes al, and fast bynde
That frō his bōd no wight ý wey out wyst
And hertes colde hem, wold I ý hem twyst
To make hem loue, & that hem lyst aye rew
On hertes sore, & kepe hem that ben trewe.

In all nedes for the townes werre
He was, and aye the fyrst in armes dyght
And certaynly, but yf that bokes erre
Haue Hector, moost ydradde of any wyght
And this encrease of hardynesse and myght
Com hym of loue, his ladyes thank to wyn
That altered his spyrite so within.

In tyme of truce on hauking wolde he ryde
Or els hunt bore, beare, or lyoun
The small beestes let he gon besyde
And whan ý he come rydyng into ý towne
Full oft his lady from her window downe
As fresh as faucon, comen out of mue
Full redy was hym goodly to salue

And moost of loue & vertue was his speche
And in despyte had al wretchednesse
And doutlesse no nede was hym beseche
To honouren hem, that had worthynesse
And easen hem that weren in distresse
And glad was he yf any wight wel ferde
That louer was, whan he it wyst or herde.

For soth to sayne, he loste held euery wizt
But yf he were in loues hygh seruyce
I meane folke that ought it ben of ryght
And ouer all this, so wel coulde he deuyse
Of sentement, and in so vncouth wyse
All his aray, that euery louer thought
That all was well, what so he sayde or (wrought.
And though that he be come of bloud royal
Hym lyst of pryde, at no wyght for to chace
Benigne he was to eche in generall
For which he gat him thāke in euery place
Thus wolde loue yhered be his grace
That pryde and yre, enuy and auaryce
He gan to flye, and euery other vyce

Thou lady bright, the doughter of Diane
Thy blynde & winged son eke Dan Cupide
Ye sustren nyne, eke that by Helicone
In hyl Pernaso lysten fyr to abyde
That ye thus ferre han deyned me to gyde
I can nomore, but syns that ye woll wende
Ye heryed ben for aye withouten ende.

Through you haue I sayd fully in my sōge
Theffect and ioye of Troylus seruyce
All be it there was some disease amonge
As myne auctour lysteth to deuyse
Hy thyrde boke nowe ende I in this wyse
And Troylus in lust and in quyete
Is with Creseyde his owne hert swete

Explicit liber tertius.

Ut all to lytle, welaway the whyle
Lasteth suche ioy, ythonked be fortune
That semeth trewest whan she woll begyle
And can to fooles so her songe entune
That she hem hent, ý blēt traytour cōmune
And whā a wight is frō her whele ythrow
Thā laugheth she, & maketh hym the mow.

From Troylus she gan her bryght face
Away to wryth, and toke of hym none hede
And cast hym clene out of his ladyes grace
And on her whele she set vp Diomede
For which myn hert rizt now gyneth blede
And now my pen alas w̄ which I wryte
Quaketh

Quaketh for drede, of that I muste endyte

For how Creseyde Troylus forsoke
Or at the leste, howe that she was vnkynde
Note hence forthe, ben mater of my boke
As write folke, through which it is in mynde
Alas that they shulde euer cause kynde
To speke her harme, & yf they on her lye
Iwys hem selfe shulde haue the vilanye

O ye Herynes nyghtes doughters thre
That endlesse complayne euer in payne
Megera, Allecto, and eke Tesiphonee
Thou cruell Mars eke, father of Quiryne
This ylke Fourth boke helpe me to fyne
So that the loos, and loue, and lyke yfere
Of Troylus be fully shewed here.

Incipit liber Quartus.

Igging in host, as I haue sayd er this
The grekes strōg, aboute Troy toun
Bykell, that whan that Phebus shynyng is
Upon the brest of Hercules Lyon
That Hector, with many a bolde baron
Caste on a day with grekes for to fyght
As he was wont, to greue hē what he might

Not I how longe or shorte it was bytwene
This purpose, & that day they fyghtē mente
But on a day wel armed bright and shene
Hector and many a worthy knight out wente
With speare in hond, and bygge bowes bente
And in the berde withouten lenger lette
Her fomen in the felde anon hem mette

The longe day w̄ speares sharpe ygroūde
With arowes, dartes, swerdes, & maces fell
They fight, & bringen horse & man to groūde
And with her axes out the braynes quell
But in the laste shoure, sothe to tell
The folke of Troye hem seluen so misledden
That with ȳ worse at night hom they fleddē

At wyche day was taken Anthenor
Maugre Polymydas, or Monesteo
Xantyppe, Sarpedon, Palestynor
Polyte, or eke the Troyan dan Rupheo
And other lasse folke, as Phebuseo
So that for harme ȳ day the folke of Troye
Dredden to lese a great parte of her ioye

Of Priamus was yeue, at grekes requeste
A tyme of truce, and tho they gonnen trete
Her Prisoners to chaungen moste and leste
And for the surplus yeuen sommes grete
This thyng anon was couthe in euery strete
Both in thassege, in towne, and euery where
And with the fyrst it came to Calkas eere

Whan Calkas knew this tretyse shulde hold
In consystorie amonge the grekes sone
He gan in thyng, forthe with lordes olde
And set hym there as he was wonte to done
And with a chaunged face, hem bade abone
For loue of god, to done that reuerence
To stynten noyse, & yeue him audyence

Than sayd he thus, lo lordes myne I was
Troyan, as it is knowen out of drede
And yf that you remembre, I am Calkas
That alderfyrst yaue comforte to your nede
And tolde wel howe that ye shulde spede
For dredelesse through you shal in a stounde
Ben Troy ybrent, & beaten down to groūde

And in what forme, or in what maner wyse
This town to shende, & al your luste tacheue
Ye haue er this wel herde me deuyse
This knowe ye my lordes, as I leue
And for the grekes weren me so leue
I came my selfe in my propre persone
To teche in this, how you was best to done

Hauyng vnto my treasour, ne my rent
Right no regarde, in respecte of your ease
Thus al my good I lefte, and to you went
Wenyng in this you lordes for to please
But all that losse ne dothe me no disease
I vouchsafe, as wisely haue I ioye
For you to lese, all that I haue in Troye

Saue of a doughter that I lefte, alas
Slepyng at home, whan out of Troy I stert
O sterne, o cruell father that I was
How might I haue in that so harde an hert
Alas that I ne had brought her in my shert
For sorow of which I wol nat liue to morow

But yf ye lordes rewe vpon my sorowe

For bycause that I sawe no tyme er nowe
Her to delyuer, iche holden haue my pees
But nowe or neuer, yf that it lyke you
I may her haue right soone doutlees
O helpe and grace, among al this prees
Rewe on this olde caytyfe in dystresse
Sith I through you haue al this heuynesse

Ye haue nowe caught, and fettred in prison
Troyans ynow, and yf your wylles be
My chylde with one maye haue redemption
Nowe for the loue of god, and of bounte
One offo fele alas, so yefe hym me
what nede were it this prayer for to werne
Sith ye shul haue, both folke & town as yern

On peryll of my lyfe I shall nat lye
Apollo hath me tolde full faytfully
I haue eke founde it by astronomy
By sorte, and by augury trewly
And dare wel saye the tyme is fast by
That fyre & flambe on all ý town shal sprede
And thus shall Troy turne to ashen dede

For certayne Phebus, & Neptunus bothe
That makeden the walles of the toun
Ben w̄ the folke of Troye alway so wrothe
That they wol bring it to confusyoun
Right in despyte of kyng Lamedoun
By cause he nolde payen hem her hyre
The towne of Troye shall ben set on fyre

Tellyng his tale alway this olde grey
Humble in his speche and lokyng eke
The salte teeres from his eyen twey
Full faste ronnen downe by eyther cheke
So longe he gan of socoure hem beseke
That for to heale him of hys sorowes sore
They gaue him Antenor, withouten more

But who was glad ynough, but Calcas tho
And of this thyng full sone his nedes leyde
On hem that shulden for the tretyse go
And hem for Antenor ful ofte preyde
To bringen home kynge Thoas, & Creseyde
And whan Priam his safegarde sente
Themballadours to Troy streight they wēt

The cause I tolde of her cōmyng, the olde
Priam the kyng, full sone in generall
Let here vpon his parlyment holde
Of whiche the effecte rehercen you I shall
Themballadours ben answerde for fynal
The eschaunge of prisoners, and al this nede
Hem lyketh wel, and forthe in they procede

This Troylus was present in the place
whan asked was for Antenor Creseyde
For whiche full sone chaungen gan hys face
As he ý with tho wordes well nyghe deyde
But natheleſſe he no worde to it seyde
Leste men shulde his affection espye
wyth mannes herte, he gan his sorowes drie

And full of anguysche and of grisly drede
Abode, what other lordes wolde to it sey
And yf they wolde graunt, as god forbede
the schaūge of her, thā thought he thiges twey
First, how to saue her honour, & what wey
He might best the schaunge of her withstonde
Ful faste he caste howe al this might stonde

Loue him made al prest to done her byde
And rather dyen, than she shulde go
But Reason sayde him on that other syde
withouten assent of her, do nat so
Leste for thy werke she wolde be thy foe
And sayn, ý thorugh thy medling is yblowe
Your bother loue, there it was erst vnknowe

For whyche he gan delyberen for the best
And though the lordes wolde that she went
He wolde lete hem graunt what hem lest
And tel his lady fyrst what that they ment
And whan that she had sayd him her entent
Therafter wolde he worken also blyue
Tho al the worlde ayen it wolde stryue

Hector whiche that well the grekes herde
For Antenor, how they wold haue Creseyde
Gan it wythstonde, and soberly answerde
Syrs, she nys no prisoner (he seyde)
I not on you who that this charge leyde
But on my parte, ye may eftsones hem tel
we vsen here, no women for to sel

The noyse of people vp sterte than atones
As brymme as blase of strawe yset on fyre
For in fortune it wolde for the nones
They shulden her confusyon desyre
Hector (q̄ they) what gost may you enspyre
This woman thus to shild, and done vs lese

Dan An-

Dan Antenor, a wronge waye now ye chese

That is so wyse, and eke so bolde baroun
And we haue nede to folke, as men may se
He is one the grettest of thys towne
O Hector, lette thy fantasies be
O kyng Priam (q they) thus segge we
That all our voice is to forgone Creseyde
And to delyuer Antenore they preyde

O Juuenall lorde, trewe is thy sentence
That lytell wenen folke what is to yerne
That they ne fynden in her desyre offence
For cloude of errour lete hem discerne
what best is, and lo, here ensample as yerne
These folke desyren nowe delyueraunce
Of Antenore that brought hem to mischaūce

For he was after traytour to the toun
Of Troye alas, they quytte him out to rathe
O nyce worlde, lo thy discrecion
Creseyde, whiche that neuer dyd hem scathe
Shall nowe no lenger in her blysse bathe
But Antenor, he shal come home to towne
And she shall out, thus said heere and howne

For whiche delybered was by parlyment
For Antenor to yelden out Creseyde
And it pronounced by the presydent
Though that Hector nay full ofte prayde
And fynally, what wight that it withsayde
It was for naught, it muste ben, and sholde
For substaunce of the parlyment it wolde

Departed out of parlyment echone
This Troylus, wythout wordes mo
Unto his chambre spedde hym faste alone
But yf it were a man of hys or two
The which he bade out faste for to go
Bycause he wolde slepen, as he sayde
And hastely vpon his bedde him layde

And as in wynter leaues ben byrafte
Eche after other tyll trees be bare
So that there nys but barke & braūche plafte
Lythe Troylus, byrafte of eche welfare
Ibounden in the blacke barke of care
Disposed woode out of his wytte to breyde
So sore him sate the chaungyng of Creseyde

He ryst him vp, and euery doore he shette
And wyndowe eke, & tho this sorowfull man
Upon his beddes syde downe him sette
Full lyke a deed ymage, pale and wan
And in his breste the heaped wo began
Out burste, and he to worken in this wyse
In his woodnesse, as I shall you deuyse

Right as ý wylde bulle begynneth spring
Nowe here nowe there, ydarted to the herte
And of his dethe roreth, in complaynyng
Right so gan he aboute the chambre sterte
Smyting his brest, aye with hisfystes smert
His heed to the wal, his body to the grounde
Full ofte he swapte him seluen to confounde

His eyen two for pyte of hys herte
Out stremeden as swyfte as welles twey
The highe sobbes of his sorowes smerte
His speche him refte, vnnethes myght he sey
O dethe alas, why nylte thou do me dey-
Acursed be that daye whiche that nature
Shope me to ben a lyues creature

But after whan the fury and all the rage
whiche that his hert twyste, and fast threst
By length of tyme somwhat gan aswage
Upon his bedde he layde him downe to rest
But tho begon his teares more out to brest
That wonder is the body maye suffyse
To halfe this wo, which that I you deuyse

Than sayd he thus: Fortune alas ý whyle
what haue I done- what haue I the agylte-
Howe myghtest thou for routhe me begyle-
Is there no grace- and shal I thus be spylt-
Shal thus Creseyde awaye for ý thou wylte
Alas: how mightest thou in thyn herte fynde
To ben to me thus cruell and vnkynde-

Haue I the nat honoured all my lyue-
As thou wel wotest, aboue the goddes all
why wylte thou me fro toye thus deprive
O Troylus, what may men nowe the call
But wretche of wretches, out of honour fall
In to mysery, in which I wol bewayle
Creseyde alas, tyll that the brethe me fayle

Alas Fortune, yf that my lyfe in toye
Displeased had vnto thy foule enuye
why ne haddest thou my father king of Troy
Berafte the lyfe, or done my brethern dye
Or slayne my selfe, ý thus complayne & crye
I combre worlde, that may of nothyng serue

But euer dye, and neuer fully sterue

If that Creseyde alone were me lafte
Naught raught I whyder thou woldest me
And her alas, thā hast thou me byraft (stere
But euermore, lo this is thy manere
To reue a wight, that moste is to him dere
To preue in that thy gierful vyolence
Thus am I loste, there helpeth no defence

O very lorde, O loue, o god alas
That knowest best myn hert, & al my thoupt
what shal my sorouful lyke done in this caas
If I forgo that I so dere haue bought
Sens ye Creseyde & me haue fully brought
In to your grace, and both our hertes sealed
Howe may ye suffre alas it be repealed

what I may done I shal, whyle I may dure
On lyue, in turment and in cruel payne
This infortune, or this disauenture
Alone as I was borne I woll complayne
Ne neuer wol I sene it shyne or rayne
But ende I wol as Edippe in derknesse
My sorouful lyke, and dyen in distresse

O wery goste, that errest to and fro
why nylt thou flyen out of the wofullest
Body that euer might on grounde go?
O soule, lurkyng in thys woful neste
Flye forthout myn herte, and it breste
And folowe alway Creseyde thy lady dere
Thy right place is nowe no lenger here

O wofull eyen two, sens your disporte
was al to sene Creseydes eyen bright
what shal ye done, but for my discomforte
Stondē for naught, & wepen out your syght
Sens she is queynt, ẏ wōt was you to light
In veyne from this forth haue I eyen twey
I formed, sens your vertue is awey

O my Creseyde, O lady souerayne
Of this wofull soule that thus cryeth
who shal nowe yeuen comforte to thy payne
Alas no wight, but whan myne herte dyeth
My spyrite, whiche that so vnto you hyeth
Receyue in gree, for that shall aye you serue
For thy no force is, though the body sterue

O ye louers, that hygh vpon the whele
Ben sette of Fortune, in good auenture
God lene that ye fynden aye loue of stele
And longe mote your lyke in ioye endure
But whan ye comen by my sepulture
Remembreth that your felowe resteth there
For I loued eke, though I vnworthy were

O olde vnholsome and mislyued man
Calkas I meane, alas what eyled the
To ben a greke-sens thou art borne Troyan
O Calcas, whiche that wolte my bane be
In cursed tyme waste thou borne for me
As wolde blysful Joue for his ioye
That I the had where I wolde in Troye

A thousande syghes hotter than the glede
Out of his brest, eche after other went
Medled with playnte newe, his wo to fede
For whiche his woful teeres neuer stente
And shortly so hys sorowes hym to rente
And wore so mate, that ioye or penaunce
He feleth none, but lyeth in a traunce

Pandare, whiche that in the parlyment
Had herde what euery lorde & burgeys seyde
And howe full graunted was by one assent
For Antenor, to yelden out Creyseyde
Gan wel nigh wode out of his wyt to breyde
So that for wo he nyste what he mente
But in a race to Troylus he wente

A certayne knight, that for the tyme kepte
The chambre doore, vndyd it hym anon
And Pandare that full tenderly wepte
In to the derke chambre as styll as stone
Towarde the bedde gan softely to gone
So confuse, that he nyste what to say
For very wo, his wytte was nyghe away

And with chere and lokyng al to torne
For sorowe of this, & with his armes folden
He stode this woful Troylus beforne
And on hys pytous face he gan beholden
But so ofte gan hys herte colden
Seyng his frende in wo, whose heuynesse
His herte slough, as thought him for distresse

This woful wight, this Troylus that felte
His frende Pandare ycomen him to se
Gan as the snowe ayenst the sonne melte
For whiche this woful Pandare, of pyte
Gan for to wepe, as tenderly as he
And specheleſſe thus ben these ylke twey

That neyther might for sorowe o worde sey

But at the laste, this wofull Troylus
Nygh deed for smert, gan bresten out to rore
And with a forouful noyse he sayd thus
Amonges his sobbes and his syghes sore
Lo Pandare I am deed, withouten more
Haste thou nat herde at parlyment he seyde
For Antenor howe loste is my Creseyde

This Pandare ful deed and pale of hewe
Ful pitously answerde, and sayd yes
As wysely were it false as it is trewe
That I haue herde, and wote al howe it is
O mercy god, who wolde haue trowed thys
Who wold haue wēde, ý in so lytell a throwe
Fortune our ioye wolde haue ouerthrowe

For in this worlde there is no creature
As to my dome, that euer sawe ruyne
Straūger thā this, through case or auēture
But who may al eschue or al deuyne
Suche is this worlde, for thy I thus defyne
Ne trust no wight to fynde in Fortune
Aye propretie, her yeftes ben cōmune

But tel me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorowē thus, why lyest thou in this wyse
Sens thy desyre al holly haste thou had
So that by right, it ought ynough suffyse
But I that neuer felte in my seruyce
A frendly chere or lokyng of an eye
Let me thus wepe and waylen tyl I dye

And ouer al this, as thou wel wost thy selue
This towne is full of ladyes al aboute
And to my dome, fayrer than suche twelue
As euer she was, shall I fyndē in some route
Yea one or twey, withouten any doute
For thy be glad myn owne dere brother
If she be loste, we shall recouer an other

What god forbyd alway ý eche plesaunce
In o thyng were, and in non other wight
If one can synge, another can well daunce
If this be goodly, she is glad and light
And this is fayre, and that can good aright
Eche for his vertue holden is for dere
Bothe heroner and faucon for ryuere

And eke as writ zanis, that was ful wyse
The newe loue out chaseth ofte the olde
And vpon newe case lythe newe auyse
Thynke eke thy selfe to sauen art thou holde
Suche fyre by processe, shall of kynde colde
For sens it is but casuell plesaunce
Some case shall put it out of remembraunce

For also sure as day cometh after nyght
The newe loue, labour, or other wo
Or els selde seynge of a wight
Done olde affections al ouer go
And for thy parte, thou shalte haue one of tho
To abredge with thy bytter paynes smerte
Absence of her, shal driue her out of herte

These wordes sayd he for the nones all
To helpe his frende, leste he for sorow deyde
For doutlesse to don his wo to fall
He raught not what vnthrift that he seyde
But Troylus that nygh for sorowe deyde
Toke lytel hede, of al that euer he mente
One eere it herde, at the other out it went

But at the laste he answerde, a said frende
This lechcrafte, or healed thus to be
were wel syttyng, yf that I were a fende
To trayen a wight, that trewe is vnto me
I pray god let this counsayle neuer ythe
But do me rather sterue anon right here
Er I thus done, as thou me woldest lere

She that I serue ywis, what so thou seye
To whom myn herte enhabyt is by right
Shall haue me holly hers tyll that I deye
For Pandarus, sens I haue trouth her hight
I wol nat ben vntrewe for no wight
But as her man I woll aye lyue and sterue
And neuer none other creature serue

And ther thou sayest ý shalt as fayre fynde
As she, let be, make no comparyson
To creature yformed here by kynde
O leue Pandare, in conclusyon
I wol nat ben of thyne opinyon
Touchyng al thys, for whiche I the beseche
So hold thy pece, thou sleest me w̄ thy spech

Thou bydde st me I shulde loue another
All freshly newe, and let Creseyde go
It lythe nat in my power leue brother
And though I might, yet wol I nat do so
But canste thou playen raket to and fro
Nettle in docke out, now this now ý Pādare

Nowe foule fall her for thy wo that care

Thou farest eke by me Pandarus
As he, that whan a wight is wo bygon
He cometh to him a pace, and saith right thus
Thynke nat on smerte, & thou shalt fele none
Thou mayste me fyrst transmewē in a stone
And reue me my passyons all
Or thou so lightly do my wo to fall

The dethe may wel out of my brest departe
The lyfe so longe may this sorowe myne
But fro my soule shall Creseydes darte
Out neuermore, but down with Proserpyne
whan I am deed, I wol wonne in pyne
And there I woll eternally complayne
My wo, & how that twynned be we twayne

Thou hast here made an argumēt forfyne
Howe that it shulde lasse payne be
Creseyde to forgon, for she was myne
And lyued in ease and in felycite
why gabbest thou, that saydest vnto me
That him is worse that is fro wele ythrowe
Than he had erst none of that wele knowe

But tel me now, sens ȳ the thinketh so light
To chaungen so in loue aye to and fro
why haste thou nat done besily thy might
To chaungen her, that dothe the al thy wo
why nylte thou let her fro thyne herte go
why nylte thou loue another lady swete
That may thyne herte setten in quyete

If thou haste had in loue aye yet mischaūce
And canste it nat out of thyne herte drye
I that lyued in lust and in plesaunce
with her, as moche as creature on lyue
Howe shulde I that forget, and that so blyue
O where hast thou ben hyd so long in mewe
That canste so wel and formelyche argewe

Nay godwote, naught worth is al thy rede
For whiche, for what that euer may befall
withouten wordes mo I wol ben deed
O dethe, that ender arte of sorowes all
Come nowe, sens I so ofte after the call
For sely is that dethe, sothe for to sayne
That ofte yclepeed, cometh and endeth payne

wel wote I, whyle my lyfe was in quiete
Er thou me slewe, I wolde haue yeuen hyre
But nowe thy commyng is to me so swete
That in this worlde, I nothyng so desyre
O dethe, sens with thys sorowe I am a fyre
Thou eyther do me anon in teeres drenche
Or with thy colde stroke myne herte quenche

Sens that thou sleest so fele in sondrie wyse
Ayenst her wyl, vnprayed day and nyght
Do me at my request thys seruyce
Delyuer nowe the world, so doste thou right
Of me that am the wofullest wight
That euer was, for tyme is that I sterue
Sēs in this world of right nauȝt do I serue

This Troylus in teeres gan distyll
As lycoure out of allambyke ful faste
And Pandarus gan holde his tonge styll
And to the grounde hys eyen downe he caste
But natheleſſe, thus thought he at laste
what parde, rather than my felawe dey
Yet shal I somwhat more vnto him sey

And said frende, sens thou hast such distresse
And sens the lyst myne argumentes blame
why nylt thy seluen helpe dou redresse
And with thy manhode letten all thys game
Go rauish her, ne canst thou nat for shame
And eyther let her out of towne fare
Or holde her styll, and leaue thy nyce fare

Arte thou in Troye, and haste non hardymēt
To take a wight, whiche that loueth the
And wolde her seluen ben of thyne assent
Nowe is nat thys a nyce vanyte
Ryse vp anon, and let this wepyng be
And sythe thou arte a man, for in this hour
I woll ben deed, or she shall ben our

To this answerde hym Troylus ful softe
And sayd, iwys my leue brother dere
Al this haue I my selfe yet thought full ofte
And more thyng than thou deuyseſt here
But why this thing is laft, ȳ shalt wel here
And whan thou haste me yeuen audyence
Therafter mayst thou tell all thy sentence

First syn ȳ wost this toun hath al this werre
For rauyshyng of women so by might
It shulde nat ben suffred me to erre
As it stonte nowe, ne done so great vnright
I shulde haue also blame of euery wight
My fathers graunt yf that I so withstode

Sens

Sens she is chaunged for the townes gode

I haue eke thought, so it were her assent
To aske her at my father of hys grace
Then thynke I, thys were her accusement
Sens well I wote I may her not purchace
For sens my father in so hygh a place
As parlyment, hath her eschaunge ensealed
He nyll for me hys lettre be repealed

yet drede I moste her herte to perturbe
wyth violence, yf I do suche a game
For yf I wolde it openly dysturbe
It muste be dysclaundre to her name
And me were leuer dye then her defame
As nolde god, but I shulde haue
Her honour, leuer then my lyfe to saue

Thus am I loste, for aught that I can se
For certayne is that I am her knyght
I muste her honour leuer haue then me
In euery case, as louer ought of ryght
Thus am I wyth desyre and reason twyght
Desyre for to dystourben her me redeth
And reason nyll not, so myne herte dredeth

Thus weppynge, that he could neuer cease
He sayd alas, how shall I wretch fare
For well fele I alwaye my loue encrease
And hope is lasse and lasse Pandare
Encreasen eke the causes of my care
So welawaye, why nyll myne herte breste
For as in loue there is but lytell reste

Pandare answerd, frende thou mayst for me
Done as the lyst, but had I it so hote
And thyne estate, she shulde go wyth me
Tho al this towne cryed on thys thynge by
I nolde set at al that noyse a grote (note
For whē mē haue cryed thē woll they ronne
Eke wōder last but.ix.dayes neuer in tonne

Deuyne not in reason aye so depe
Ne curtesly, but helpe thy selfe anone
Bet is that other then thy seluen wepe
And namely sens ye two ben all one
Ryse vp, for by myne heed she shall not gone
And rather be in blame a lytell yfounde
Thē sterue here as a gnat withoutē woūde

It is no shame vnto you ne no vyce
Her to wyth holden, that ye loueth moste
Paraueuture she myght holde the for nyce
So letten her go thus vnto the grekes hoste
Thinke eke fortune, as wel thy seluen woste
Helpeth hardy man vnto hys empryse
And weyueth wretches, for her cowardyse

And though thy lady wolde alyte her greue
Thou shalt thy selfe thy peace herafter make
But as to me certayne I can not leue
That she wolde it as nowe for yuell take
why shulde then for feare thyne herte quake
Thynke howe Paris hath, ý is thy brother
A loue, & why shalt thou not haue another

And Troylus, o thynge I dare the swere
That yf Creseyde, whych that is thy lefe
Nowe loueth the, as well as thou doste here
God helpe me so, she nyll not take a grefe
Though ỹ do boote anone in this myschefe
And yf she wylneth fro the for to passe
Then is she false, so loue her well the lasse

For thy take hert, & thynke ryght as a knight
Through loue is broken aldaye euery lawe
Kyth now somwhat thy corage & thy myght
Haue mercy on thy selfe for any awe
Let not this wretched wo thyne hert gnawe
But manly set the worlde on syxe & seuen
And yf thou dye a marter go to heuen

I wol my selfe ben wyth the at thys dede
Though I and all my kyn vpon a stounde
Shulde in a strete, as dogges lyggen deede
Through gyxte wyth many a bloody woūde
In euery case I woll a frende be founde
And yf the lysteth here sterueu as a wretche
Adieu, the deuell spede hym that retche

Thys Troylus gan ẃ tho wordes quicken
And sayd frende, graunt mercy, I assent
But certayuly thou mayst not so me prycken
Ne payne none ne may me so turment
That for no case, it is not myne entent
At short wordes, though I dyen sholde
To rauyshen her, but yf her selfe it wolde

why, so meane I (q̃ Pādarus) al this day
But tel me then, hast thou her well assayde
That sorowest thus. & he answerde him nay
wherof arte thou (q̃ Pādare) thē dysmayde
That nost not that she woll ben euel apayde
To rauyshē her, sens thou hast not ben there

But yf that Joue tolde it in thyne eere

For thy rise vp as nought ne were anone
And washe thy face, & to ý kynge thou wēde
Or he may wondren whyther thou art gone
Thou must w̄ wysedome, hym & other blēde
Or vpon case he may after the sende
Or thou beware, and shortly brother dere
Be glad, & let me werke in thys matere

For I shall shape it so, that sekerly
Thou shalt this night sōtime in some maner
Come speken wyth thy lady priuely
And by her wordes eke, as by her chere
Thou shalt full sone aperceyue & wel here
Of her entent, and in thys case the beste
And fare nowe wel, for in this poynt I reste

The swykke fame, whych ý false thinges
Equall reporteth lyke the thynges trewe
was throughout Troy ifled, w̄ prestwinges
Fro man to man, and made hys tale al newe
How Calcas doughter with her bright hew
At parlyment wythout wordes more
Igraunted was, in chaunge of Antenore

The whych tale anone ryght as Creseyde
Had herde, she whych ý of her father rought
(As in thys case) right nauzt, ne whē he deyd
Ful busely to Jupiter besought
Yeue hem myschaūce, ý thys tretys brought
But shortly leste these tales soth were
She durste at no wyght asken it for fere

As she that had her herte & al her mynde
On Troylus yset so wonder faste
That al this world ne mizt her loue vnbynd
Ne Troylus out of her herte caste
She wold bē hys, whyle ý her lyfe may last
And she thus brenneth both in loue & drede
So that she nyst what was best to rede

But as men sene in towne, and all aboute
That women vsen her frendes to visyte
So to Creseyde of women came a route
For pitous ioye, and wenden her delyte
And wyth her tales dere ynough a myte
These women, whych that in the cyte dwell
They set hem downe, & sayd as I shall tell

(Quod fyrst that one) I am glad trewly
Bycause of you, that shall your father se
Another sayd, ywys so am not I
For all to lytle hath she wyth vs be
(Quod tho the thyrd) I hope ywys that she
Shall bryngen vs the peace on euery syde
That whē she goeth, almyghty god her gyde

Tho wordes & tho womannyshe thynges
She herd hē ryght as though she thēce were
For god it wote, her hert on other thynge is
Although the body sat amonge hem there
Her aduertence is alwaye els where
For Troylus full faste her soule sought
wythoutē worde, on hym alway she thought

These women that thus wendē her to plese
About naught gonne all her tales spende
Suche vanite ne can done her none ese
As she that all thys meane whyle brende
Of other passyon then they wende
So that she felte almoste her herte dye
For wo, and wery of that companye

For whych myght she no lenger restrayne
Her teeres, they gan so vp to well
That gaue sygnes of her bytter payne
In whych her spirite was, and must dwell
Remēbrynge her frō heuen vnto whych hell
She fallen was, sens she forgo the syght
Of Troylus, and sorowfully she syght

And thylke fooles, syttynge her aboute
wende that she wepte and syghed sore
Bycause that she shulde out of the route
Departen, and neuer playe wyth hem more
And they that had knowen her of yore
Se her so wepe, & thought it was kyndnesse
And eche of hem wepte eke for her dystresse

And besely they gonnen her to comforten
One thig god wot, on which she lytel thouzt
And wyth her tales wenden her dysporten
And to be glad they oft her besought
But such an ease therwith they her wrought
Ryght as a man is eased for to fele
For ache of heed, to clawen hym on hys hele

But after all thys nyce vanyte
They toke her leue, and home they wentē all
Creseyde full of sorowfull pyte
Into her chambre vp wente out of the hall
And on her bedde she gan for deed to fall

In

In purpose neuer thence for to ryse
And thus she wrought, as I shal you deuyse

Her ownded heer, ý sonnyshe was of hewe
She rent, & eke her fyngers longe and smale
She wronge ful ofte, & bad god on her rewe
And wyth the death to do bote on her bale
Her hewe whylom bright, that tho was pale
Bare wytnesse of her wo, & her constraynte
And thus she spake, sobbyng in her cõplaynt

Alas (quod she) out of thys regioun
I wofull wretch and infortuned wyght
And borne in cursed constellatioun
Wote gone, & thus departen fro my knyght
wo worth alas, that ylke dayes lyght
On which I sawe him fyrst w̃ eyen twayne
That causeth me, and I hym all thys payne

Therwyth the teeres from her eyen two
Downe fell, as shoure in Aprylll swythe
Her whyte brest she bette, and for the wo
After the death she cryed a thousande syth
Seng he that wonte her wo was for to lyth
She mote forgone, for whych dysauenture
She helde her selfe a forlost creature

She sayd, howe shall he done and I also
Howe shuld I lyue, yf ý I from him twynne
O dere herte eke that I loue so
who shall ý sorowe slene, that ye ben inne?
O Calkas father, thyne be all thys synne
O mother myne, that cleaped were Argyue
wo worth ý daye, that thou me bare on lyue

To what fyne shuld I lyue & sorowen thus?
Howe shuld a fyshe wythouten water dure?
what is Creseyde worth from Troylus?
Howe shulde a plante or lyues creature
Lyue wythouten hys kynde noriture?
For whych full ofte, a by worde here I sey
That rotelesse mote greene sone dey

I shal don thus, sens neither sword ne darte
Dare I none handle, for the cruelte
That ylke daye that I fro you departe
yf sorowe of that nyl not my bane be
Then shall no meate ne drynke come in me
Tyll I my soule out of my brest vnchethe
And thus my seluen woll I done to dethe

And Troylus, my clothes euerychone
Shul blacke ben, in tokenynge herte swete
That I am as out of thys worlde agone
That wonte was you to set in quyete
And of myne ordre aye, tyll death me mete
The obseruaunce euer in your absence
Shal sorowe ben, complaynt, & abstynence

Myne herte, & eke the wofull gost therin
Byqueth I wyth your spirite to complayne
Eternally, for they shall neuer twyn
For though in erth twynned be we twayne
Yet in the felde of Pyte, out of payne
That hyght Elysos, shall we ben yfere
As Orpheus and Erudice hys fere

Thus herte myne, for Antenor alas
I sone shalbe chaunged, as I wene
But howe shull ye done in thys sorowful cas
Howe shall your tendre herte thys sustene
But herte myne, forget thys sorowe and tene
And me also, for sothly for to sey
So ye welfare, I retche not to dey

Howe myght it euer redde ben or ysonge
The playnt that she made in her dystresse
I not, but as for me my lytell tonge
yf I dyscryuen wolde her heuynesse
It shulde make her sorowe seme lesse
Then that it was, and chyldyshly deface
Her hye complaynt, and therfore I it pace

Pandare, whych that sent from Troylus
was vnto Creseyde, as ye haue herde deuyse
That for the best it was acorded thus
And he full glad to done hym that seruyse
Unto Creseyde in a full secrete wyse
There as she lay, in turment and in rage
Came her to tell al holy hys massage

And fonde that she her seluen gan to trete
Full petously, for wyth her salte teeres
Her brest and face ybathed was full wete
Her myghty tresses of her sonnysh heeres
Unbroyden, hangen all aboute her eeres
whych yaue hym very sygne of matere
Of death, whych that her herte gan desyre

when she hym sawe, she gan for sorowe anon
Her tery face, atwyxte her armes hyde
For whych thys Pandare is so wo bygon
That in the house he myght vnneth abyde
As he that felte sorowe on euery syde

For

For ye Creseyde had erst complayned sore
Tho gan she playne a thousand tymes more

And in her aspre playnte, thus she seyde
Pandare, fyrst of ioyes mo then two
was cauhynge vnto me Creseyde
That nowe transmued ben in cruell wo
whether shall I saye to you welcome or no:
That alderfyrst me brought vnto seruyse
Of loue alas, that endeth in suche wyse.

Endeth then loue in wo: ye or men lyeth
And all worldly blysse, as thynketh me
The ende of blysse aye sorowe it occupyeth
And who troweth not that it so be
Let hym vpon me wofull wretch se
That my selfe hate, and aye my byrth curse
Felynge alwaye, fro wycke I go to worse

who so me seeth, he seeth sorowe al atonis
Payne, turment, playnte, wo, and dystresse
Out of my wofull body harme there none is
As langour, anguysche, cruell bytternesse
Annoye, smerte, drede, furye, & eke sycknesse
I trowe ywys from heuen teeres rayne
For pyte of my aspre and cruell payne

And thou my syster, full of dyscomforte
(Quod Pãdarus) what thinkest thou to do:
why ne hast thou to thy seluen some resport:
why wylt thou thus alas thy selfe fordo:
Leaue al thys werke, and take nowe hede to
That I shall sayne, & herken of good entent
This message, ẏ by me Troylus you sente

Turned her tho Creseyde, a wo makynge
So great, that it a death was for to se
Alas (q̃ she) what wordes maye ye brynge
what woll my dere herte sayne to me
whych that I drede neuer more to se
woll he haue playnte or teeres er I wende
I haue ynough, yf he therafter sende

She was ryght such to sene in her visage
As is that wyght that men on bere bynde
Her face lyke of paradys the ymage
was all ychaunged in another kynde
The play ẏ laughter, mẽ were wont to fynd
On her, and eke her ioyes euerychone
Ben fledde, and thus lyeth Creseyde alone

Aboute her eyen two, a purpre ryngе
Bytrent, in sothfast tokenynge of her payne
That to beholde it was a deedly thynge
For whych Pandare myght not restrayne
The teeres from hys eyen for to rayne
But natheleſſe as he best myght he seyde
From Troylus these wordes to Creseyde

Lo nece, I trowe ye han herde al howe
The kynge wyth other lordes for the beste
Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and you
That cause is of thys sorowe & thys vnrest
But howe thys case doth Troylus moleste
Thys may none earthly mannes tonge say
For very wo, hys wytte is all away

For whych we haue so sorowed, he and I
That into lytell, it had vs both slawe
But through my counsayle thys daye fynaly
He somwhat is fro weppynge wythdrawe
And semeth me that he desyreth fawe
wyth you to ben all nyght for to deuyse
Remedye of thys, yf there were any wyse

This shorte & playne, theffect of my message
As ferforth as my wytte can comprehende
For ye that ben of turment in suche rage
May to no longe prologe as nowe entende
And herupon ye maye answere hym sende
And for the loue of god my nece dere
So leaue thys wo or Troylus be here

Great is my wo (q̃ she) and syghed sore
As she that feleth deedly sharpe dystresse
But yet to me hys sorowe is mokell more
That loue hym bet then he hym selfe I gesse
Alas, for me hath he such heuynesse
Can he for me so pytously complayne
Iwys thys sorowe doubleth al my payne

Greuous to me god wot is for to twynne
(Quod she) but yet it harder is to me
To sene that sorowe, whych that he is inne
For well wote I, it wol my bane be
And dye I wol in certayne tho (quod she)
But byd hi come, er deth ẏ thus me threteth
Driue out ẏ gost, whych in myne hert beteth

These wordes sayd she, on her armes two
Fyll grufle, and gan to wepen pytously
(Quod Pandarus) alas why do ye so
Seys ye well wote the tyme is fast by
That he shall come, aryse vp hastely

That

That he you not bewopen thus ne fynde
But ye wol haue him wode out of his minde

For wyst he that ye farde in thys manere
He wolde hym selfe slee: and yf I wende
To haue thys fare, he shulde not come here
For all the good that Priam maye dyspende
For to what fyne he wolde anone pretende
That knowe I well, and for thy yet I sey
So leaue this sorowe, or plainly he wol dey

And shapeth you hys sorowe for to abredge
And not encrease, lefe nece swete
Beth rather to hym cause of plat then edge
And w̃ some wysedom, ye hys sorowes bete
What helpeth it to wepen full a strete
Or though ye both in salte teeres dreynte
Bet is a tyme of cure aye then of pleynte

I meane thus, whē I hym hether bryngе
Sens ye be wyse, and both of one assent
So shapeth howe to distourbe your goynge
Or come ayen sone after ye be went
women ben wyse, in short auysement
And let sene howe your wyt shall auayle
And what that I may helpe, it shal not fayle

Go (quod Creseyde) and vncle truely
I shall done all my myght me to restrayne
From wepynge in hys syght, and besely
Hym for to glad, I shall done all my payne
And in my herte seken euery bayne
yf to thys sore there maye ben founden salue
It shall not lacke certayne on myne halue

Goth Pandarus, and Troylus he sought
Tyll in a temple he founde hym al alone
As he that of hys lyfe no lenger rought
But to the pytouse goddes euerychone
Full tendrely he prayed, and made hys mone
To done hym sone out of thys world to pace
For wel he thought ther was non other grace

And shortly all the soth for to seye
He was so fallen in dyspayre that day
That vtterly he shope him for to deye
For ryght thus was hys argument alway
He sayd he nas but lorne welaway
For all that cometh, cometh by necessite
Thus to be lorne is my destyne

For certaynly thys wote I well he sayd
That forsyght of diuyne purueyaunce
Hadsene alwaye me to forgone Creseyde
Sens god seeth euery thing out of doutaũce
And hem dysposeth through hys ordynaũce
In hys merytes sothly for to be
As they shull comen by predestyne

But natheleſſe alas, whom shall I leue
For there ben great clerkes many one
That destynie, through argumentes preue
And some sayne that nedely there is none
But that free choyce is yeuen vs euerychone
O welawaye, so slygh arne clerkes olde
That I not whose opinion I maye holde

For some men sayne, ý god seeth al byforne
Ne god maye not dysceyued ben parde
Thã mote it fallen, though mē had it sworne
That purueiaunce hath sene before to be
Wherfore I saye, that from eterne yf he
Hath wyst before our thoust eke as our dede
We haue no fre choyce, as these clerkes rede

For other thought, nor other dede also
Myght neuer ben, but suche as purueyaunce
Whych maye not ben dysceyued neuer mo
Hath feled byforne, wythouten ignorauncе
For yf there myght ben a variaunce
To wrythen out fro goddes purueynge
There nere no prescience of thynge cõmynge

But it were rather an opinion
Uncertayne, and no stedfast foreseyng
And certes that were an abusyon
That god shuld haue no parfite clere weting
More then we men, ý haue doutous wening
But such an erronr vpon god to gesse
Were false & foule, and wycked cursednesse

Eke thys is an opinion of some
That haue her top ful hygh & smoth yshore
They sayn right thus, ý thing is not to come
For that the prescience hath sene before
That it shall come, but they sayne ý therfore
That it shall come, therfore the purueyaunce
Wote it before wythouten ignorauncе

And in thys maner thys necessyte
Returneth in hys parte contrary agayne
For nedefully behoueth it not to be
That thylke thynges fallen in certayne
That bē purueyed, but nedfully as they sayn
Behoueth

Behoueth it that thynges whych that fall
That they in certayne ben purueyed all

I meane as though I laboured me in this
To enquyre which thige cause of which thig
Is whether that the prescience of god is (be
The certayne cause of the necessite
Of thynges that to comen be pardy
Or of necessite of thynge comynge
Because certayne of the purueyeng

But now ne enforce I me not in shewyng
How ye order of ye causes stāt, but wel wote I
That it behoueth that the befallyng
Of thynges wyst before certaynly
Be necessary, all seme it not therby
That prescience put fallynge necessayre
To thynge to come, all fall it foule or fayre

For yf there syt a man yonde on a see
That by necessite behoueth it
That certes thyne opinion soth be
That wenest or coniectest that he syt
And further ouer, nowe ayenwarde yet
Lo, ryght so is it on the parte contrarye
Is thus, nowe herken for I woll not tarye

I saye that yf the opinion of the
Be soth for that he syt, then saye I thys
That he mote sytten by necessyte
And thus necessyte in eyther is
For in hym nede of syttynge is ywys
And in the nede of soth, and thus forsoth
There mote necessite ben in you both

But thou mayst sayne ye mā syt not therfore
That thyne opinion of hys syttynge soth is
But rather for the man sat there before
Therfore is thyne opinion soth ywys
And I saye, though the cause of soth of thys
Cometh of hys syttynge, yet necessite
Is entrechaunged, both in hem and in the

Thus in the same wyse out of doutaunce
I maye well maken, as it semeth me
My reasonynge of goddes purueyaunce
And of the thynges that to comen be
By whych reason men may well yse
That thylke thynges that in erth fall
That by necessite they comen all

For al though that forthing shal come ywys
Therfore is it purueyd certaynly
Not that it cometh for it purueyed is
Yet natheleſſe behoueth it nedefully
That thynge to come be purueyed truely
Or els thinges that purueyed be
That they betyden by necessyte

And this suffyseth ryght ynough certayne
For to destroye our free choyce euerydel
But nowe is thys abusyon to sayne
That fallynge of the thynges temporel
Is cause of the goddes prescience eternell
Nowe truely that is a false sentence
That thing to come shuld cause his prescience

what might I wene & I had such a thought
But that god purueyeth thynge ye is to come
For that it is to come, and els nought
So might I wene that thinges al and some
That whylom ben bykal and ouercome
Ben cause of thylke souerayne purueyaunce
That forewote all, wythouten ignoraunce

And oueral thys, yet say I more therto
That right as whē I wote there is a thinge
I wys that thynge mote nedefully be so
Eke ryght so, when I wote a thing comyng
So mote it come, and thus the befallynge
Of thynges that ben wyst before the tyde
They mowe not ben eschewed on no syde

Thē sayd he thus, almyghty Joue in trone
That wotest of al thys thyng ye sothfastnesse
Rewe on my sorowe, and do me dyen sone
Or brynge Creseyde & me fro thys dystresse
And whyle he was in all thys heuynesse
Dysputynge wyth hym selfe in thys matere
Came Pandare in, & sayd as ye may here

O myghty god (q Pandarus) in trone
Eygh, who sawe euer a wyse man faren so-
why Troylus, what thynkest thou to done-
Hast thou suche luste to ben thyne owne foe-
what parde, yet is not Creseyde ago
why lyst the so thy selfe fordone for drede
That in thyne heed, thyne eyen semen dede-

Hast thou not lyued many a yere before
wythouten her-and farde full well ateaſe
Arte thou for her and for none other bore
Hath kynde ye wrought all only her to please
Let be and thynke ryght thus in thy dyseaſe
That

That in ý dyce, right as there fallē chaūces
Ryght so in loue there come & go plesaūces.

And yet this is a wonder moost of all
Why thou thus sorowest sith thou wust nat
Touching her going, how ý it shal fall (yet
Se yf she can her selfe distourben it
Thou hast nat yet assayed all her wyt
A man maye al betyme his necke bede
Whan it shall of, and sorowen at the nede

For thy take hede of all that I shal say
I haue with her yspoke and longe ybe
So as accorded was betwyxt vs twey
And euermo me thynketh thus, that she
Hath somwhat in her hertes priuitie
Wherwith she can, yf I shall aryght rede
Disturbe al this of which thou art in drede

For which my counsayl is whan it is night
Thou to her go, and make of this an ende
And blyssful Juno, through her gret myght
Shal (as I hope) her grace vnto vs sende
Myne hert seeth certayne she shal nat wend
And for thy put thy hert a whyle in rest
And holde thy purpose, for it is the best.

This Troylus answerde, and syghed sore
Thou sayest ryght wel, & I wil do ryght so
And what him list, he sayd vnto him more
And whan it was tyme for to go
Full priuely hym selfe withouten mo
Unto her came, as he was wont to done
And how they wrought I shal you tell sone

Soth is, that whan they gone first to mete
So gan the payne her hertes for to twyst
That neyther of hem other myght grete
But hem in armes toke, and after kyst
The lasse wofull of hem both nyst
Wher ý he was, ne might o word out bring
As I sayd erst, for wo and for sobbyng

The wofull teares that they letten fal
As bytter weren out of teres kynde
For payne, as is lignealoes, or gall
So bytter teeres wept nat as I fynde
The woful Myrra through ý bark & rynd
That in this world ther nis so hard an hert
That nold haue rewed on her paines smert

But whan her woful wery gostes twayne
Returned ben there, as hem ought to dwell
And that somwhat to weaken gan ý payne
By length of playnt, & ebben gan the wel
Of her teares, and the hert vnswell
W̄ brokē voyce al horse, for shright Creseyde
To Troylus these ylke wordes sayde

O Joue I dye, and mercy the beseche
Helpe Troylus, & therwith all her face
Upon his brest she layde, and lost speche
Her woful spyrit from his prope place
Ryght w̄ the worde away in poynt to pace
And thus she lyth w̄ hewes pale and grene
That whylom fresch & fayrest was to sene.

This Troylus that on her gan beholde
Cleping her name, and she lay as for deed
W̄outen answer, & felt her lymmes colde
Her eyen throwen vpwarde to her heed
This sorouful mā can nowe non other rede
But oft tyme her colde mouth he kyst
Wher him was wo, god & him selfe it wyst.

He riseth him vp, & long streight he her layd
For signe of lyfe, for ought he can or may
Can he none fynde in nothing of Creseyde
For which his songe ful oft is welaway
But whan he sawe that specheleſſe she laye
W̄ sorowfull voyce, & herte of blysse all bare
He sayd, how she was fro this world yfare

So after that he longe had her cōplayned
His hōdes wronge, & sayd that was to seye
And w̄ his teeres salte her brest berayned
He gan tho teeres wypen of full dreye
And pytously gan for the soule preye
And sayd, lorde that set art in thy trone
Rewe eke on me, for I shal folowe her sone

She colde was, and without sentement
For ought he wot, for breth felt ne none
And thus was him a preignant argument
That she was forth out of this world agon
And whā he sawe ther was non other won
He gan her lymmes dresse in suche manere
As men do on hem ý shall ben layen on bere

And after this, with sterne and cruel herte
His swerde anon out of his sheth he twight
Him self to sleen, howe sore that him smerte
So that his soule her soule folowē myght
Ther as the dome of Mynos wold it dight
Syth loue and cruell fortune it ne wolde

That in this worlde he lenger lyuen shold

Than sayd he thus, fulfyld of high disdayn
O cruel Joue, and thou fortune aduerse
This al & some that falsely haue ye slayne
Creseyde, and syth ye may do me no werse
Fye on your myght and workes so dyuerse
Thus cowardly ye shal me neuer wyn
There shall no deth me fro my lady twyn.

For I this world sith ye haue slayn her thus
Wol let and folowe her spyrite lowe or hye
Shall neuer louer sayne, that Troylus
Dare nat for feare with his lady dye
For certayne I woll beare her company
But syth ye wol nat suffre vs lyuen here
Yet suffreth that our soules ben yfere

And thou cytie, in which I lyue in wo
And thou Priam, and brethren al yfere
And thou my mother, farewel for I go
And Attropose make redy thou my bere
And thou Creseyde, o swete hert dere
Receyue now my spyrite, wolde he sey
With swerde at herte all redy for to deye

But as god wolde, of swough she abrayde
And gan to sygh, and Troylus she cryde
And he answerd, lady myne Creseyde
Lyue ye yet: & let his swerde downe glyde
Yea hert myne, that thanked be cupyde
(Quod she) & therwithal she sore sygh
And he began to glad her as he myght

Toke her in his armes two, & kyst her ofte
And her to glad, he dyd all his entent
For which her goost ỳ flyckered aye a lost
Into her woful hert ayen it went
But at the last, as that her eye glent
Alyde, anon she gan his sworde aspye
As it laye bare, and gan for feare crye.

And asked hym, why he had it out drawe
And Troylus anon the cause her tolde
And how hi self therw̃ he wold haue slawe
For which Creseyd vpon hym gan beholde
And gan hym in her armes fast folde
And sayde: o mercy god, lo which a dede
Alas how nygh we weren both deed

Than yf I nad spoken, as grace was
Ye wolde haue slayne your self anon (q̃ she)
Yea doutlesse: and she answerde alas
For by that ylke lorde that made me
I nolde a forlonge way on lyue haue be
After your deth to haue ben crowned quene
Of al ỳ londe the sunne on shyneth shene

But with this selue swerd, which ỳ here is
My self I wolde haue slayne (q̃ she) tho
But ho, for we haue ryght ynough of this
And let vs ryse, & streyght to bed go
And there let vs speken of our wo
For by that marter, which that I se brene
Knowe I ful well, that day is nat ferre hen

Whan they were in her bed in armes folde
Nought was it lyke tho nightes here before
For pytously eche other gan beholde
As they that hadden all her blysse yloste
Bewaylyng aye ỳ day that they wer borne
Til at ỳ last this sorowful wyght Creseyd
To Troylus these ylke wordes seyde

Lo hert myne, wel wot ye this (quod she)
That yf a wight alway his wo complayne
And seketh nat how holpen for to be
It nys but folye, and encrease of payne
And syns ỳ here assembled be we twayne
To fynde bote of wo that we ben in
It were tyme all soone to begyn.

I am a woman, as full well ye wot
And as I am aduysed sodaynly
So woll I tell you whyle it is whote
Me thynketh thus, that neyther ye nor I
Ought halfe this wo to maken skylfully
For there is arte ynough for to redresse
That yet is mysse, & fleen this heuynesse

Soth is, the wo the which we ben in
For ought I wot, for nothyng els is
But for the cause that we shulde twyn
Consydred al, there nys nomore amys
And what is than a remedy vnto this
But that we shape vs soone for to mete
This all and some, my dere hert swete

Now that I shal well bryngen it about
To come ayen sona after that I go
Therof am I no maner thyng in dout
For dredelesse, within a weke or two
I shal ben here, and that it mayebe so

By

By all ryght, and in wordes fewe
I shall you well an heape of wayes shewe

For which I wol not make longe sermon
For tyme ylost may not recouered be
But I wol go to my conclusyon
And to the best in ought that I can se
And for the loue of god forgeue it me
Yf I speke ought ayenst your hertes rest
For truly I speke it for the best

Makyng alway a protestacion
That now these wordes which I shal saye
Nys but to shewen you my mocion
To fynde vnto our helpe the best waye
And taketh it none otherwyse I pray
For in effect, what so ye me cõmaunde
That wol I don, for that is no demaunde

Now herkeneth this ye haue wel vnderstõd
My going graunted is by parlyment
So ferforth ỳ it may not ben withstonde
For all this worlde as by my iudgement
And syth ther helpeth non aduysement
To letten it, let it passe out of mynde
And let vs shape a better way to fynde

The soth is, the twynnyng of vs twayne
wol vs disease, and cruelly anoye
But him behoueth somtyme haue a payne
That serueth loue, yf that he wol haue ioye
And syth I shal no ferther out of Troye
Thã I may ryde ayen on halfe a morowe
It ought lasse causen vs for to sorowe

So as I shal not so ben hyd in mewe
That day by day, myne owne hert dere
Syns well I wot that it is nowe a trewe
Ye shall ful well all myne estate here
And er that truce is don, I shal ben here
Than haue ye both Antenor ywon
And me also beth glad now yf ye con

And think right thus, Creseyd is now agon
But what, she shal come hastely ayen
And whan alas - by god, so right anon
Er dayes ten, this dare I safely sayne
And than at erst shall we be so fayne
So as we shall togythers euer dwell
That all this world ne might our blysse tel

I se that oft tyme, there as we ben nowe
That for the best our counsayl for to hyde
Ye speake not with me, nor I with you
In fourtenyght, ne se ye go ne ryde
May ye nat ten dayes than abyde
For myne honour in suche auenture
I wys ye mowe els lyte endure.

ye knowe eke howe that al my kyn is here
But if that only it my father be
And eke myne other thynges al yfere
And namely my dere herte ye
whom that I nolde leauen for to se
For al this world as wide as it hath space
Or els se I neuer Joues face

why trowe ye my father in this wyse
Coueyteth so to se me, but for drede
Lest in this towne that folkes me dispyse
Bycause of him, for his vnhappy dede
what wote my father what lyke that I lede
For if he wyste in Troye howe wel I fare
Vs neded for my wendyng nat to care

Yea, that euery day eke more and more
Men treate of peace, and it supposed is
That men the qnene Heleyne shal restore
And grekes vs restore that is mys
So though there nere cõfort none but this
That men purposen peace on euery syde
Ye may the better at ease of hert abyde

For yf that it be peace, myne hert dere
The nature of the peace mote nedes dryue
That men must entercõmune yfere
And to and fro eke ryde and gone as blyue
Al day as thycke as been flyen frõ an hyue
And euery wyght haue lybertie to bleue
where as him lyst, the bet withouten leue

And though so be ỳ peace ther may be none
Yet hither though ther neuer peace ne were
I must come, for whyder shulde I gone
Or how mischaunce shulde I dwel there
Amonge tho men of armes euer in feare
For which as wysely god my soule rede
I can nat sene wherof ye shulde drede

Haue here another way yf it so be
That al this thing ne may you nat suffyse
My father as ye knowen well parde
Is olde, and eke ful of couetyse
And I right now haue founden all the gyse

withouten net, wherwith I shal hym hente
And herkeneth now yf that ye wyl assent

Lo Troylus, men sayne that ful harde it is
The wolfe ful, and the weder hole to haue
This is to sayne, that men ful oft iwys
Note spenden part, ý remnaunt for to saue
For aye with gold men may the hert graue
Of hym that set is vpon couetyse
And how I meane I shal it you deuyse

The mouable, which ý I haue in this toun
Unto my father shall I take and say
That ryght for trust, and for saluatioun
It sent is, from a frende of his or tway
The which frendes feruently him prayé
To sende after more, and that in hye
whyle ý this town stant thus in ieopardy

And that shalbe of golde an huge quantitie
Thus shal I sayne, but lest folke it espyde
This may be sent by no wyght but by me
I shal eke shewen hym, yf peace betyde
what frendes that I haue on euery syde
Towarde the court, to don the wrath pace
Of Priamus, and do hym stonde in grace

So what for o thyng and for other swete
I shall him enchaunten with my sawes
That right in heuē his soul is, shal he mete
For all Apollo, or his clerkes lawes
Or calculyng auayleth nat thre hawes
Delyre of golde shall so his soule blende
That as my lyst, I shall well make an ende

And yf he wolde ought by his sorte it preue
If that I lye, in certayne I shal fonde
Distourben him, and plucke by the sleue
Makyng his sorte, & bearen hym on honde
He hath nat well the goddes vnderstonde
For goddes speke in amphibologies
And for o soth, they tellen twenty lyes

Eke drede fonde first goddes I suppose
Thus shall I sayne, & that his coward hert
Made hym amysse the goddes text to glose
whan he for ferde out of Delphos stert
And but I make hym sone to conuert
And don my rede within a day or twey
I woll to you oblege me to deye.

And truly, as wrytten well I fynde
That al this thing was sayd of good entēt
And that her hert true was and kynde
Towardes him, & spake ryght as she ment
And ý she starkefor wo nigh whan she went
And was in purpose euer to be trewe
Thus wryten they ý of her werkes knewe

This Troylus with hert and eares spread
Herde all this thyng deuyled two and fro
And verily it semed that he had
The selue wyt, but yet to let her go
His hert mysyaue hym euermo
But fynally he gan his hert wrest
To trusten her, and toke it for the best

For which the great fury of his penaunce
was queynt w̄ hope, therw̄ hem bytwene
Began for to ioye the amorous daunce
And as ý bydes whan the sun is shene
Delyten in her songe, in leues grene
Ryght so the wordes, that they spake yfere
Delyten hem, and make hem hertes clere.

But nathelsse, the wendyng of Creseyde
For al this world may not out of his mynd
For which ful oft he pytously her preyde
That of her heest he might her true kynde
And sayd her, certes yf ye be kynde
And but ye come at day set in Troye
Ne shal I neuer haue heale, honour ne ioye

For all so soth as sunne bryst a morowe
And god so wysely thou me woful wretche
To rest bryng, out of this cruell sorowe
I woll my seluen slee yf that ye dretche
But of my deth though lytle be to retche
yet er that ye me causen so to smert
Dwell rather here myne owne swete herte.

For truly myne owne lady dere
The sleyghtes yet ý I haue herde you stere
Full shapely ben to fallen all yfere
For thus men sayth, ý one thynketh ý bere
But al another thynketh the ledere
Your sire is wyse, and sayd is out of drede
Men may the wyse out ren, & not out rede

It is full harde to halten vnespyed
Before a creple, for he can the crafte.
Your father is in sleyght as Argus eyed
For al be it that his mouable is him byraft
His olde sleyght is yet so with hym lafte

ye shall nat blende hym for your womãhed
Ne sayne aryght, and that is al my drede

I not yf peace shall euermo betyde
But peace or no, for ernest ne for game
I wot syth Calcas on the grekes syde
Hath ones ben, and lost so foule his name
He dar nomore come here agayne for shame
For which that we, for ought I can espy
To trusten on, nys but a fantasye.

ye shal eke sene your father shal you glose
To ben a wyke, and as he can wel preche
He shal some greke so preyse and wel alose
That rauyshen he shal you with his speche
Or do you don by force as he shall teache
And Troylus on whom ye nyll haue routh
Shall causelesse so steruen in his trouth.

And ouer all this your father shal despyse
Vs al, and sayn this citie is but lorne
And that thassege neuer shal aryse
For why the grekes haue it all sworne
Tyl we bẽ slayne, & down our walles torne
And thus he shal you with his wordes fere
That aye drede I, that ye wol bleuen there

ye shall eke sene so many a lustye knyght
Amonge the grekes full of worthynesse
And eche of hem with hert, wyt & myght
To plesen you don all his besynesse
That ye shull dullen of the rudynesse
Of sely Troyans, but yf routh
Remorde you, or vertue of your trouth

And this to me so greuous is to thynke
That fro my brest it woll my soule rende
Ne dredlesse in me there may not synke
O good opinyon, yf that ye wende
For why your fathers sleyght woll vs shed
And yf ye gone, as I haue tolde you yore
So think I nam but deed, withouten more

For which with humble, true, & pitous hert
A thousande tymes mercy I you praye
So reweth on myne aspre paynes smert
And doth somwhat, as that I shall you say
And let vs steale away betwyxt vs tway
And thinke ý foly is whã a man maye chese
For accident his substaunce for to lese

I meane thus, that syns we nowe or day
well steale away, and ben togyther so
what wyt were it to putten it in assaye
(In case ye shulden to your father go)
If that ye myghten come ayen or no
Thus meane I that were a great folly
To put that sykernesse in ieopardy

And vulgarly to speken of substaunce
Of treasour may we both with vs lede
Ynough to lyue in honour and pleasaunce
Tyl vnto tyme that we shal ben deed
And thus we may eschewen al this drede
For euery other waye ye can recorde
Wyne hert ywys may therwith nat accorde.

And hardely ne dredeth no pouertie
For I haue kyn and frendes els where
That though we comen in our bare sherte
Vs shulde neyther lacke golde ne gere
But ben honoured whyle we dwelten there
And go we anon, for as in myne intent
This is the best, yf that ye woll assent

Creseyde with a sygh, ryght in this wyse
Answerde: ywys my dere herte true
we maye wel steale away, as ye deuyse
And fynden suche vnthryftye wayes newe
But afterwarde full sore it woll vs rewe
And helpe me god so at my moost nede
As causelesse ye suffren all this drede

For thylke day that I for cherysshyng
Or drede of father, or for any other wyght
Or for estate, delyte, or for weddyng
Be false to you, my Troylus my knyght
Saturnus doughter Juno through her
As wode as Achamãt do me dwel (migh
Eternally with styx in the pyt of hell

Ad this on euery god celestiall
I sweare it you, and eke on eche goddesse
On euery nymphe, and deitie infernall
On Satiry and Fauny more and lesse
That halfe goddes ben of wyldernesse
And Attrapos my threde of lyfe to brest
If I be false, now trowe me yf ye lest.

And thou Synoys that as an arowe clere
Thrugh Troy rẽnest aye downward to ý se
Be wytnesse of this worde ý sayd is here
That ylke daye that I vntrue be
To Troylus myne owne hert free

That thou returne bakwarde to thy well
And I with body and soule synke to hell

But that ye speke away thus for to go
And leten al your frendes god forbede
For any woman that ye shulden so
And namly syns Troy hath now such nede
Of helpe, and eke of o thyng taketh hede
Yf this were wist, my lyfe laye in balaunce
And your honour, god shylde vs from myschaunce.
And yf so be that peace herafter betake
As all daye heppeth after angre game
Why lorde ý sorowe & wo ye wolden make
That ye ne durst come ayen for shame
And er that ye ieoparden so your name
Beth nat to hasty in this hote fare
For hasty man ne wanteth neuer care

What trowe ye the people eke al about
Wolde of it say-it is ful lyght to arede
They wolden say, and swere it out of dout
That loue ne draue you nat to do this dede
But lust voluptuous, and cowarde drede
Thus were all lost iwys myne hert dere
Your honour, which ý now shyneth clere

And also thynketh on myne honestie
That floureth yet, how foul I shuld it shēd
And with what fylth it spotted shulde be
If in this forme I shoulde with you wende
Ne though I lyued vnto the worldes ende
My name shulde I neuer ayenwarde wyn
Thus wer I lost, and ý were routh & synne

And for thy, slee with reason al this hete
Men sayne the suffraunt ouercōmeth parde
Eke who so wol haue lefe, he lefe mote lete
Thus maketh vertue of necessitie
By pacience, and thynke that lorde is he
Of fortuue aye ý nought wol of her retche
And she ne daūteth no wight but a wretche

And trusteth this, that certes hert swete
Or Phebus suster Lucina the shene
The Lyon passe out of this Ariete
I wol ben here withouten any wene
I mene, as helpe me Juno heuens quene
The tenth day, but if that death me assayle
I woll you sene withouten any fayle

And now so thus be soth (quod Troylus)
I shall well suffre vnto the tenth daye
Syns that I se, that nedes it mote be thus
But for the loue of god, yf it be maye
So let vs stelen priuely away
For euer in one, as for to lyuen in rest
Myne hert sayth that it woll be the best

O mercy god, what lyfe is this (q̃ she)
Alas, ye slee me thus for very tene
I se well now that ye mystrusten me
For by your wordes it is well ysene
Now for the loue of Scithia the shene
Mistrust me nat thus causelesse for routh
Sis to be tru, I haue you plight my trouth

And thynketh wel, that sōtyme it was wyt
To spende a tyme, a tyme for to wyn
Ne parde lorne I nat fro you yet
Though that we ben a daye or two a twyn
Driue out tho fantasyes you within
And trusteth me, & leaueth eke your sorowe
Or here my trouth, I wyl nat lyue tyll morowe.
For if ye wyst how sore it doth me smerte
Ye wold not cesse of this, for god thou wost
The pure spyrit wepeth in myne herte
To sene you wepen, which ý I loue moost
And that I mote gon vnto the grekes host
Yea nere it that I wyst a remedye
To come ayen, ryght here I wolde dye

But certes I am not so nyce a wyght
That I ne can ymagynen away
To come ayen that daye that I haue hyght
For who may holden a thyng ý wol awaye
My father nought, for all his queynt playe
And by my thrift my wendyng out of Troy
An other daye shall turne vs all to ioye.

For thy with all myne hert I you beseke
Yf that you lyst done ought for my prayer
And for ý loue which that I loue you eke
That er that I departe fro you here
That of so good a comfort and a chere
I may you sene, that ye may bring at rest
Myne herte, which is at poynt to brest

And ouer all this I praye you (q̃ she) tho
Myne owne hertes sothfast suffysaunce
Syth I am thyne all hole withouten mo
That whyle that I am absent, no plesaūce
Of other, do me fro your remembraunce

For

For I am euer agast, for why men rede
That loue is thyng aye ful of bely drede

For in thys worlde there leueth lady none
If that I were vntrewe, as god defende
That so betrayed were, or wo begone
As I, that al trouth in you entende
And doutlesse, yf that iche other wende
I were but deed, and er ye cause fynde
For goddes loue, so beth me naught vnkind

To this answered Troylus, and seyde
Now god, to whō there nys no cause ywrie
Ye glade, as wys I neuer vnto Creseyde
Sith thylke day I saw her fyrst wyth eye
was false, ne neuer shal tyl that I dye
At shorte wordes, wel ye may me leue
I can no more, it shal be founde at preue

Graūt mercy it good hert myn ywis (q̃ she)
And blysful Venus let me neuer sterue
Er I may stonde at pleasaunce in degre
To quyte him wel, that so wel can deserue
And whyle ẏ god my wyt wyl me conserue
I shal so done, so trewe I haue you founde
That aye honour to me ward shall rebound

For trusteth wel, that your estate royal
Ne beyne delyte, nor onely worthynesse
Of you in werre or turnay marcial
Ne pompe, array, nobley, or eke rychesse
Ne made me to rewe on your distresse
But moral vertue, grounded vpon trouth
that was ẏ cause I first had on you routh

Eke gentyl hert, and manhede that ye had
And that ye had (as me thought) in dispyte
Euery thyng that sowned in to bad
And rudenesse, and peoplyshe appetyte
And that your reason bridled your delyte
This made abouen euery creature
ẏ I was yours, & shal while I may endure

And thys may lengthe of yeres nat fordo
Ne remuable fortune deface
But Jupitter, that of his myght may do
The sorouful to be glad, so yeue vs grace
Er nyghtes ten, to meten in this place
So that it may your hert and myn suffyse
And fareth now wel, for time is that ye ryse

And after that they longe yplayned had
And ofte ykyst, and strayte in armes folde
The day gan ryse, and Troylus him clad
And rufully his lady gan beholde
As he that felte dethes cares colde
And to her grace he gan hym recōmaunde
where he was wo, this holde I no demaūd

For mannes heed ymaginen ne can
Ne entendement consyder, ne tonge tel
The cruel paynes of this sorouful man
That passen euery torment downe in hel
For whan he sawe that she ne might dwel
which that his soule out of his herte rent
withoutē more, out of the chambre he went

¶ Explicit li.iiii. Et incipit li.v.

Prochen gan the fatall destyne
That Joues hathe in dispo-
sytioun
And to you angrye Parcas
sustren thre
Committeth to done, execusioun
For which Creseyde must out of the toun
And Troylus shal dwel forth in pyne
Tyl Lachesis his threde no lenger twyne

The golde tressed Phebus hyghe on lofte
Thrise had al with his beames clere
The snowes molt, and zephyrus as ofte
Ybrought ayen the tender leaues grene
Sens that the sonne of Eccuba the quene
Began to loue her first, for whō his sorowe
was al, that she departe shulde a morowe

Ful redy was at prime Diomede
Creseyde vnto the grekes hoost to leed
For sorowe of which, she felte her hert blede
As she that nyste what was best to reed
And trewly, as men in bookes reed
Yen wyst neuer woman haue the care
Ne was so lothe out of a towne to fare

Thys Troylus wythouten rede or lore
As man that hath his ioyes eke forlore
was waytyng on hys lady euer more
As she that was sothfast croppe and more
Of al his lust or ioyes here tofore
But Troylus now fare wel al thy ioye
For shalte thou neuer sene her efte in Troye

Sothe is, ȳ whyle he bade in this manere
He gan his wo ful manly for to hyde
That wel vnneth it sene was in his chere
But at the yate there she shulde out ryde
with certayne folke he houed her to abyde
So wo begon, al wolde he not him playne
That on hys horse vnneth he sate for payne

For ire he quoke, so his herte gnawe
whan Diomede on horse gan him dyght
And sayd vnto him selfe thys ylke sawe
Alas (q̃ he) thus foule a wretchydnesse
why suffre I it: why nyl I it redresse:
were it nat bet atones for to dye
Than euermore in langour thus to crye:

why nyl I make at ones ryche and poore
To haue ynough to done er that she go:
why nyl I bryngе al Troye vpon a roore
why nyl I sleen thys Diomede also:
why nyl I rather wyth a man or two
Steale her away: why wol I this endure:
why nyl I helpen to myne owne cure:

But why he nolde done so fel a dede
That shal I sayne, & why hym lyste it spare
He had in herte alway a maner drede
Leste that Creseyde, in rumour of thys fare
Shulde haue ben slayn, lo this was all hys
And els certayne, as I sayd yore (care
He had it done, withouten wordes more

Creseyde whan she redy was to ryde
Ful sorowfully she syghed, and sayd alas
But forth she mote, for aught ȳ may betyde
And forth she rydeth ful sorowfully a paas
There is none other remedye in this caas
wat wonder is, though that her sore smerte
whan she forgoth her owne swete herte

Thys Troylus in gyse of curtesye
wyth hauke on hande, & with an huge route
Of knyghtes, rode and dyd her companye
Passyng al the valey, ferre wythout
And ferther wold haue rydden out of doute
Ful fayne, and wo was hym to gon so sone
But turne he must, and it was eke to done

And ryght wyth that was Antenor ycome
Out of the grekes hoste, and euery wyght
was of hym glad, & sayd he was welcome
And Troylus al nere hys herte lyght
He payned hym, wyth al hys ful myght
Hym to wythholde of weppyng at leste
And Antenor he kyste, and made feste

And therwythal he must his leaue take
And cast his eyes vpon her pytously
And nere he rode, hys cause for to make
To take her by the honde al sobrely
And lorde so she gan wepen tenderly
And he ful softe and slyghly gan her sey
Now holde your day, and do me not to dey

with that hys courser turned he aboute
wyth face pale, and vnto Diomede
No worde he spake, ne none of al his route
Of which the sonne of Tydeus toke hede
As he that kouth more than the crede
In such a crafte, and by the rayne her hente
And Troylus to Troye, homwardes went

This Diomede, that ladde her by the bridel
whan that he saw the folke of Troye away
Thought, al my labour shal not ben on ydel
If that I may, for somwhat shal I say
For at the worste, it shorte may our way
I haue herde say eke, tymes twyse twelue
He is a foole that wol forfete hym selue

But nathlesse, thys thought he wel ynough
That certaynly I am about nought
If that I speke of loue, or make it thought
For doutelesse, yf she haue in her thought
Him that I gesse, he may not ben ybrought
So sone away, but I shal fynde a meane
That she shal not yet wete what I meane

Thus Diomede, as he that coulde his gode
whā this was don, gan fallē forth in speche
Of this and that, and aske why she stode
In such disease, and gan her eke beseche
That yf that he encrease̅n myght or eche
wyth any thyng her ease, that she sholde
Cōmaund it him, and sayd he done it wolde

For trewly he swore her as a knyght
ȳ ther nas thyng w̄ which he myght her plese
That he nolde don hys payne, & al his myght
To don it, for to done her herte an ese
And prayde her she wolde her sorowe apese
And sayd, ywys we grekes can haue ioye
To honouren you, as well as folke of Troy

He

He said eke thus, I wote you thiketh straũg
No wonder is, for it is to you newe
Thacqueyntaũce of these troyans to chaũg
For folke of Grece, that ye neuer knewe
But wolde neuer god, but yf as trewe
I greke ye shuld amonge vs al fynde
As any troyan is, and eke as kynde

And bycause I swore you ryght nowe
To ben your frende, & helply to my might
And for that more acqueintaunce eke of you
Haue I had, than another straunger wight
So fro this forth, I pray you daye & nyght
Cõmaũdeth me, howe sore that me smerte
To done, al that may lyke vnto your herte

And that ye me wold, as your brother treat
And taketth nat my frendshyp in dispyte
& though your sorowes ben for thinges gret
Not I nat why, but out of more respyte
Myn hert hath for to amend it great delyte
And yf I may your harmes nat redresse
I am ryght sory for your heuynesse

For though ye troyans w̃ vs grekes wroth
Haue many a day ben: alway yet parde
O god of loue, in soth we seruen both
And for the loue of god my lady free
whõ so ye hate, as beth not wroth wyth me
For trewly there can no wyght you serue
that halfe so loth your wrath wolde deserue

And nere it that we ben so nere the tent
Of Calcas, which that sene vs both may
I wolde of thys you tel al myne entent
But thys enseled tyl another day
yeue me your hande, I am and shal be aye
god helpe me so, while ẏ my life may endure
Your owne, abouen euery creature

Thus saide I neuer er now to womã borne
For god myne herte as wysely glade so
I loued neuer woman here before
As paramours, ne neuer shal no mo
And for the loue of god be not my foe
Al can I nat to you my lady dere
Complayne aryght, for I am yet to lere

And wõdreth nouȝt myn owne lady bryght
Though ẏ I speke of loue to you thus bliue
For I haue herde or thys of many a wyght
Hath loued thynge he neuer sawe his lyue

Eke I am not of power for to stryue
Ayenst the god of loue, but hym obey
I wol alway, and mercy I you prey

There beth so worthy knyghtes in the place
And ye so fayre, that euerych of hem al
wol payne hym to stonden in your grace
But myght me so fayre a grace fal
That ye me for your seruaunte wolde cal
So lowly, ne so trewly you serue
Nyl none of hem, as I shal tyl I sterne

Creseyde vnto that purpose lyte answerde
As she that was wyth sorowe oppressed
That in effecte she naught his tales herde
But here & there, nowe here a worde or two
Her thought her sorouful hert brast a two
For whan she gan her father ferre espye
wel nyghe downe of her horse she gan to sye

But nathlesse she thonketh Diomede
Of al his trauayle and his good chere
And that him lyst his frendshyp to her bede
And she accepteth it in good manere
And wol do fayne that is him lefe and dere
And trusteth hym she wold, & wel she might
As sayd she, and from her horse she alyght

Her father hath her in his armes nõme
& twẽty times he kyst his doughter swete
And sayd: O dere doughtee mine welcome
She sayd eke, she was fayne w̃ him to mete
And stode forth muet, mylde, and mansuete
But here I leaue her wyth her father dwell
And forth I wol of Troylus you tell

To Troye is come this woful Troylus
In sorowe abouen al sorowes smerte
with felon loke, and face dispytous
Tho sodaynly downe frõ his horse he sterte
And through his paleys with swolne herte
To chãbre he went, of nothyng toke he hede
Ne non to him dare speke o worde for drede

And there his sorowes that he spared had
He yaue an issue large, and dethe he cryde
And in his throwes, frenetyke and mad
He curseth Juno, Apollo, and eke Cupide
He curseth Bachus, Ceres, and Cipride
His byrth, him selfe, his fate, & eke nature
And saue his lady, euery creature

To

To bed he goth and weyleth there & turneth
In furye, as doth he Ixion in hell
and in this wyse he nygh tyl day soiourneth
But tho began his herte alyte vnswel
Through teeres, which ý gonnen vp to wel
And pytously he cryed vpon Creseyde
And to hym selfe thus he spake and seyde

where is myne owne lady lefe and dere
where is her white brest, where is it where
where ben her armes, and her eyen clere
That yesterdaye this tyme with me were
Nowe may I wepe alone many a teere
And graspe aboute I may, but in this place
Saue a pylowe, kynde naught to embrace

How shal I don whã shal she come agayne
I not alas, why let I her go
As wolde god I had as tho be slayne
O hert myne Creseyde, O swete fo
O lady myne, that I loue and no mo
To whom for euer more myne hert a dowe
Se howe I dye, ye nyll me not rescowe

who seeth you nowe, my ryght lode sterre
who sytteth ryght nowe in your presence
who can comforten now your hertes werre
Now I am gon, whom yeue ye audience
who speketh for my ryght nowe in your ab-
Alas no wyght, & that is al my care (sence
For wel wote I, as yuell as ye fare

Howe shulde I thus ten dayes ful endure
whan I the fyrst nyght haue al thys tene
Howe shal she eke sorouful creature
For tenderneſſe, howe shall she thys sustene
Suche wo for me, o pytous pale, and grene
Shal ben your freshe womanly face
For langour er ye turne vnto thys place

And whan he fyl in any slombrynges
Anon begyne he shulde for to grone
And dreamen of the dredfullest thynges
That myght ben, as mete he were alone
In place horrible makyng aye hys mone
Or meten that he was amonges al
Hys enemyes, and in her handes fal

And therwithal hys body shulde sterte
And wyth the sterte al sodayuly awake
And such a tremour fele about his herte
That of the feare hys body shulde quake
And therwythal he shulde a noyse make
And seme as though he shulde fal depe
From hygh alofte, and than he wolde wepe

And rewen on hym selfe so pytously
That wonder was to here hys fantasye
Another tyme he shulde myghtely
Comforte hym selfe, and sayne it was folye
So causelesse, suche drede for to drie
And efte begyn his aspre sorowes newe
That euery man might on his paines rewe

who coulde tel al, or fully discryue
His wo, his playnt, hys langour, & his pyne
Nat al the men that han or ben on lyue
Thou reder mayst thy selfe ful wel deuyne
That such a wo my wyt can not defyne
On ydel for to write it shulde I swynke
whan that my wyt is wery it to thynke

On heuen yet the sterres weren sene
Although full pale ywoxen was the moone
And whyten gan the orizonte shene
Al eestwarde, as it is wonte to doone
And Phebus wyth hys rosy carte soone
Gan after that to dresse him vp to fare
whan Troylus hath sent after Pandare

This Pandare, that of al the day before
Ne might hym comen thys Troylus to se
Although he on hys hecd it had swore
For with the kyng Priam alday was he
So that it laye nat in his lyberte
No wher to gon, but on ý morowe he went
To Troylus, whan that he for hym sent

For in hys herte he coulde wel deuyne
That Troylus al nyght for sorowe woke
And that he wolde tel hym of hys pyne
Thys knew he well ynough wythout boke
For which to chãbre streyght ý way he toke
And Troylus tho sobrely he grette
And on the bed ful sone he gan hym sette

My Pandarus (q̃ Troylus) the sorowe
which that I drie, I may not longe endure
I trowe I shal not lyuen tyl to morowe
For which I wolde alwayes on auenture
To the deuysen of my sepulture
The forme, & of my mouable thou dispone
Ryght as the semeth best is for to done

But

But of the fyre and flambe funerall
In which my body brennen shall to glede
And of the feest and playes palestrall
At my bygyle, I pray the take good hede
That that be wel, and offre Mars my stede
My sworde, myn helme, & leue brother dere
My sheld to Pallas yeue, that shyneth clere

the poudre i which min hert ibrēde shal turn
That pray I the thou take, and it conserue
In a vessel that men clepeth an vrne
Of golde, and to my lady that I serue
For loue of whom thus pytously I sterue
So yeue it her, and do me thys plesaunce
To prayen her to kepe it for a remembraūce

For wel I fele by my maladye
And by my dreames, nowe and yore ago
Al certaynly, that I mote nedes dye
The oule eke, which that hyght ascaphylo
Hath after me shryght al these nyghtes two
& god Mercury, now of me wofull wretche
The soule gyde, and whan the lyste it fetche

Pandare answerde, and sayd Troylus
My dere frende, as I haue tolde the yore
That it is folye for to sorowen thus
And causelesse, for which I can no more
But who so wol nat trowen rede ne lore
I can not sene in hym no remedye
But let hym worchen with his fantasye

But Troylus I pray the tel me nowe
If that thou trowe er thys that any wyght
Hath loued paramours as wel as thou
Ye god wote, & fro many a worthy knyght
Hath hys ladye gone a fourtenyght
And he nat yet made haluendele the fare
what nede is the to maken al thys care

Sens day by day thou mayst thy seluen se
That from his loue, or els from hys wyke
A man mote twynnen of necessyte
Yee, though he loue her as his owne lyke
Yet nyl he wyth him selfe thus maken stryke
For wel thou wost my leue brother dere
That alway frendes may not ben yfere

how don thys folke ý sene her loues wedded
By frendes myght as it betydeth ful ofte
And sene hem in her spouses bed ybedded
God wote they take it wysely fayre & softe
For why, good hope halt vp her herte alofte
And for they can a tyme of sorowe endure
As tyme hem hurteth, a time doth hem cure

So shuldest thou endure, and letten slyde
The tyme, and fonde to ben gald and lyght
Ten dayes nys not so longe to abyde
And sens she to comen the hath behyght
She nyl her heste breken for no wyght
For drede the not, that she nyl fynde way
To come ayen, my lyfe that durst I laye

Thy sweuenesse eke, and al such fantasye
Dryue out, and let hem faren to mischaunce
For they procede of thy melancolye
That doth the fele in slepe al thys penaunce
A strawe for al sweuenes signifyaunce
God helpe me so, I counte hem nat abeene
ther wot no mā aright what dremes meene

For preestes of the temple tellen thys
That dreames bene the reuelations
Of goddes, and als wel they tel ywys
That they bene infernales, illusyons
And leches sayne, that of complections
Proceden they of faste, or glotonye
who wot in soth thus what they signyfye

Eke other sayne, that through impressions
As yf a wyght hath faste a thinge in mynde
That therof cometh such auisions
And other sayne, as they in bokes fynde
That after tymes of the yere by kynde
Yē dreme, & that theffect goth by the mone
But leue no dreame, for it is not to done

well worth of dremes aye these olde wyues
And trewly eke, augurye of these foules
For feare of which, mē wemen lese her liues
as rauēs qualm or schriching of these oules
To trowen on it, both false and foule is
Alas alas, that so noble a creature
As is a man, shulde drede such ordure

For which with al myne herte I the beseche
Unto thy selfe, that al thys thou forgeue
And ryse nowe vp, withouten more speche
And let vs cast how forth may best be dryuē
The time, & eke how freshly we may lyuen
whā she cometh, ý which shall be right soue
God helpe me so, the best is thus to done

Ryse

Ryse, let vs speke of lustye lyfe in Troye
That we haue lad, and forth the time dryue
And eke of tyme comyng vs reioye
That bryngen shal our blysse now so blyue
And langour of these twyse dayes fyue
we shal therwyth so forpete or oppresse
That well vnneth it done shal vs duresse

Thys towne is ful of lordes al aboute
And truce lasten all thys meane whyle
Go we playen vs in some lusty route
To Sarpedon, not hence but a myle
And thus thou shalt the tyme wel begyle
And dryue it forth vnto that blysful morow
That thou her se, that cause is of thy sorow

Nowe ryse my dere brother Troylus
For certes it non honoure is to the
To wepe, and in thy bedde to rouken thus
For trewly of o thyng trust to me
If thou thus lygge, a daye, two or thre
The folke woll wene, ꝑ thou for cowardyse
The fayrest sicke, & that thou darst not ryse

This Troylus answerde: o brother dere
Thys knowē folke that haue ysuffred paine
that though he wepe, & make sorouful chere
That feleth harme and smert in euery vaine
No wonder is, and though I euer playne
Or alway wepe, I am nothyng to blame
Sens ꝑ I haue lofte, ꝑ cause of al my game

But sens of fyne force I mote aryse
I shal aryse, as sone as euer I may
And god, to whom myne hert I sacrifyse
So sende vs hastely the tenthe daye
For was there neuer foule so fayne of May
As I shal ben, whan ꝑ she cometh in Troye
That cause is of my turment and my ioye

But whyder is thy rede (q̃ Troylus)
That we may playe vs beste in al thys toun
By god my counsayle is (quod Pandarus)
To ryde & playe vs wyth king Sarpedoun
So longe of this they speken vp and doun
Tyl Troylus gan at the laste assent
To ryse, & forth to Sarpedon they went

Thys Sarpedon, as he that honourable
was euer his lyue, and ful of hye prowesse
wyth al that myght yserued bene on table
That deyntie was, al cost it great rychesse
He fed hem day by day, that suche noblesse
As sayden both the moost and eke the leest
was neuer er that daye wyst at any feest

Nor in this worlde ther is none instrument
Delicious, through wynd or touch on corde
As ferre as any wyght hath euer ywent
That tonge tell, or herte maye recorde
But at that feest, it nas wel herde recorde
Ne of ladyes eke so fayre a companye
On daūce er tho, was neuer ysene with eye

But what auayleth thys to Troylus
That for his sorowe, nothyng of it rought
But euer in one, as hert pytous
Ful besily Creseyde his lady sought
On her was al that euer his hert thought
Now thys nowe that, so fast ymaginyng
That glad ywys can him no festyng

These ladyes eke, that at thys feest ben
Sens that he sawe his lady was awey
It was his sorowe vpon hem for to seen
Or for to here on instrumentes pley
For she that of hys herte hath the key
was absent, lo thys was his fantasye
That no wyght shulde make melodye

Nor there nas houre in al the day or nyght
whā he was ther as no mā myght him here
That he ne sayd, O louesom lady bryght
Howe haue ye faren sens that ye were there
welcome ywys myne owne lady dere
But welaway, al this nas but a mase
Fortune his houe, entended bet to glase

The letters eke, that she of olde tyme
Had hym ysent, he wolde alone rede
An hundred sythe, atwixte noone and prime
Refiguryng her shappe, & her womanhede
wythin his hert, and euery worde and dede
that passed was, & thus he droue to an ende
The fourth day, and sayd he wol wende

And sayd leue brother Pandarus
Intendest thou that we shal here bleue
Tyl Sarpedon woll forthe conueyen vs
Yet were it fayrer that we toke our leue
For goddes loue, let vs nowe sone at eue
Our leaue take, and homwarde let vs turne
For trewly I nyl not thus soiourne

Pandare

Pandare answerde, be we comen hyther
To fetchen fyre, and rennen home agayne
God helpe me so, I can not tellen whyther
We myght gone, yf I shall sothly sayne
There any wyght is of vs more fayne
Then Sarpedon, and yf we hence hye
Thus sodeynly I holde it vylanye

When that we sayden we wolde bleue
Wyth hym a weke, and nowe thus sodaynly
The fourth daye, to take of hym our leue
He wolde wondren on it truely
Let vs holden forth our purpose fermely
And sens that ye behyghten hym to abyde
Holde forewarde nowe, & after let vs ryde

Thys Pandarus, wyth all pyne and wo
Made hym to dwell, and at the wekes ende
Of Sarpedon they toke her leaue tho
And on her way they spedden hem to wende
(Quod Troylus) now lorde me grace sende
That I may fynde at myne home cõmynge
Creseyde comen, and therwyth gan he synge

Ye haselwode thought thys Pandare
And to hym selfe full softely he seyde
God wote rekroyden may thys hotte fare
Er Calkas sende Troylus Creseyde
But natheles he iaped thus and seyde
And swore ywys, hys hert him wel behyght
She wold come, as sone as euer she myght

When they vnto the palays were ycomen
Of Troylus, they downe of horse alyght
And to ỳ chãbre, her way haue they nõmen
And vnto tyme that it gan to nyght
They speken of Creseyde the lady bryght
And after thys, when hem both leste
They spedde hem fro the supper vnto reste

On morowe, as sone as daye began to clere
Thys Troylus gan of hys slepe to abreyde
And to Pandarus, hys owne brother dere
For loue of god, full pytously he seyde
As go we sene the paleys of Creseyde
For sens we yet may haue no more feest
So let vs sene her paleys at the leest

And therwyth all hys meyne for to blende
A cause he fonde in towne for to go
And to Creseydes house they gone wende
But lorde thys sely Troylus was wo
Hym thought his sorowful hert brast in two
For when he sawe her dores sperred all
Wel nyg for sorowe adowne he gan to fall

Therwith whẽ he was ware, & gan beholde
Howe shet was euery wyndowe of the place
As frost hym thought hys herte gan to colde
For whych wyth chaunged deedly pale face
Wythouten worde, he forth by gan to pace
And as god wolde, he gan so faste ryde
That no wyght of hys countenaunce aspyde

Then sayd he thus: O paleys desolate
O house of houses, whylom best yhyght
O paleys empty and dysconsolate
O thou lanterne, of whych queynt is ỳ light
O paleys, whylom daye ỳ nowe art nyght
Well oughtest thou to fall, and I to dye
Sens she is went, that wont was vs to gye

O paleys, whylom crowne of houses all
Enlumyned wyth sunne of blysse
O ryngc, of whych the rubie is out fall
O cause of wo, that cause haste ben of blysse
Yet sens I maye no bet, fayne wolde I kysse
Thy colde doores, durst I for thys route
And farwel shryne, of which the saynt is out

Therwyth he cast on Pandarus hys eye
Wyth chaunged face, and pytous to beholde
And when he myght hys tyme aryght aspye
Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he tolde
Hys newe sorowe, and eke hys ioyes olde
So pytously, and wyth so deed an hewe
That euerywight, might on his sorow rewe

Fro thence forth he rydeth vp and downe
And euery thynge came him to remẽbraunce
As he rode forth by the places of the towne
In whych he whylom had all hys plesaunce
Lo, yonder sawe I myne owne lady daunce
And in that temple wyth her eyen clere
Ye kaught first my ryght lady dere

And yonder haue I herde full lustely
My dere herte laugh, and yonder play
Sawe I her ownes eke full blyssfully
And yonder ones to me gan she saye
Nowe good swete, loue me well I praye
And yonde so goodly gan she me beholde

That to the death myne herte is to her holde

And at the corner in the yonder house
Herde I myne alderleuest lady dere
So womanly, wyth voyce melodyouse
Syngen so well, so goodly and so clere
That in my soule yet my thynketh I here
The blysfull sowne, and in that yonder place
My lady fyrst me toke vnto her grace

Thē thought he thus, o blysful lorde Cupide
when I the processe haue in memorye
Howe thou me haste weryed on euery syde
Yen myght a boke make of it lyke a storye
what nede is the to seke on me vyctorye
Sens I am thyne, and holy at thy wyll
what ioye hast thou thyn owne folke to spyl

wel hast thou lord ywroke on me thyn yre
Thou myghty god, and dredfull for to greue
Nowe mercy lorde, thou woste wel I desyre
Thy grace moste, of all lustes leue
And lyue and dye I woll in thy beleue
For whych I ne aske in guerdon but a boone
That thou Creseyde ayen me sende soone

Dystrayne her herte as fast to returne
As thou doest myne to longen her to se
Then wote I wel that she nyll not soiourne
Nowe blysfull lorde, so cruell thou ne be
Unto the bloode of Troye, I praye the
As Juno was vnto the bloode Thebane
For which ý folk of Thebes caught her bane

And after thys he to the yates wente
There as Creseyde out rode, a ful good paas
And vp & downe there made he many a wēte
And to hym selfe ful ofte he sayd alas
Fro hence rode my blysse and my solas
As wolde blysfull god nowe for hys ioye
I myght her sene ayen come to Troye

And to the yonder hyll I gan her gyde
Alas, and there I toke of her my leue
And yonde I sawe her to her father ryde
For sorowe of which myne hert shall to cleue
And hyther home I come when it was eue
And here I dwell, out cast from al ioye
And shall, tyll I maye sene her efte in Troye

And of hym selfe ymagined he ofte
To ben defeyted, pale, and woxen lesse
Then he was wont, & that men sayden softe
what maye it be: who can the soth gesse
why Troylus hath all thys heuynesse
And all thys nas but hys melancolye
That he had of hym selfe suche fantasye

Another tyme ymagynen he wolde
That euery wyght that went by the wey
Had of hym routh, & that they sayne sholde
I am ryght sory, Troylus woll dey
And thus he droue a day yet forth or tweye
As ye haue herde, suche lyke gan he lede
As he that stode bytwixen hope and drede

For whych hym lyked in hys songes shewe
Thencheson of hys wo, as he best myght
And made a songe, of wordes but a fewe
Somwhat hys wofull herte for to lyght
And when he was from euery mānes syght
wyth softe voyce, he of hys lady dere
That absent was, gan synge as ye may here

O sterre, of whych I lost haue al the light
wyth herte sore, well ought I to bewayle
That euer derke in turment, nyght by nyght
Towarde my deth, ẃ wynde I stere & sayle
For whych the tenth nyght, yf that I fayle
The gydyng of thy beames bryght an houre
My shyp and me Carybdes woll deuoure

Thys songe whē he thus songē had soone
He fyll ayen into hys syghes olde
And euery nyght, as was his wont to doone
He stode the bryght moone to beholde
And all hys sorowe he to the moone tolde
And sayd, ywys whē thou arte horned newe
I shall be glad, yf all the worlde be trewe

I sawe thyne hornes old eke by the morowe
when hence rode my ryght lady dere
That cause is of my turment and my sorowe
For whych, O bryght Lucina the clere
For loue of God ren fast aboute thy spere
For when thyne hornes new gynnē sprynge
Then shall she come ý may my blysse brynge

The daye is more, and lenger euery night
Then they ben wōte to be, hym thought tho
And that the sonne went hys course vnryght
By lenger waye then it was wonte to go
And sayd, ywys I drede me euer mo
The Sonnes sonne Pheton be on lyue

And

And that hys fathers carte amysse he drywe

Upon the walles fast eke wolde he walke
And on the grekes hoste he wolde se
And to hym selfe ryght thus he wolde talke
Lo, yonder is myne owne lady free
Or els yonder, there the tentes be
And thence cometh thys ayre that is so soote
That in my soule I fele it dothe me boote

And hardly thys wynde that more & more
Thus stoundemele encreaseth in my face
Is of my ladyes depe syghes sore
I preue it thus, for in none other space
Of all thys towne, saue only in thys place
Fele I no winde, that sowneth so lyke payne
It sayeth alas, why twynned be we twayne

Thys lõge tyme he dryueth forth ryght thus
Tyll fully passed was the nynth nyght
And aye besyde hym was thys Pandarus
That besyly dyd all hys full myght
Hym to comforte, and make hys herte lyght
Yeuynge him hope alway ỳ tenth morowe
That she shal comen, & stynten al his sorowe

Upon that other syde eke was Creseyde
wyth women fewe, amonge ỳ grekes stõge
For whych full ofte a day, alas she seyde
That I was borne, wel may myn herte lõge
After my death, for nowe lyue I to longe
Alas, and I ne maye it not amende
For nowe is worse then euer yet I wende

My father nyll for nothynge do my grace
To gone ayen, for ought I can hym queme
And yf so be, that I my terme pace
My Troylus shall in hys herte deme
That I am false, & so it maye well seme
Thus shall I haue vnthanke on euery syde
That I was borne so welawaye the tyde

And yf that I me put in ieopardye
To steale awaye by nyght, and it be fall
That I be caught, I shalbe holde a spye
Or els lo, thys drede I moste of all
Yf in the handes of some wretche I fall
I nam but loste, all be myn herte trewe
Now mighty god, thou on my sorowe rewe

Full pale yworen was her bryght face
Her lymmes leane, as she that all the daye
Stode when she durst, & loked on the place
There she was borne, and dwelt had aye
And all the nyght weppynge alas she laye
And thus dyspayred out of al cure
She ladde her lyfe, thys wofull creature

Full ofte a day she syghed eke for dystresse
And in her selfe she went aye purtrayeng
Of Troylus the great worthynesse
And all hys goodly wordes recordyng
Sens fyrst that day her loue begã to spryng
And thus she sette her wofull herte a fyre
Through remembraunce of ỳ she gan desyre

In all thys world there nys so cruel herte
That her had herde cõplaynen in her sorowe
That nold haue weptẽ for her paynes smert
So tenderly she wepte, both eue & morowe
Her neded no teeres for to borowe
And thys was yet the worst of all her payne
There was no wyst, to whõ she durst playne

Full rewfully she lokedvpon Troye
Behelde the toures hygh, and eke the hallis
Alas (q̃ she) the pleasaunce and the ioye
The whych that nowe al turned into gall is
Haue I had ofte, wythin yonder wallis
O Troylus, what doest thou nowe she seyde
Lord whether thou yet thinke vpõ Creseyde

Alas, that I ne had ytrowed on your lore
And went wyth you, as ye me redde er thys
Then had I nowe not syghed halfe so sore
Who myght haue sayd, ỳ I had done amys
To steale awaye wyth suche one as he is
But all to late cometh the lectuary
When men the corse vnto the graue carye

To late is nowe to speke of that matere
Prudence alas, one of thyne eyen thre
Ye lacked alwaye, er that I came here
For on tyme passed well remembred me
And present tyme eke coulde I well se
But future tyme, er I was in the snare
Coulde I not sene, that causeth now my care

But natheleſſe, betyde what betyde
I shall to morowe at nyght, by eest or west
Out of thys hoost steale, on some syde
And gone wyth Troylus, where as hem lest
This purpose wol I holde, & this is ỳ best
No force of wycked tonges ianglerye

For euer on loue, haue wretches had enuy

For who so wol of euery worde take hede
Or rulen hym by euery wyghtes wyt
Ne shall he neuer thryuen out of drede
For that that some men blamen euer yet
Lo, other maner folke comenden it
And as for me, for all suche variaunce
Felicite clepe I my suffysaunce

For whych, wythout any wordes mo
To Troy I woll, as for conclusioun
But God it wote, er fully monethes two
She was full ferre fro that entencioun
For both Troylus and Troye toun
Shall knotlesse throughout her herte slyde
For she woll take a purpose for to abyde

Thys Diomede, of whome you tell I can
Goeth nowe wythin hym selfe aye arguyng
wyth all the sleyght and all that euer he can
Howe he maye best wyth shortest taryeng
In to hys nette Creseydes herte bryngc
To thys entente he couth neuer fyne
To fyshen her, he layde out hoke and lyne

But natheleſſe, well in hys herte he thought
That she nas not wythout a loue in Troye
For neuerfythen he her thens brought
Ne couth he sene her laugh, or maken ioye
He nyst howe best her herte for tacoye
But for tassey, he sayd naught it ne greueth
For he that naught assayeth nauzt atcheueth

Yet sayd he to hym selfe vpon a nyght
Nowe am I not a fole, that wote wel howe
Her wo is, for loue of another wyght
And hervpon to gon assaye her nowe
I maye well wete, it nyll not ben my prowe
For wyse folke in bokes it expresse
Men shall not wowe a wyght in heuynesse

But who so myght wynnen suche a floure
Fro him, for whō she mourneth night & daye
He myght sayne he were a conquerour
And ryght anone, as he that bolde was aye
Thought in his hert, happe how happe may
All shulde I dye, I woll her herte seche
I shall no more lesen but my speche

Thys Diomede, as bokes vs declare
was in hys nedes prest and corragious
wyth sterne voyce, & mighty lymmes square
Hardy, testyke, stronge, and cheualrous
Of dedes lyke hys father Tydeus
And some men sayne, he was of tonge large
And heyre he was, of Calcidony and Arge

Creseyde meane was of her stature
Therto of shappe, of face, and eke of chere
There myght ben no fayrer creature
And ofte tyme thys was her manere
To gone ytressed wyth her heeres clere
Downe by her colere, at her backe behynde
which with a threde of golde she wold bynde

And saue her browes ioyneden yfere
There nas no lacke, in aught I can espyen
But for to speken of her eyen clere
Lo, trewly they wrytten that her seyen
That paradys stode formed in her eyen
And wyth her ryche beaute euermore
stroue loue in her, ay which of hē was more

She sobre was eke, synple, & wyse withal
The beste ynorysched eke that myght be
And goodly of her speche in generall
Charitable, estately, lusty, and fre
Ne neuer more ne lacked her pyte
Tendre herted, slydynge of corage
But truely I can not tell her age

And Troylus well woren was in hyght
And complete formed by proporcioun
So wel, that kynde it naught amēden might
Yonge, fresche, stronge, and hardy as lyoun
Trewe as stele, in eche condicioun
One of the beste entetched creature
That is or shal, whyle ẏ the world may dure

And certaynly, in story as I it fonde
That Troylus was neuer vnto no wyght
As in hys tyme, in no dregre seconde
In daryngc do, that longeth to a knyght
Al myght a gyaunt passen hym of myght
hys herte aye wyth the fyrst and wyth ẏ best
Stode peregall to dare done what hym leste

But for to tellen forth of Diomede
It fyll, that after on the tenthe daye
Sens that Creseyde out of the cyte yede
Thys Diomede, as fresh as brauche in May
Came to the tente there as Calkas lay
And fayned hym w̄ Calcas haue to doone

But

But what he mente, I shal you tellen soone

Creseyde at shorte wordes for to tell
welcomed hym, & downe hym by her sette
And he was eth ynough to maken dwell
And after thys, wythouten longe lette
The spyces and the wyne mē forth hem fette
And forth they speke of thys and that yfere
As frendes done, of whych some shal ye here

He gan fyrst fallen of the werre in speche
Betwyxen hem & the folke of Troye toun
And of thassiege he gan eke her beseche
To tellen hym what was her opinioun
Fro that demaunde he so dyscendeth doun
To asken her, yf that her straunge thought
The grekes gyse, & werkes ý they wrought.

And why her father taryeth so longe
To wedden her vnto some worthy wyght
Creseyde that was in her paynes stronge
For loue of Troylus her owne knyght
So ferforth as she conuynge had or myght
Andwerde hym tho, but as of hys entente
It semed not she wyste what he mente

But natheleſſe thys ylke Diomede
Gan on hym selfe assure, and thus he seyde
yf I aryght haue taken on you hede
Me thynketh thus, o lady myne Creseyde
That sens I fyrst hōde on your bydel leyde
when ye out came of Troye by the morowe
Ne myght I neuer sene you but in sorowe

I can not sayne what may the cause be
But yf for loue of some Troyan it were
The whych ryght sore wolde athynken me
That ye for any wyght that dwelleth there
Shulden spyll a quarter of a teere
Or pytously your seluen so begyle
For dredelesse it is not worth the whyle

The folke of Troye, as who sayth al & some
In pryson ben, as ye your seluen se
Fro thence shall not one on lyue come
For all the golde atwyxen sunne and see
Trusteth well, and vnderstandeth me
There shall not one to mercy gone on lyue
All were he lorde of worldes twyse fyue

Such wrech on hem for fetchyng of Heleyne
There shall be take, er that we hence wende
That Maunes, which ý goddes bē of peyne
Shal ben agast that grekes wol hem shende
And men shall drede vnto the worldes ende
From hence forth, to rauyshen any quene
So cruell shall our wreche on hem be sene

And but yf Calcas lede vs wyth ambages
That is to sayne, wyth double wordes slye
Such as mē clepen a worde w̄ two visages
Ye shall well knowen that I not ne lye
And all thys thinge ryght sene it w̄ your eye
And ý anone, ye nyll not trowe howe soone
Nowe taketh hede, for it is for to doone

what wene ye your wyse father wolde
Haue yeuen Antenor for you anone
yf he ne wyst that the cytie shulde
Dystroyed ben? why nay so mote I gone
He knewe full well there shal not scapen one
That Troyan is, and for the great feere
He durst not that ye dwelte lenger there

what woll ye more, o louesom lady dere
Let Troye and troyans fro your herte pace
Dryue out ý bytter hope, & make good chere
And clepe ayen the beaute of your face
That ye wyth salte teeres so deface
For Troye is brought in suche a ieopardye
That it to saue is nowe no remedye

And thynketh wel, ye shal in grekes fynde
A more parfyte loue, er it be nyght
Then any troyan is, and more kynde
And bet to seruen you woll done hys myght
And yf ye vouchsafe my lady bryght
I woll ben he, to seruen you my selue
Yea leauer then be lorde of Greces twelue

And wyth ý worde he gan to waxen reed
And in hys speche, a lytel whyle he quoke
And cast asyde a lytell wyth hys heed
And stynte a whyle, & afterwarde he woke
And sobrely on her he threwe hys loke
And sayd I am, al be it to you no ioye
As gentyll a man, as any wyght in Troye

For yf my father Tydeus, he seyde
Ylyued had, I had ben er thys
Of Calcidony and Argo a kynge Creseyde
And so hope I that I shalbe ywys
But he was slayne alas, the more harme is
Unhappely at Thebes all to rathe

Polymyte, and many a man to scathe

But herte myne, sythe that I am your mã
And ben the fyrst, of whome I seche grace
To serue you as hertely as I can
And euer shall whyle I to lyue haue space
So that, er I departe out of thys place
Ye woll me graunt that I maye to morowe
At better leyser tell you of my sorowe

What shulde I tell hys wordes ý he seyd:
He spake ynough for o daye at the mest
It preueth well he spake so, that Creseyde
Graunted on the morowe at hys request
For to speake wyth hym at the leest
So that he nolde speake of suche matere
And thus she to hym sayd, as ye mowe here

As she that had her herte on Troylus
So fast, that there maye it none arace
And straungely she spake, and sayd thus
O Diomede, I loue that ylke place
There I was borne, & I oues for thy grace
Delyuer it soone of all that doth it care
God for thy myght so leue it well to fare

That grekes wold her wrath on Troy wrek
Yf that they myght I knowe it wel ywys
But it shall naught befallen as ye speke
And god to forne, and farther ouer thys
I wote my father wyse and redy is
And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde
So dere I am the more vnto hym holde

That Grekes ben of hygh condition
I wote eke wel, but certayne men shal fynde
As worthy folke wythin Troy toun
As connyng, as parfyte, and as kynde
As ben betwyxt Orcades and Inde
And that ye coude well your lady serue
I trowe eke well, her thanke for to deserue

But as to speke of loue, ywys she seyde
I had a lorde, to whome I wedded was
The whose myne herte was all tyll he deyde
And other loue, as helpe me nowe Pallas
There in myne herte nys, ne neuer was
And that ye ben of noble and hygh kynrede
I haue well herde it tellen out of drede

And that doth me to haue so great a wonder
That ye woll scorne any woman so
Eke god wote, loue and I ben fer asonder
I am dysposed bet so mote I go
Unto my death playne and make wo
What I shall after done, I can not say
But trewly as yet me lyst not play

Myne herte is nowe in tribulatioun
And ye in armes besy daye by daye
Herafter when ye wonnen haue the toun
Perauenture then, so it happen may
That when I se that I neuer ere say
Then woll I werke ý I neuer ere wrought
Thys worde to you ynoughe suffysen ought

To morow eke wol I spekẽ wyth you fayne
So that ye touchen naught of thys matere
And when you lyst, ye may come here againe
And er ye gone, thus moche I saye you here
As helpe me Pallas, wyth her heeres clere
Yf that I shulde of any greke haue routhe
It shulde be your seluen by my trouthe

I saye not therfore that I wol you loue
Ne say not nay, but in conclusioun
I meane well by god that syt aboue
And therwythall she caste her eyen doun
And gã to sigh & said, Troilus & Troy toun
Yet bydde I god, in quyete and in reste
I maye you sene, or do myne herte breste

But in effecte, and shortly for to saye
Thys Diomede all freshly newe agayne
Gan preasen on, and faste her mercy praye
And after thys the soth for to sayne
Her gloue he toke, of which he was ful fayne
And fynally, when it was woxen eue
And all was well, he rose and toke hys leue

The bryght Venus folowed & aye taught
The way there brode Phebus downe alight
And Cythera her chare horse ouer raught
To whyrle out of the lyon, yf she myght
And Signifer hys candels sheweth bryght
When that Creseyde vnto her bedde wente
Wythin her fathers fayre bryght tente

Retournyng in her soule aye vp & downe
The wordes of thys sodayne Diomede
Hys great estate, and peryl of the towne
And that she was alone, and had nede
Of frendes helpe, and thus began to brede
The cause why the soth for to tell

She toke fully purpose for to dwell

The morow came, and goostly for to speke
This Diomede is come vnto Creseyde
And shortly, leste that ye my tale breke
So wel he for hym selfe spake and seyde
That all her syghes sore, downe he leyde
And fynally, the sothe for to sayne
He lefte her the great of all her payne

And after this, the storye telleth vs
That she him yaue the fayre baye stede
The whiche she ones wan of Troylus
And eke a broche (and that was lytel nede)
That Troylus was, she yaue this Diomede
And eke the bet from sorowe him to releue
She made him weare a pencell of her sleue

I fynde eke in stories els where
whan through the body hurte was Diomede
Of Troylus, tho wepte she many a teere
whã that she sawe his wyde woundes blede
And that she toke to kepen him good hede
And for to healen hin: of his smerte
Yen sayn, I not, that she yaue him her herte

But trewly the storie telleth vs
There made neuer woman more wo
Than she, whan that she falsed Troylus
She sayd alas, for nowe is clene ago
My name in trouthe of loue for euermo
For I haue falsed one the gentylleſt
That euer was, and one the worthyest

Alas, of me vnto the worldes ende
Shal neyther ben ywritten nor ysonge
No good word, for these bokes wol me shede
I rolled shall I ben on many a tonge
Throughout ý worlde, my bel shal be ronge
And women moste woll hate me of all
Alas, that suche a caas me shulde fall

They wol sayne, in as moche as in me is
I haue hem done dishonour welaway
Al be I nat the fyrst that dyd amys
what helpeth that, to don my blame away
But sens I se there is no better way
And that to late is nowe for me to rewe
To Diomede I woll algate be trewe

But Troylus, sens I no better may
And sens that thus departen ye and I
Yet pray I god so yeue you right good day
As for the gentylleſt knyght trewly
That euer I sawe, to seruen faythfully
And best can aye his ladyes honour kepe
And with ý worde she braste anone to wepe

And certes you ne haten shall I neuer
And frendes loue, that shal ye haue of me
And my good worde, all shulde I lyuen euer
And trewly I wolde right sorie be
For to sene you in aduersyte
And gyltlesse I wote wel I you leue
And all shall passe, and thus take I my leue

But trewly howe longe it was bytwene
That she forsoke him for this Diomede
There is none auctour telleth it I wene
Take euery man nowe to his bokes hede
He shall no terme fynden, out of drede
For though that he began to wow her soone
Er he her wan, yet was there more to done

Ne me ne lyste this sely woman chyde
Ferther than the storie woll deuyse
Her name alas, is publyshed so wyde
That for her gylte it ought ynough suffyse
And yf I might excuse her in any wyse
For she so sory was for her vntrouthe
I wys I wolde excuse her yet for routhe

This Troylus, as I before haue tolde
Thus driueth forth, as wel as he hath might
But ofte was his herte hote and colde
And namely that ylke nynthe nyght
whiche on the morowe she had him behyght
To come ayen, god wote full lytel reste
Had he that night, nothyng to slepe him leste

The laurer crowned Phebus, with his heate
Gan in his course aye vpwarde as he wente
To warmen of the eest see the waues weate
And Cyrces doughter songe, with fresh entẽt
whan Troylus his Pandare after sente
And on the walles of the towne they pleyde
To loke, yf they can sene aught of Creseyde

Tyll it was noone, they stoden for to se
who that ther came, and euery maner wight
That came fro ferre, they sayden it was she
Tyll that they colden knowen him aright
Nowe was his herte dull, now was it light
And thus beiaped stoden for to stare

Aboute naught, this Troylus & Pandare

To Pandarus, this Troylus tho seyde
For aught I wotte, before noone sykerly
In to this town ne cometh nat here Creseyde
She hath ynough to done hardely
To wynnen from her father, so trowe I
Her olde father wol yet make her dyne
Er that she go, god yeue his herte pyne

Pãdarus answerd, it may well ben certayne
And for thy let vs dyne, I the beseche
And after noon, thã mayst thou come agayn
And whom they go, without more speche
And comen ayen, but longe may they seche
Er that they fynde that they after gape
Fortune hem bothe thynketh for to iape

(Quod Troylus) I se well nowe that she
Is taryed with her olde father so
That er she come it woll nygh euen be
Come forthe, I woll vnto the yate go
These porters ben vnkonnyng euermo
And I woll done hem holden vp the yate
As naught ne were, all though she come late

The day gothe faste, & after that came eue
And yet came nat to Troylus Creseyde
He loketh forthe by hedge, by tree, by greue
And ferre his heed ouer the wall he leyde
And at the laste he turned him, and seyde
By god I wote her meanyng now Pandare
Almoste ywis al newe was my care

Nowe doutelesse thys lady can her goode
I wote she cometh rydyng priuely
I commende her wysedom by myne hode
She woll nat maken people nycely
Gaure on her whan ý she cometh, but softly
By nyght in to the town she thynketh ryde
And dere brother thynke nat longe to abyde

We haue naught els for to don ywis
And Pandarus, now wylte thou trowen me
Haue here my trouthe I se her, yonde she is
Heaue vp thyne eyen man, mayst thou nat se
Pandare answerde, nay so mote I the
Al wrõg by god, what sayst ý mã wher arte
That I se yonde, nys but a farre carte

Alas, thou sayest right sothe (qꝯ Troylus)
But hardely it is nat al for nought
That in myne herte I nowe reioyce thus
It is ayenst some good, I haue a thought
Not I nat howe, but sens ý I was wrought
Ne felte I suche a comfort dare I say
She cometh to night, my lyfe ý durst I lay

Pãdarus answerd, it may be wel ynough
And helde with him, of al that euer he sayde
But in his herte he thought, and softe lough
And to him selfe full soberly he sayde
Frome haselwodde, there ioly Robyn pleyde
Shall come all that thou abydest here
Yea, farwell all the snowe of ferne yere

The wardeyn of the yates gan to call
The folke, which that without ý yates were
And bade hem driuen in her beestes all
Or all the night they muste bleuen there
And ferre within the night, with many a tere
This Troylus gan homwarde for to ryde
For wel he seeth it helpeth nat to abyde

But nathelesse he gladded him in this
He thought he myscounted had hys dey
And sayd, I vnderstonde haue al amys
For thylke night I laste Creseyde sey
She sayd, I shall ben here, yf that I may
Er that the moone, o dere herte swete
The Lyon passe, out of this Aryete

For which she may yet hold al her byheste
And on the morowe, vnto the yate he wente
And vp and downe, by west & eke by este
Upon the walles made he many a wente
But al for naught, his hope alway him blent
For whiche at night, in sorowe & syghes sore
He wente hym home, withouten any more

This hope all clene out of hys herte fledde
He ne hath wheron nowe lenger for to hongе
But for ý payne him thourt his herte bledde
So were his throwes sharpe, & wõder strõg
For whan he sawe that she abode so longe
He nyste what he iudgen of it myght
Sens she hath broken that she hym behyght

The thyrde, fourthe, fyfthe, and syxte day
After tho dayes ten, of whiche I tolde
Betwyxen hope and drede his herte lay
Yet somwhat trustyng on her hestes olde
But whan he saw she nolde her terme holde
He can nowe sene none other remedye

But for

But for to shape him sone for to dye

Therwith the wicked spiryt, god vs blesse
which that men clepen woode ialousye
Gan in him crepe, in al this heuynesse
For whyche bycause he wolde sone dye
He ne ete ne dronke for hys melancolye
And eke from euery companye he fledde
This was the lyke that al this tyme he ledde

He so dekayte was, that no maner man
Unneth him might knowen there he wente
So was he leane, and therto pale and wan
And feble, that he walketh by potente
And with his ire he thus him selfe shente
But who so asked him wherof hym smerte
He sayd, his harme was al aboute his herte

Priam full ofte, and eke his mother dere
His bretherne & his sustren gan him krayne
why he so sorowfull was in all his chere
And what thyng was ỳ cause of al his payne
But al for naught, he nolde hys cause playne
But sayd, he felte a greuous maladye
Aboute his herte, and fayne he wolde dye

So on a day he laye him downe to slepe
And so bykell that in slepe him thought
That in a forest faste he walked to wepe
For loue of her, ỳ him these paynes wrought
And vp and downe, as he that forest sought
He mette he sawe a bore, with tuskes greate
That slept ayenst the bright sonnes heate

And by this bore, faste in her armes folde
Lay kysyng aye his lady bright Creseyde
For sorow of which, whan he it gan beholde
And for dispyte, out of his slepe he breyde
And loude he cryed on Pandarus, and seyde
O Pandarus, nowe knowe I croppe & roote
I nam but deed, there nys non other boote

My lady bright Creseyde hath me betrayde
In whom I trusted moste of any wight
She els where hath nowe her herte apayde
The blyssful goddes, through her gret might
Haue in my dreame yshewed it full right
Thus in my dreme, Creseyde haue I behold
And all this thyng to Pandarus he tolde

O my Creseyde alas, what subtylte-
what newe lust-what beaute-what science-
what wrathe of iuste cause haue ye to me-
what gylte of me-what fel experience
Hath me rafte alas-thyne aduertence
O trust, o faythe, o depe assuraunce
who hath me rafte Creseyde, all my plesaūce

Alas, why let I you from hence go-
For which wel nigh out of my wyt I breyde
who shall nowe trowe on any othes mo-
God wote I wende, o lady bright Creseyde
That euery worde was gospel that ye seyde
But who may bet begyle, yf hym lyste
Than he on whom men wenen best to tryste

What shall I done, my Pandarus alas-
I fele nowe so sharpe a newe payne
Sens that there is no remedye in this caas
That bet were it, I with myn hōdes twayn
My seluen slowe, than alway thus to playn
For throgh ỳ deth my wo shuld haue an end
Ther euery day with lyke my selfe I shende

Pandare answerde & sayd, alas the whyle
That I was borne, haue I nat sayd er thys
That dreames many a maner man begyle
And why-for folke expounden hem amys
Howe darste thou sayne that false thy lady is
For any dreame, right for thyn owne drede
Let be this thought, ỳ canst no dremes rede

Paraūcture there thou dreamest of this bore
It may so be that it may signifye
Her father, whiche that olde is and eke hore
Ayen the sonne lythe on poynte to dye
And she for sorowe gynneth wepe and crye
And kysseth him, there he lythe on ỳ grounde
Thus shuldest ỳ thy dreme aright expounde

Howe might I than done (q̃ Troylus)
To knowe of this, yea were it neuer so lyte
Now sayest thou wisely (q̃ this Pandarus)
My rede is this, sens thou canst wel endyte
That hastely a letter thou her write
Through which ỳ shalt well bringen about
To knowe a sothe, of that thou arte in doute

And se nowe why-for this I dare wel sayne
That yf so is, that she vntrewe be
I can nat trowen that she wol write agayns
And yf she write, thou shalt ful sone yse
As whether she hath any lyberte
To come ayen, or els in some clause

If she

Jf she be let, she woll assygne a cause

Thou hast nat writte to her sens ý she went
Nor she to the, and this J durste lay
There may suche cause ben in her entente
That hardely thou wolt thy seluen say
That her abode the best is for you tway
Nowe write her than, & thou shalt fele sone
A sothe of all, there is no more to done

Acorded ben to this conclusyoun
And that anon, these ylke lordes two
And hastely sate Troylus adoun
And rolleth in his herte to and fro
Howe he may best discryuen her his wo
And to Creseyde his owne lady dere
He wrote right thus, & sayd as ye may here.

¶ The copy of the letter.

Jght freshe floure, whose J haue ben and shall
Withoute parte of els where seruyce
Wyth herte, body, lyke, luste, thought, and all
J wofull wight, in euery humble wyse
That tonge can tel, or herte may deuyse
As ofte as mater occupyeth place
Ye recommaunde vnto your noble grace

Lyketh it you to weten swete herte
As ye wel knowe, howe longe tyme agon
That ye me left in aspre paynes smerte
whan that ye went, of whiche yet bote non
Haue J non had, but euer worse bygon
Fro day to day am J, and so mote dwell
whyle it you lyst, of wele and wo my well

For which to you, with dredeful hert trewe
J write, as he that sorowe driueth to write
My wo, that euery houre encreaseth newe
Complaynyng as J dare, or can endyte
And that defaced is, that may ye wyte
The teares, which that frō myne eyen rayne
That wolden speke, yf ý they durste & playne

You lyst beseche J, that your eyen clere
To loke on this defouled ye nat holde
And oueral this, that ye my lady dere
wol vouchsafe this letter to beholde
And by the cause eke of my cares colde
That sleeth my wyt, yf aught amysme sterte
Forgeue it me, myne owne swete herte

Jf any seruaunt durst or ought of ryght
Upon his lady pitously complayne
Than wene J that J ought be that wyght
Cōsydred this, that ye these monthes twayn
Haue taryed, there ye sayden sothe to sayn
But ten dayes ye nolde in hoste soiourne
But in two monthes, yet ye nat retourne

But for as moche, as me mote nedes lyke
All that you lyst, J dare nat playne more
But humbly, with sorowfull syghes syke
You write J myne vnresty sorowes sore
Fro day to day, desyryng euer more
To knowen fully, yf your wyll it were
Howe ye haue fared & don while ye be there

Whose welfare and heale eke god encrease
In honour suche, that vpwarde in degree
Jt growe alway, so that it neuer cease
Right as your herte aye can my lady free
Deuyse, J pray to god so mote it be
And graunt it that ye soone vpon me rewe
As wisely as in all J am to you trewe

And yf you lyketh knowen of the fare
Of me, whose wo ther may no wizt discryue
J can no more, but chest of euery care
At writyng of this letter J was on lyue
Al redy out my wofull gost to dryue
whiche J delay, and holde him yet in honde
Upon the syght of mater of your sonde

Myne eyen two in bayn, with which J se
Of sorowfull teares salte arn worken wellis
My songe in playnt of myne aduersyte
My good in harm, myn ease eke worē hell is
My ioye in wo, J can sey nowe nought ellis
But turned is, for whiche my lyke J wary
Euery ioye prease inhis contrary

Which w̄ your cōmyng home aye to Troy
ye may redresse, and more a thousande sythe
Than euer J had encressen in me ioy
For was there neuer herte yet so blythe
To haue his lyke, as J shall ben as swythe
As J you se, and though no maner routhe
Can meuen you, yet thinketh on your trouthe

And yf so be my gylte hath dethe deserued
Or yf

Or yf you lyst no more vpon me se
In guerdon yet of that I haue you serued
Beseche I you, myn owne lady fre
That her vpon ye wolden write me
For loue of god, my right lode sterre
That deth may make an ende of al my werre

If other cause aught doth you for to dwel
That with your letter ye may me recomforte
For though to me your absence is an hell
wyth pacience I woll my wo comforte
And with your lettre of hope I wol disporte
Now writeth swete, & let me thus nat playn
with hope or dethe, delyuereth me fro payne

Iwys myne owne dere herte trewe
I wote that whan ye next vpon me se
So loste haue I myn heale, & eke myn hewe
Creseyde shall nat conne knowen me
Iwys myne hertes day, my lady fre
So thursteth aye myne herte to beholde
Your beaute, that vnneth my lyfe I holde

I say no more, all haue I for to sey
To you wel more than I tell may
But whether that ye do me lyue or dey
Yet pray I god, so yeue you right good day
And fareth wel goodly fayre fresh may
As ye that lyfe or dethe me may commaunde
And to youre trouthe aye I me recōmaunde

Wyth heale suche, that but ye yeuen me
The same heale, I shal none heale haue
In you lythe, whan you lyst that it so be
The day in which me clothen shal my graue
And in you my lyfe, in you might for to saue
Me fro disease of all paynes smerte
And fare nowe well myne owne swete herte
Le vostre T.

This lettre forth was sent vnto Creseyde
Of whiche her answere in affecte was thys
Full pitously she wrote ayen, and seyde
That also sone as she myght ywis
She wold come, & mende al that was amys
And fynally she wrote and sayd then
She wolde come, ye, but she nyste when

But in her letter made she suche feestes
That wōder was, & swore she loued him best
Of which he founde but botomlesse byhestes
But Troylus thou mayst nowe eest & west
Pype in an Iuy leefe yf that the lest
Thus gothe the worlde, god shylde vs fro mischaunce
And euery wight that meneth trouth auaūce

Encreasen gan the wo fro day to nyght
Of Troylus, for taryeng of Creseyde
And lessen gan his hope and eke his myght
For which al down he in his bedde him leyd
He ne ete, dronke, ne slept, ne worde seyde
Imagynyng aye that she was vnkynde
For which wel nigh he wext out of his mind

This dreme, of which I told haue eke beforn
May neuer come out of his remembraunce
He thought aye well, he had his lady lorne
And that Ioues, of hys purueyaunce
Hym shewed had in slepe the signyfiaunce
Of her vntrouth, and his disauenture
And that the bore was shewed him in fygure

For whiche he for Sybille his suster sente
That called was Cassandre eke all aboute
And all his dreame he tolde her er he stente
And her besought assoylen him the doute
Of the stronge boore, with tuskes stoute
And fynally, within a lytell stounde
Cassandre him gan thus hys dreme expoūde

She gan first smyle, & sayd o brother dere
If thou a soth of this desyrest to knowe
Thou muste a fewe of olde stories here
To purpose howe that fortune ouerthrowe
Hath lordesold, through which win a throw
Thou shalt this bore know, & of what kynde
He comen is, as men in bookes fynde

Diane, which that wroth was and in yre
For grekes nolde done her sacrifyce
Ne encens vpon her aulter sette on fyre
She for that grekes gonne her so dispyse
wrake her in a wonder cruel wyse
For with a bore, as great as ore in stall
She made vp frete her corne and vynes all

To slee the bore was al ÿ countrey reysed
Amonge whiche there came this bore to se
A mayd, one of this worlde the best yprayised
And Meleager, lorde of that countre
He loued so this freshe mayden fre
That with his manhode, er he wolde stente
This bore he slough, and her ÿ heed he sente
Of whiche

Of whiche, as olde bokes tellen vs
There rose a conteke and a great enuye
And of this lorde discended Tideus
By lygne or els olde bokes lye
But howe this Meleager gan to dye
Through his mother, woll I you nat tell
For all to longe it were for to dwell

She tolde eke howe Tideus, er she stente
Unto the stronge cyte of Thebes
(To claymen kyngdom of the cyte) went
For his felawe dan Polimites
Of whiche the brother dan Ethiocles
Ful wrongfully of Thebes helde ỳ strentgh
This tolde she by processe all by length

She tolde eke howe Hemonydes asterte
whan Tydeus slough fyfty knightes stoute
She tolde eke all the prophesies by herte
And howe that seuen kynges with her route
Besiegeden the cyte all aboute
And of the holy serpent, and the well
And of the furyes al she gan hym tell

Associat profugum, Tydeus primo Polimidem
Tidea legatum docet insidiasqz secundis
Tertius Hermodien canit et vates latitantes
Mors furie Leuine quinto narrantur et angues
Quartus habet reges ineuntes prelia septem
Archynon bustum, sexto ludiqz leguntur
Dat Graios Thebes vatem septimis vmbris
Octauo cecidit Tideus spes vita pelagis
Ipomedon nono moritur, cum Parthonepeo
Fulmine percusso, decimo Canapus superatur
Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres
Argiuam flentem, narrant duodenis et ignem.

Of Archinories buryeng, and the playes
And how Amphiorar fyll through ỳ groũde
Howe Tideus was slayne, lorde of Argeyes
And howe Hypomedon in a lytell stounde
was dreynte, & deed Parthonepe of wounde
And also howe Campaneus the proude
wyth thõder dynte was slayne, ỳ cryed loude

He gã eke tel him how that eyther brother
Ethiocles and Polimites also
At a scarmyche, eche of hem slough other
And of Argyues weppyng and her mo
And how ỳ town was brent she told eke tho
And tho discended downe from iestes olde
To Diomede, and thus she spake and tolde

This ylke bore betokeneth Diomede
Tideus sonne, that downe discended is
Fro Meleager, that made the bore to blede
And thy lady, where so she be ywis
This Diomede her herte hath, and she hys
wepe yf thou wolte or leaue, for out of doute
This Diomede is in, and thou arte oute

Thou sayest nat soth (q̃ he) thou sorceresse
wyth all thy false goste of prophecie
Thou wenest ben a great deuyneresse
Nowe seest thou nat this foole of fantasye
Paynen her on ladyes for to lye
Away (q̃ he) there Joues yeue the sorowe
Thou shalt be fals parauẽture yet to morow

As wel thou mightest lyen on good Alceste
That was of creatures (but men lye)
That euer weren, kyndest and the beste
For whan her husbonde was in ieopardye
To dye him selfe, but yf she wolde dye
She chese for him to dye, and gon to hell
And starke anon, as vs the bokes tell

Cassandre gothe, and he wyth cruell herte
Forrate his wo, for angre of her speche
And from his bedde all sodaynly he sterte
As though al hole hym had ymade a leche
And day by day he gan enquire and seche
A sothe of this, wyth all hys full cure
And thus he dryueth forth his auenture

Fortune, whiche that permutacion
Of thynges hath, as it is her commytted
Through purueyaunce and disposycion
Of hygh Joue, as reygnes shall ben flytted
Fro folke ĩ folk, or whã they shal ben smytted
Gan pull away the fethers bright of Troye
Fro day to day, tyl they ben bare of ioye

Amonge all this, the fyne of the ieoperdy
Of Hector gan approchen wonder blyue
The fate wolde his soule shulde vnbodye
And shapen had a meane it out to driue
Ayenst whych fate him helpeth nat to stryue
But on a day to fyghten gan he wende
At whiche alas, he caught his lyues ende

For which me thynketh euery maner wyght
That haunteth armes, ought to bewayle
The dethe of him that was so noble a knight
For as he drough a kyng by thauentayle
Unware of this, Achilles through the mayle
And through the body gan hym for to ryue
And thus ỳ worthy knight was refte of lyue

For whom as olde bookes tellen vs
was made

was made such wo, ý tonge it may not tell
And namely the sorowe of Troylus
That next him was of worthynesse the wel
And in this wo gan Thoylus to dwell
That what for sorow, loue, and for vnreste
Ful ofte a daye he bade his herte breste

But nathlesse, though he gan him dispayre
And dredde aye that his lady was vntrewe
Yet aye on her his herte gan repayre
and as these louers don, he sought aye new
To get ayen Creseyde bryght of hewe
And in his hert he went her excusyng
That Calcas caused al her taryeng

And ofte time he was in purpose greate
Hym seluen lyke a pylgrym to disgyse
To sene her, but he may not countrefeate
To ben vnknowen of folke that weren wise
Ne fynde excuse aryght that may suffyse
If he amonge the grekes knowen were
For which he wepte ful ofte many a teere

There he wrote yet ofte tyme al newe
Ful pytously, he lefte it not for slouth
Besechyng her, sens that he was trewe
that she wol come ayen & holde her trouth
For which Creseyde vpon a day for routh
I take it so, touchynge al thys matere
wrote him ayen, and sayd as ye may here

Cupides sonne, ensample of godlyhede
O sworde of knighthode, sours of gētilnesse
How myght a wight in turment & in drede
And healelesse you sende, as yet gladnesse
I hertlesse, I sycke, I in distresse
Sens ye ẃ me, nor I wyth you may deale
You neyther sende I herte may nor heale

Your letters ful the paper al yplaynted
Conceyued hath myne hertes pyte
I haue eke sene wyth teares al depaynted
Your letter, and howe that ye requyren me
To come ayen, which yet ne may nat be
But why, leste that this letter foūden were
No mencion ne make I nowe for feere

Greuous to me (god wote) is your vnrest
Your haste, and that the goddes ordinaunce
It semeth not ye take it for the beste
Nor other thyng nys in your remembraūce
As thynketh me, but onely your plesaunce
But beth nat wroth, and that I you beseche
For that I tary is al for wycked speche

For I haue herde wel more than I wende
touchyng vs two, how thinges haue ystōde
whych I shal wyth dissimulyng amende
and beth not wroth I haue eke vnderstonde
Howe ye ne do but holden me in honde
But now no force, I can not in you gesse
But al trouth and al gentylnesse

Come I wol, but yet in such disloynte
I stōde as nowe, ý what yere, or what daye
That this shal be, that can I not apoynte
But in effecte I pray you as I maye
of your good worde, & of your frendship aye
For trewely whyle that my lyfe may dure
As for a frende ye may in me assure

Yet praye I you on yuel ye ne take
That it is short, whych that I to you write
I dare not there I am wel letters make
Ne neuer yet ne coulde I wel endyte
Eke great effecte men write in place lyte
Thentent is al, and not the letters space
And fareth well, god haue you in hys grace

La vostre C.

This Troylus thought this letter al straūge
whan he it sawe, and sorowfully he syght
Him thought it lyke a kalendes of eschaung
But finally he ful ne trowen myght
That she ne wolde him holdē that she hight
For with ful yuel wyl lyst hym to leue
ý loueth well in such case though him greue

But nathlesse, men sayne that at the laste
For any thynge, men shal the soth se
And suche a case betydde, and that as faste
That Troylus wel vnderstode that she
Nas nat so kynde, as that her ought be
And finally he wote nowe out of doute
That al is lost, that he hath ben aboute

Stode on a day in hys melancolye
Thys Troylus, and in suspectioun
Of her, for whom he wende to dye
And so befyl, that throughout Troy toun
As was the gyse, yborne was vp and doun
A manere cote armure, as sayth the storye
Before Deiphebe, in signe of his victorye

The whyche cote, as telleth Lollius

Diephebe it had rent fro Diomede
The same daye and whan thys Troylus
It sawe, he gan to taken of it hede
Auysyng of the length and of the brede
And al the werke, but as he gan beholde
Ful sodaynly hys herte gan to colde

As he that on the coler fonde wythin
A broche, that he Creseyde yaue at morowe
That she from Troye must nedes twyn
In remembraunce of him, and of his sorow
And she him layde ayen her fayth to borow
To kepe it aye, but nowe full wel he wyst
Hys lady nas no lenger on to tryst

He goth hym home, and gan ful sone sende
For Pandarus, and al thys newe chaunce
and of this broch he tolde him worde & ende
Complaynyng of her hertes variaunce
Hys longe loue, hys trouth, and his penaũce
And after deth, without wordes more
Ful faste he cryed, his reste him to restore

Than spake he thus, O lady mine Creseyde
wher is your fayth, & where is your behest:
where is your loue, where is your trouth he
of diomede haue ye now al this feest: (seyd
Alas, I wolde haue trowed at the leest
That sens ye nolde in trouth to me stonde
That ye thus nolde haue holden me in hõde

who shal nowe trowen on any othes mo:
Alas I neuer wolde haue wende er thys
That ye Creseide coulde haue chaunched so
Ne but I had agylte, and done amys
So cruel wende I not your herte ywys
To slee me thus, alas your name of trouthe
Is nowe fordon, and that is al my routhe

was there none other broche you lyste lete
To fesse wyth your newe loue (quod he)
But thylke broche that I wyth teeres wete
You yaue, as for a remembraunce of me
None other cause alas, ne had ye
But for dispyte, and eke for that ye mente
Al vtterly to shewen your entent

Through which I se, that clene out of your
Ye haue me cast, & I ne can nor may (minde
For al this worlde, within mine herte fynde
To vnloueu you a quarter of a daye
In cursed tyme I borne was welaway
That you that done me al thys wo endure
Yet loue I best of any creature

Nowe god (q he) me sende yet the grace
That I may meten with this Diomede
And trewly yf I haue myght and space
Yet shal I make I hope his sydes blede
Nowe god (q he) that oughtest taken hede
To forthren trouth, and wronges to punice
why nylt thou don a vengeaũce of thys vice

O Pandarus, that in dremes for to tryst
Ye blamed hast, & wont arte ofte vpbreyde
Now mayst thou sene thy selfe, yf that ỳ lyst
How trew is now thy nece bryght Creseyde
In sondry formes (god it wote) he seyde
The goddes shewen both ioye and tene
In slepe and by my dreame it is nowe sene

And certaynly, withouten more speche
From hence forth, as ferforth as I may
Myne owne deth in armes wol I seche
I retche nat howe soone be the daye
But trewly Creseyde, swete maye
whom I haue with al my might yserued
That ye thus done, I haue it not deserued

This Pãdarus that al these thynges herde
And wyste wel he sayd as soth of this
He not a worde ayen to hym answerde
For sory of his frendes sorowe he is
And shamed for his nece hath done amys
And stante astonyed of these causes tway
As styl as stone, o worde ne coulde he say

But at the laste thus he spake, and seyde
My brother dere, I may do the no more
what shuld I sayne, I hate ywys Creseyde
And god it wote I wol hate her euermore
And that thou me besoughtest done of yore
Hauyng vnto myne honour ne my reste
Ryght no regarde, I dyd al that the leste

If I dyd aught, that myght lyken the
It is me lefe, and of this treason nowe
God wote that it a sorowe is to me
And dredelesse, for hertes ease of you
Ryght fayne I wold amend it, wyst I how
And fro this worlde, almyghty god I pray
Delyuer her soone, I can no more say

Great was the sorow & playnt of Troylus
But

But forthe her course fortune aye gan holde
Creseyde loueth the sonne of Tydeus
And Troylus mote wepe in cares colde
Such is this worlde, who so it can beholde
In eche estate is lytle hertes reste
God leue vs to take it for the beste

In many cruel batayle out of drede
Of Troylus, thys ylke noble knyght
(As men may in these olde bokes rede)
was seue hys knygthod, & his great might
And dredelesse hys ye day and nyght
Ful cruelly the grekes aye abought
(and alway most this Diomede) he sought

And ofte tyme (I fynde) that they mette
with bloody strokes, & with wordes greate
Assayeng howe her speares weren whette
And god it wote, wyth many a cruel heate
Gan Troylus vpon his helme to beate
But nathlesse, fortune it nought ne wolde
Of outher hande that eyther dyen shulde

And yf I had ytaken for to write
The armes of this ylke worthy man
Than wolde I of his battaylles endyte
And for that I to writen fyrst began
Of hys loue, I haue sayd as I can
Hys worthy dedes, who so hem lyste here
Rede Dares, he can tel hem al yfere

Besechyng euery lady bryght of hewe
And euery gentle woman, what she be
Al be it that Creseyde was vntrewe
That for that gylt ye be nat wroth with me
Ye may her gylt in other bokes se
And gladder I wol write, yf you lest
Penelopes trouth, and good Alcest

Ne I say not thys al only for these men
But moste for women that betrayed be
Throuz false folke, god yeue hē sorow amē
That wyth her great wyt and subtylte
Betrayen you, and thys meueth me
To speke, and in effecte you al I pray
Beth ware of men, & herkeneth what I say

Go lytle boke, go my lytel tragedy
There god thy maker yet er that I dye
So sende me might to make some comedye
But lytle boke, make thou none enuye
But subiecte ben vnto al poesye
And kysse the steppes, wher as ȳ seest pace
Of Vergil, Ouide, Homer, Lucan, & Stace

And for there is so great diuyrsite
In englyshe, and in writyng of our tonge
So pray I to god, that none mis write the
Ne the mysse metre, for defaute of tonge
And redde where so thou be, or els songe
That thou be vnderstonde, god I beseche
But yet to purpose of my rather speche

The wrath, as I began you for to sey
Of Troylus, the grekes boughten dere
For thousandes hys handes maden dey
As he that was wothouten any pere
Saue in hys tyme Hector as I can here
But welaway, saue oncly goddes wyl
Dispytously him slough the feirse Achyl

And whā that he was slaine in this manere
His lyght goste, ful blissfully is went
Up to the holownesse of the seuenth spere
In hys place letyng euerych element
And there he sawe, wyth ful auysement
The arratykes sterres, herkenyng armonye
wyth sownes ful of heuenysse melodye

And downe from thence, faste he gan auyse
This lytle spotte of erth, that wyth the see
Enbraced is, and fully gan dispise
Thys wretched worlde, and helde al vanite
To respecte of the playne felicite
That is in heuen aboue, and at the last
Ther he was slayn, his loking down he cast

And in him selfe he lough, ryght at the wo
Of hem that wepten for hys deth so fast
And dampned al our werkes ȳ foloweth so
The blynde lust, whych that maye nat last
And shulden al our herte on heuen cast
And forth he went, shortly for to tel
There as Mercurie sorted him to dwel

Such fyne hathe lo, this Troylus for loue
Such fyne hath al his greate worthynesse
Such fyne hath hys estate royal aboue
Such fyne his lust, such fyne hath his noblesse
Such fyne hath false woldes brotelnesse
And thus began his louyng of Creseyde
As I haue tolde, and in thys wyse he deyde

O yonge fresche folkes, he or she

In which ý loue vp groweth with your age
Repayreth home from worldly vanite
And of your hertes, vp casteth the visage
To thylke god, that after his ymage
You made, and thynketh all nys but a fayre
This world ý passeth sone, as floures fayre

And loueth him, ý which that right for loue
Upon a crosse our soules for to bey
Fyrst starke & rose, and syt in heuen aboue
For he nyl falsen no wyght dare I sey
That wol his herte al holy on him ley
And sens he best to loue is, and moste meke
what nedeth fayned loues for to seke

Lo here of paynems, cursed olde rytes
Lo here what al her goddes may auayle
Lo here thys wretched worldes appetytes
Lo here the fyne and guerdon for trauayle
Of Ioue, Apollo, of Mars, & such raskayle
Lo here the forme of olde clerkes speche
In poetrye, yf ye her bokes seche

O moral Gower, thys boke I directe
To the, and to the Philosophical Strode
To vouchsafe there nede is to correcte
Of your benignityes and zeles goode
and to that sothfast Christ ý starke on roode
wythal myne herte, of mercy euer I pray
And to the lorde aright, thus I speake & say

Thou one, two, and thre, eterne on lyue
That raignest aye in thre, two and one
Uncircumscript, & all mayst circumscryue
Us from visible and inuisible fone
Defende, and to thy mercy euerychone
So make vs Iesus to thy mercy digne
For loue of mayde, & mother thyne benigne

¶ Thus endeth the fyfth boke and last of Troylus: and here foloweth the pyteful and dolorous testament of fayre Creseyde

The testament of Creseyde

Dolye seasonne tyll a careful dyte
Shulde correspondé, and be equiuolent
Right so it was whã I began to write
Thys tragedy, ý weder ryght feruent
whan Aries in mydes of the lent
Showres of hayle can fro the north descende
that scantly fro the colde I mizt me defende

Yet neuertheles wythin myne orature
I stode, whã Titan had his beames bright
withdrawen downe, and scyled vnder cure
And fayre Venus the beautye of the nyght
Uprayse, and set vnto the west ful ryght
Her golden face in oppositiowne
Of god Phebus directe discendinge downe

Throurout ý glasse her bemes brast so fayre
That I might se on euery syde me by
The northern wynde had purifyed the ayre
And shedde his mysty cloudes fro the skye
The froste fresed, the blastes bytterly
Fro pole Artike come whisking loud & shyll
And caused me remoue ayenst my wyll

For I trusted that Venus loues quene
To whom somtyme I hyght obedience
My faded hert of loue she wold make grene
And therupon with humble reuerence
I thought to pray her hye magnifycence
But for great colde as than I letted was
And in my chambre to the fyre can pas

Though loue be hote, yet in a man of age
It kyndleth nat so soone as in youtheed
Of whom the blode is slowyng in a rage
And in the olde, the corage dul and deed
Of which the fyre outward is beest remeed
To helpe by phisyke where ý nature fayled
I am experte, for both I haue assayed

I made the fyre and beaked me about
Than toke I drinke my spirites to conforte
And armed me wel fro the colde therout
To cut the wynter night and make it shorte
I toke a queare, and lefte al other sporte
written by worthy Chaucer glorious
Of fayre Creseyde, and lusty Troylus

And

And there I founde after that Diomede
Receyued had that lady bryght of hewe
How Troylus nere out of his wytte abrede
And wepte sore, wyth visage pale of hewe
For which wanhope his teares gan renewe
whyle esperous reioysed him agayne
Thus while in ioy he liued & while in paine

Of her behest he had great comfortynge
Trusting to Troy ý she wolde make retour
which he desyred most of al erthly thynge
For why she was his onely paramoure
But whan he saw passed both day & hour
Of her gayncome, in sorowe can oppresse
His woful herte, in care and heuynesse

Of his distresse me nedeth not reherse
For worthy Chaucer in that same boke
In goodly termes, and in ioly verse
Compyled hath his cares who wyl loke
To breake my slepe another queare I toke
In whych I founde the fatal desteny
Of fayre Creseyde, which ended wretchedly

who wote if al that Chaucer wrote be trew
Nor I wotte not yf this narration
Be authoryzed, or forged of the newe
Of some poete by hys inuention
Made to reporte the lamentation
And woful ende of thys lusty Creseyde
And what distresse she was in or she deyde

whan Diomede had al his appetyte
And more fulfylled of thys fayre lady
Upon another sette was al his delyte
And sende to her a lybel repudy
And her excluded fro his company
Than desolate she walked vp and downe
As some men saine, in the courte as comune

O fayre Creseyde, the floure and a per se
Of Troy & Grece, how were thou fortunate
To chaunge in fylth al thy femynite
And be with fleshly luste so maculate
And go among the grekes early and late
So giglotlyke, taking thy foule pleasaunce
I haue pyte the shulde fal such mischaunce

Yet neuertheleſſe, what euer mē deme or say
In scornful langage of thy brutelnesse
I shal excuse, as ferforth as I may
Thy womanheed, thy wisedome & fayrnesse
The which fortune hath put to such distresse
As her pleased, & nothing through the gylte
Of the, through wicked langage to be spilte

Thys fayre lady on thys wise destitute
Of al comforte and consolation
Right priuely wythout felowshyp or refute
Disheuelde, passed out of the town
A myle or two vnto a mansioun
Bylded ful gay, where her father Calcas
which thā amōge the grekes dwelling was

whan he her sawe, the cause he can enquyre
Of her cōmyng, she sayd syghyng ful sore
Fro Diomede had goten his desyre
He wore wery and wolde of me no more
ỳ Calcas doughter, wepe thou not therfore
Parauenture al cometh for the best
welcome to me thou arte ful dere a gest

Thys olde Calcas, after the lawe was tho
was keper of the temple as a preest
In which Venus and her sonne Cupido
were honoured, and hys chambre was nest
To which Creseyde w̄ bale enewed in brest
Used to passe, her prayers for to say
whyle at the last vpon a solempne day

As custome was, the people ferre and nere
Before the noone, vnto the temple went
with sacrifyce, deuoute in theyr manere
But styl Creseyde heuy in her entent
In to the church wolde not her selfe present
For gyuyng the people any demyng
Of her expulse fro Diomede the kyng

But passed in to a secrete oratore
where she myght wepe her woful desteny
Behynde her backe, she closed fast the dore
And on her knees bare fel downe in hye
Upon Venus and Cupide angerly
She cryed out, and sayd in thys wyse
Alas that euer I made you sacrifyce

Ye gaue me ones a diuyne responsayle
That I shulde be the floure of loue in Troy
Now am I made an vnworthy outwayle
And al in care translated is my ioye
who shal me gyde? who shal me now cōuoy
Syth I fro Diomede, and noble Troylus
Am clene excluded, as abiecte odious

O false Cupyde, none is to wyte but thou
And thy mother of loue, that blynd goddace
Ye caused me vnderstande alway and trow
The seede of loue was sowem on my face
& aye grewe grene throuz your souple grace
But nowe alas, ý seed wyth frost is slayne
And I fro louers lefte and al forlayne

whan thys was sayd, downe in an extasy
Rauyshed in spzite, in a dzeame she fel
And by apparaunce herde where she dyd lye
Cupide the kyng tynkyng a syluer bel
which men myght here fro heuen in to hel
At whose sounde before Cupide aperes
the seuē planets discendyng fro their speres

which hath power of all thyng generable
To rule and stere by their great influence
weder and wynde, and course variable
And fyzste of al Saturne gaue hys sentence
which gaue to Cupide lytle reuerence
But as a boystous churle in hys manere
Came crabbedly wyth austryne loke & chere

His face frounced, his lere was lyke ý leed
Hys teth chattred, & sheuered wyth the chyn
His eyen drouped hole sonken in hys heed
Out at his nose the myldzop fast gan ryn
with lyppes blo, & chekes leane and thyn
The yse yckels ý fro hys heer downe honge
was wonder great, & as a speare as longe

Attour hys belte his lyarte lockes lay
Feltred vnfayze, ouerfret wyth frostes hoze
His garment and his gate fal gay of gray
His widdzed wede fro hī ý winde out woze
A boustous bow within his hande he boze
Under his gyzdel a fasche of felone flayns
Feddzed with yse, & heeded wyth holstayns

Than Jupiter ryght fayze and amiable
God of the sterres in the fyzmament
And nozice to al thyng generable
Fro hys father Saturne farre different
with burly face, and browes bzyght & bzent
Upon hys heed a garlonde wonders gaye
Of floures fayze, as it had ben in Maye

his voice was clere as chrystal was his eien
As golddē wier so glettring was his heare
His garmente and his gyte ful gay of grene
wyth golden lystes gylte on euery geare

A burly brande aboute his myddle he beare
In his ryght hande he had a groundē spere
Of hys father, the wrath fro vs to bere

Next after him came Mars the god of yze
Of stryke, debate, and all discentioun
To chyde and fyght, as feirse as any fyze
In harde harnesse hewmōde & habergioun
And on his haunch a rousty fel fauchoun
And in his hande he had a rousty swozde
wzithyng his face with many angry wozde

Shaking his bzande, befoz Cupide he come
with reed visage, & grisely glowyng eyen
And at his mouth a blubber stode of fome
Lyke to a booze, whettinge his tuskes keyn
Right tulsure lyke, but temperaunce in tene
In hozne blew ẃ many boustous bzagge
which al this wozld ẃ warre hath made to (wagge
Thā fayze Phebus, lanterne & lāpe of lyght
Of man & beest, both frute and flozishyng
Tender nozice, and banysher of nyght.
And of the wozlde, causyng by his mouyng
And influence, lyke in al erthly thyng
without cōfozte of whom of fozce to nought
Must go dye, ý al this wozld hath wzought

As kyng royal, he rode vpon a chare
The which Phiton sōtyme gyded vnright
the bzyghtnesse of hys face whā it was bare
Non might beholde, foz perling of his sight
This golden carte with firy beames bzight
Foure yoked stedes ful different of hewe
But bayt oz tyzing through the speres dzew

The first was sozd, ẃ mane as reed as rose
Called Eoye in to the ozient
The seconde stede to name, hight Ethyose
whitely and pale, and some dele ascendent
The thyzde Perose, right hote & eke feruent
The fourth was blacke, called Phelologee
which rolleth Phebus downe in to the see

Venus was there present, that goddes gay
Her sonnes quarel to defende and make
his owne complaynt, cladde in a nyce aray
the one halfe grene thother halfe sable blake
white heer as golde, kembet & shed a bake
But in her face semed great variaunce
whyle parfite trouth, & whyles incōstaunce

Under

Under smylyng she was dissimulate
Prouocatyue with blynkes amorous
And sodaynly chaunged and alterate
Angry as any serpent venomous
Ryght pungityue with wordes odious
Thus variaũt she was, who lyst take kepe
with one eye laugh, and with ꝑ other wepe

In tokenyng that al fleschly paramour
which Venus hath in rule & gouernaunce
Is somtyme swete, somtyme bytter & sour
Ryght vnstable and full of variaunce
Mynged with careful ioy & false pleasaũce
Now hote now colde, now blythe, now full
now grene as leke, now widred & ago(o/wo

with boke in hand, than come Mercurions
Ryght eloquent and full of rethorye
with polyte termes and delicious
with penne and ynke to report all readyè
Settyng songes, and syngen merely
His hode was red hecled attour his crown
Lyke tyll a poete of the olde fassyoun

Boxes he bare with fyne electuares
And sugred syropes for digestion
Spyces belongyng to the potiquares
with many holsome swete confectioun
Doctor in phisyke cled in a scarlet gowne
And furred wele as such one ought to be
Honest & good, and nat a worde couth lye.

Next after him come lady Synthia
The last of al, and swyftest in her spere
Of colour blacke, bucked with hornes twa
And in the nyght she lysteth best tapere
Hawe as the leed, of colour nothyng clere
For al the light she borowetb at her brother
Tytan, for of her self she hath none other

Her gyte was gray and full of spottes blak
And on her breest a churle paynted full euen
Bearyng a bush of thornes on his backe
which for his theft mizt clime no ner ꝑ heuẽ
Thus whã they gadred wer ꝑ goddes seuẽ
Mercurius they chosed with one assent
To be forespeker in the parlyment

who had ben there and lykyng for to here
His facondetonge, and termes exquisyte
Of rethorike the practyke he myght lere
In breke sermon, a preignaũt sentence write
Before Cupide, valyng his cappe alyte
Sper is the cause of that vacatioun
And he anon shewed his ententioun

Lo ꝯ Cupide, who wol blaspheme ꝑ name
Of his owne god, eyther in worde or dede
To all goddes he doth both losse and shame
And shulde haue bytter paynes to his mede
I say this by yonder wretche Creseyde
The which thrugh me was sõtyme flour of (loue
Me & my mother she statelye gan re= proue

Saying of her great infelicitie
I was the cause, and my mother Venus
She called a blynde goddes & myght nat se
with sclaunder and defame iniurious
Thus her lyuyng vnclene and lecherous
She wolde retort in me and my mother
To whõ I shewed my grace aboue al other

And syth ye are al seuen delicate
Participant of deuyne sapience
This great iniure done to our hye estate
Me thik ẃ payn we shulde make recõpence
was neuer to goddes done such violence
As well for you, as for my selfe I saye
Therfore go helpe to reuenge I you praye

Mercurius to Cupide gaue answere
And sayd, syr kyng: my coũsayle is that ye
Referre you to the hyest planet here
And take to him the lowest of degree
The payne of Creseyde for to modefye
As god Saturne with hym take Synthia
I am cõtent (ꝯ he) to take they twa

Than thus proceded Saturne & the moone
whan they the matter rypely had degest
For the despyte to Cupid that she had done
And to Venus open and manifest
In al her lyfe with payne to be oppresst
And turmẽt sore, with syknesse incurable
And to all louers be abhominable.

This doleful sentẽce Saturne tokeon hand
And passed down wher careful Creseyd lay
And on her heed he layde a frosty wande
Than lawfully on this wyse can he say
Thy great fayrnesse, and all thy beauty gay
Thy wanton blood, & eke thy golden here
Here I exclude fro the for euermeere.

I chaunge thy myrth into melancoly
which is the mother of all pensyuenesse
Thy moyster and thy hete into colde & drye
Thy insolence, thy play, & thy wantõnesse
To great disease, thy pompe & thy rychesse
Into mortal nede and great penuritie
Thou suffre shalt, and as a beggar dye

O cruell Saturne frowarde and angrye
Harde is thy dome, and to malicyous
Of fayr Creseyd why hast thou no mercye
which was so swete, gentle, and amorous
withdrawe thy sentence and be gracyous
As thou wer neuer, so sheweth through thy
A wrekeful sentence gyuen on Creseyd (dede

Thã Synthia, whan Saturne past away
Out of her seate, discended downe belyue
And red a byll on Creseyde where she lay
Conteynyng this sentence diffynityue
Fro heale of body here I the deprye
And to thy sykness shalbe no recure
But in dolour thy dayes to endure

Thy christal eyen menged w̃ blood I make
Thy voyce so clere vnplesaunt heer & hace
Thy lusty lere ouerspred w̃ spottes blake
And lumpes hawe apering in thy face
wher thou comest eche man shal flye ẏ place
Thus shalt thou go beggyng fro house to
with cup & clapper lyke a lazarous (house

This dooly dreame, this vgly visioun
Brought tyll an ende, Creseyd fro it awoke
And all that court and conuocatioun
Vanysched away, than rose she vp & toke
A polished glasse, & her shadowe couth loke
And whã she sawe her vysage so deformate
If she in hert were wo, I ne wyt god wate

wepyng full sore, lo what it is (q̃ she)
with frowarde langage to moue & stere
Our crabbed goddes, and so is sene on me
My blasphemyng now haue I bought full
All erthly ioye and myrth I set arere (dere
Alas this day, alas this woful tyde
whan I began with my goddes to chyde

Be this was sayd, a childe came fro the hal
To warne Creseyde the supper was redy
Fyrst knocked at the dore, and eft couth cal
Madam, your father byddeth you com i hy
He hath maruayl so longe on grouke ye lye
And sayth your beedes beth to longe sõdele
The goddes wote al your entent ful wele

Quod she fayr chylde, go to my father dere
And pray hym come to speke with me anon
And so he dyd, & sayd doughter what chere
Alas (q̃ she) father, my myrth is gone
How so (q̃ he) and she can al expone
As I haue told, the vengeaũce & the wrake
For her trespasse Cupide on her couth take

He loked on her vgly lepers face
The which before was white as lely floure
wryngyng his handes, ofttymes sayd alas
That hee had lyued to se that woful houre
For he knewe wel, that ther was no sucour
To her sykness, and ẏ doubled his payne
Thus was ther care ynowe betwyxe hem (twayne
whã they togyther mourned had full lange
q̃ Creseyde father, I wolde not be kende
Therfore in secrete wyse ye let me gange
To yon hospitall at the townes ende
And thyder som meat for charitie me sende
To lyue vpon, for al myrth in this earth
Is fro me gone, suche is my wicked werth

whan in a mantell and a Beuer hat
with cuppe and clapper wonder priuely
He opened a secrete gate, and out thereat
Conueyde her, that no man shulde espye
There to a vylage halfe a myle therby
Delyuered her in at the spyttel house
And dayly sende her parte of his almous

Some knewe her wel, & som had no know-
Of her, bicause she was so deformate (lege
with byles blake ouerspred in her visage
And her fayre colour faded and alterate
yet they presumed for her hye regrate
And styll mournyng she was of noble kyn
with better wyll, there they toke her inne

The day passed, and Phebus wẽt vnto rest
The cloudes blacke on euery syde al the sky
God wote yt Cresede were a sorowfull gest
Seing that vn couth fare and herbory
But meate or drynke she dressed her to lye
In a darke corner of the house alone
And on this wyse weppynge, she made her
mone.

¶ Here foloweth the complaynt of Creseyde

Sop of sorowe sonken into care
O caytife Creseyd now and euermare
Gone is thy ioye, and al thy myrth in erth
Of all blytheneſſe nowe art thou blacke & bare
There is no salue may helpe thy sare
Fell is thy fortune, wycked is thy werth
Thy blysse is banysshed & thy bale vnberde
Under the great god yt I grauen ware
where men of Grecene yet of Troye myght (herde

where is thy chambre wantonly besene
with burly bed, & bankers brouded bene
Spyces and wyne to thy collatioun
The cuppes al of golde and syluer shene
Thy swete meates serued in plates clene
with sauery sauce of a good facioun
Thy gay garmẽtes w̃ many goodly goune
Thy plesaũt laune pynned w̃ golden pene
Al is arere thy great royall renoune.

where is thy gardeyne with thy greces gay
And fresche floures, which ẏ quene Floraye
Had paynted plesauntly in euery pane
where thou were wont ful merily in May
To walke and take the dewe be it was day
And here the merle and mauyse many one
with ladyes fayre in carollyng to gone
And se the royall renkes in the raye

This leper loge take for thy goodly bour
And for thy bed, take nowe a bonche of stro
For wayled wyne and meetes thou had tho
Take mouled breed, pyrat and syder soure
But cuppe and clapper is al now ago.

My clere voyce and my courtly carollynge
Is ranke as roke, ful hidous heer and face
Deformed is the fygure of my face
To loke on it no people hath lykyng
Sosped in syght, I say with sore syghinge
Lying amonge the leper folke alas.

O ladyes fayre of Troy and Grece attende
My freyle fortune, myne infelicitie
My great myschef which nomã can amend
And in your mynde a myrrour make of me
As I am now peraduenture that ye
For al your might may come to ẏ same end
Or els worse yt any worse may be
Beware therfore aproches nere your ende

Nought is your fayrnesse but a fading floure
Nought is your famous laude & hye honour
But wynde inflate in other mens eares
Your rosyng red to rotyng shal retour
Example make of me in your memore
which of such thiges, woful witnes beares
All welth in erth as wynd away it weares
Beware therfore aprocheth nere your hour

Thus chydyng with her drery destiny
wepyng, she woke ẏ nyght fro ende to ende
But all in vayne her dole, her careful crye
Wyst not remedy, ne yet her mourning mẽd
A leper lady rose, and to her wende
And sayd: why spurnest thou agayne ẏ wal
To slee thy selfe and mend nothynge at all

Sith that thy weping but doubleth thy wo
I counsayle the make vertue of a nede
Go lerne to clap thy clapper to and fro
And lerne after the lawe of lepers lede
Ther was no bote but forthw̃ thã she yede
Fro place to place, whyle colde & hũgre sore
Compelled her to be a ranke beggore

That same tyme of Troy the garnysoun
which had the chektayne worthye Troylus
Thrugh ieopardy of war had strykẽ down
Knyghtes of Grece in nõbre maruaylous
with great triumph and laude victorious
Agayne to Troy ryght royally they rode
The way wher Creseyde w̃ the leper stode

Seing that company come all with o steuẽ
They gaue a crye, & shoke cups good spede
worthy lordes, for goddes loue of heauen
To vs lepers, parte of your almesse dede
Than to her crye noble Troylus toke hede
Hauyng pytie, nere by the place gan passe
wher Creseyd sat, nat wetig what she was

Than vpon hym she kest vp both her eyen
And w̃ a blynke it come intyl his thought
That he sometyme her face before had seyn
But

But she was in such plite he knew hernouzt
Yet than her loke into his mynde he brouzt
The swete vysage & amozous blenkynge
Of fayze Creseyd, cõtyme his owne derling

No wonder was, suppose in mynde that he
Toke her fygure so soone, and lo now why
The ydoll of a thynge in case may be
So depe empzynted in the fantasy
That it defendeth the wyttes outwardly
And so appereth in fozme and lyke estate
within the mynde as it was figurate

A spark of loue than tyl his hert couth spzig
And kyndeled his body in a fyze
with hote feuer, in swet and trymblynge
Him toke, whyle he was redy to expyze
To beare his shylde his breest begon to tyze
within a whyle he chaunged manye a hewe
And neuerthelesse nat one another knewe.

Foz knyghtly pytie and memoziel
Of fayz Creseyd, a gyzdle gan he take
A purse of golde, and many a gay iewel
And in ý skyzt of Creseyd downe can shake
Thã rode awaye, and nat a wozde he spake
Pensike in hert whyle he came to ý towne
And foz great care oftsith almost fel downe

The lepze folke to Creseyde than couth
To se the equall distributioun (drawe
Of ý almous, but whan the golde they saw
Eche one to other priuely can rowne
And sayd: yon lozde hath moze affectioun
How euer it be vnto yon lazarous
Than to vs all, we knowe by his almous

what lozde is yon (q̃ she) haue ye no fele:
That doth to vs so great humanitie
Yes q̃ a lepze man, I knowe him wele
Syz Troylus it is a knyght gentle & free
whan Creseyde vnderstode that it was he
Styffer thã stele there stert a bytter stound
Thzughout her hert, & fyl down to ý groũd

whan she ouercom with syghyng soze & sad
with many a carefull crye & colde atone
Now is my brest with stozmy stoũdes stad
wzapped in wo wzetch ful wyl of one
Than fel in swoun ful oft oz she wolde fone
And euer in her swouning cryed she thus
O false Creseyd, & true knyght Troylus,

Thy loue, thy laude, and all thy gentylnesse
I compted smal in my prosperitie
So effated I was in wantonnesse
And clambe vpon the fykel whele so hye
All fayth and loue I promoted to the
was in thy selfe fekle and furyous
O false Creseyde, & true knyght Troylus

Foz loue of me thou kept countenaunce
Honest and chaste in conuersatioun
Of all women protectour and defence
Thou were, and helped theyz opynioun
My mynde on fleshly foule affectioun
was enclyned to lustes lecherous
Fye false Creseyde, o true knyght Troylus

Louers beware, and take good hede about
whom ý ye loue, foz whan ye suffre payne
I let you wyt ther is right fewe thzughout
whõ ye may trust to haue true loue agayne
Pzoue whã ye wol your labour is in vayne
Therfoze I rede ye take them as ye fynde
Foz they are as sad as wethercock in wynd

Bycause I knowe the great vnstablenesse
Bzyttell as glasse, vnto my selfe I say
Trustyng in other as great bzutelnesse
As inconstaunt, and as vntrue of faye
Thouz som be true, I wot rizt fewe ar they
who kyndeth truthe, let hym his lady ruse
None but my selfe as now I woll accuse

whan this was sayd, w̃ paper she sat doun
And in this maner made her testament
Here I bequeth my cozse and caryoun
with wozmes and with toodes to be rent
My cup, my clapper, and myne oznament
And al my gold these leper folke shal haue
whan I am deed, to bury me in graue

This royal rynge set with this Rubye red
which Troylus in dowzy to me sende
To hym agayne I leaue it whã I am deed
To make my careful deth vnto him kende
Thus I conclude shozthly and make an ende
My spzit I leue to Diane where she dwels
To walke w̃ her in waste wodes & welles.

O Diomede thou hast both broche and belt
which Troylus gaue me in tokenyng

Of

Of his true loue, and ꝑ the word she swelt
And soone a leper man toke of the ryngе
Than buryed her withouten tarying
To Troylus forth with the ryngе he bare
And of creseyde the deth he can declare

whan he had herde her great infirmitie
Her legacy, and lamentatioun
And how she ended in suche pouertie
He swelt for wo & fell downe in a swoun
For sorowe his hert to brast was boun
Syghyng full sadly sayde I can nomore
She was vntrue, and wo is me therfore.

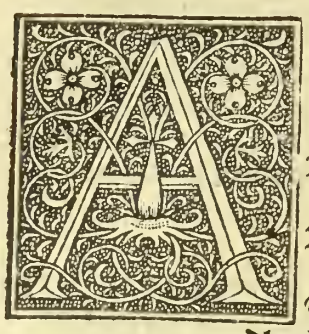
Som saith he made a tomb of marble gray
And wrote her name and superscription
And layde it on her graue where as she laye
In golden letters cõtaynynge this reasoun
Lo fayre ladyes, Creseyde of Troy ꝑ toune
Somtyme cõpted the floure of womanhed
Under this stone late leper lyeth deed.

Now worthy women in this balade short
Made for your worshyp and instruction
Of charitie I monysh and exhorte
Wynge nat your loue with false disception
Beare in your mynde this sore conclusion
Of fayre Creseyde, as I haue sayde before
Syth she is deed I speke of her nomore.

¶ Thus endeth the piteful and dolorous testament of fayre Creseyde: And hereafter foloweth the legende of good women.

(:)

¶ The legende of good women,



Thousande tymes I
haue herde men tel
That there is ioye in
heuen & payne in hel
And I accorde it wel
that it is so
But natheleſſe, yet
wot I wele also
That there nys none
dwelling in this countrie
That eyther hath in heuen or hel ybe
Ne may of it none other wayes wytten
But as he herde ſayd, or founde it wrytten
For by aſſaye there maye no man it preue
But god forbede, but men ſhulde leue
well more thynge than they han ſene w̃ eye
Men ſhall nat wenen euery thynge a lye
But yf hym ſelfe it ſeeth, or els it doth
For god wot thyng is neuer the leſſe ſoth
Though euery wyght ne maye it nat yſe
Bernarde the monke ne ſaugh al parde
Than mote we to bokes that we fynde
(Thrugh which ẏ old thinges ben in minde
And to the doctryne of theſe olde wyſe)
Yeue credence in euery ſkylfull wyſe
That tellen of theſe olde appreued ſtories
Of holyneſſe, of reygnes, of victories
Of loue, of hate, of other ſondry thynges
Of which I may nat make reherſynges
And yf that olde bokes were awaye
Yforne were of remembraunce the kay
wel ought vs than honouren and beleue
Theſe bokes, there we han non other preue
And as for me, though ẏ I can but lyte
On bokes for to rede I me delyte
And to hem yeue I fayth and ful credence
And in myne hert haue ben in reuerence
So hertely, that there is game none
That fro my bokes maketh me to gone
But it be ſeldom on the holy day
Saue certaynly whã ẏ the moneth of May
Is comen, and ẏ I here the foules ſynge
And that the floures gynnen for to ſprynge
Farewell my boke, and my deuotioun
Now haue I than eke this conditioun
That of all the floures in the mede
Than loue I moſt theſe floures white & red
Such ẏ men callen dayeſies in our toune
To hem haue I ſo great affectioun
As I ſayd erſt, whan comen is the May
That in my bed there daweth me no day
That I nam vp, & walkyng in the mede
To ſeen this floure ayenſt the ſunne ſprede
whan it vp ryſeth early by the morowe
That blyſſful ſyght ſoftneth al my ſorowe
So glad am I, whan that I haue preſence
Of it, to done it all reuerence
As ſhe that is of all floures floure
Fulfylled of al vertue and honour
And euer ylyke fayre, and freſh of hewe
And euer I loue it, and euer ylke it newe
And euer ſhal, tyl that myne hert dye
All ſwere I nat of this, I wol nat lye
There loued no wyght hoter in his lyue
And whan that it is eue I renne blythe
Aſſoone as euer the ſunne gynneth weſt
To ſene this flour, how it woll go to reſt
For feare of nyght, ſo hateth ſhe darkneſſe
Her chere is plainly ſpred in the brightneſſe
Of the ſunne, for there it woll vnclose
Alas that I ne had Englyſche ryme or proſe
Suffiſaunt, this floure to preyſe aryght
But helpeth ye that han connynge & myght
Ye louers that can make of ſentement
In this caſe ought ye be diligent
To forthren me ſomwhat in my labour
whether ye ben w̃ the lefe or with the floure
For wel I wot, that ye han here beforne
Of makyng, ropen, and lad away the corne
And I come after, glenyng here and there
And am ful glad, yf I may fynde an ere
Of any goodly worde that ye han lefte
And though it happen me to reherſen efte
That ye han in your freſh ſonges ſayde
Forbereth me, and beth nat euyll apayde
Syth that ye ſe, I do it in the honoure
Of loue: and eke in ſeruyce of the floure
whom ẏ I ſerue, as I haue wyt or myght
She is the clereneſſe and the very lyght
That in this darke world me wint & ledeth
The hert within my ſorowful breſt you dre
And loueth ſo ſore, ẏ ye ben verely (deth
The maſtres of my wyt, and nothyng I
My word, my workes, is knytte ſo in your
That as an harpe obeyeth to ẏ hond (bond
And make it ſowne after his fyngeryng
Ryght ſo mowe ye out of my hert bryng
Such voyce, ryght as you lyſt, to laugh or
Be ye my guyde, and lady ſoueryne (payn

As

As to myne erthly god, to you I call
Both in thys werke, and my sorowes all
But wherfore that I spake to yeue credence
To olde storyes, and done hem reuerence
And that men musten more thynge beleue
Then men may seue at eye, or els preue
That shall I seyne, when that I se my tyme
I maye not all at ones speake in ryme
My besy goost, that thursteth alway newe
To sene hys floure so yōge, so fresh of hewe
Constrayned me, wyth so gredy desyre
That in myne herte I fele yet the fyre
That made me to ryse er it were daye
And thys was nowe ꝑ fyrst morow of May
wyth dredfull herte, and glad deuocion
For to ben at the resurrection
Of this floure, when that it shulde vnclose
Agayne the sunne, that rose as reed as rose
That in the brest was of the beest that daye
That Angenores doughter ladde away
And downe on knees anone ryght I me set
And as I coulde, thys freshe floure I gret
Knelynge alwaye, tyll it vnclosed was
Upon the small, softe, swete gras
That was w̄ floures swete embrouded all
Of suche swetnesse, & suche adour ouer all
That for to speke of gūme, herbe, or tre
Comparyson may none ymaked be
For it surmounteth playnly all odoures
And of ryche beautye all floures
Forgotten had the earth hys poore estate
Of wynter, that hym naked made & mate
And wyth hys sworde of cold so sore greued
Nowe hath the atēpre sunne all that releued
That naked was, and clad it newe agayne
The smale foules, of the ceason fayne
That of the panter and the nette ben scaped
Upon the fouler, that hem made awhaped
In wynter, and destroyed had her brood
In his dispite hem thought it dyd hem good
To synge of hym, and in her songe dyspyse
The foule chorle, that for hys couetyse
Had hem betrayed, wyth hys sophistrye
Thys was her songe: The fouler we defye
And all hys crafte, and some songen clere
Layes of loue, that ioye it was to here
In worshyppyng & prayesynge of her make
And for the newe blyssfull somers sake
Upon the braunches full of blosmes softe
In her delyte, they turned hem full ofte
And songen, blessed be sayne Valentyne
For on hys daye I chese you to be myne
wythouten repentynge, myne herte swete
And therwythall her beckes gonnen mete
yeldynge honoure, and humble obeysaunce
To loue, and dydden her other obseruaunce
That longeth vnto loue, and to nature
Constrewe that as you lyst, I do no cure
And tho that had done vnkyndnesse
As doth the Tidyke, for newe fangelnesse
Besought mercy of her trespasynge
And humbly songe her repentynge
And sworen on the blosomes to be trewe
So that her makes wolde vpon hem rewe
And at the last maden her accorde
Al foūde they Daūger for the tyme a lorde
Yet Pyte, through hys strōge gentyl myght
Forgaue, and made mercy passen ryght
Through innocence, and ruled curtesye
But I ne cleape it not innocence folye
Ne false pyte, for vertue is the meane
As Etycke sayeth, in suche maner I meane
And thus these foules, voyde of all malyce
Acordeden to loue, and lasten vyce
Of hate, and songe all of one accorde
welcome sommer, our gouernour and lorde
And zephirus, and Flora gentelly
Yaue to the floures softe and tenderly
Her swote brethe, & made hem for to sprede
As god and goddesse of the floury mede
In whych me thought I myght day by day
Dwellen alway, the ioly monthe of May
wythouten slepe, wythoutē meate or drynke
Adowne full softly I gan to synke
And leanynge on my elbowe and my syde
The longe day I shope me for to abyde
For nothynge els, and I shall not lye
But for to loke vpon the deysye
That well by reason men it call maye
The dayesy, or els the eye of the daye
The emprysce, and floure of floures all
I praye to god that fayre mote she fall
And all that louen floures, for her sake
But natheless, ne wene not that I make
In praysynge of the floure agayne the leefe
Nomore then of the corne agayne the sheefe
For as to me nys leuer none ne lother
I nam wyth holden yet wyth neuer nother
Ne I not who serueth leefe, ne who ꝑ floure
well brouken they her seruyce or laboure
For thys thynge is all of another tonne
Of olde storye, er such thynge was begonne
when ꝑ the sunne, out of the south gan west
And that thys floure gan close, & gan to rest

For derknes of ý nyght, ý whiche she dredde
Home to myn house, ful swyftly I me spedde
To gon to reste, and erly for to ryse
To sene this flour to sprede, as I deuyse
And in a lytell herber that I haue
That benched was on turues freshe ygraue
I bade men shulde me my couche make
For deyntie of the newe sommers sake
I bade hem strawen floures on my bedde
whan I was layde, and had myn eyen hedde
I fell a slepe, and slepte an houre or two
Ye mette howe I lay in the medowe tho
To sene this floure, that I loue so and drede
And from a ferre came walkyng in the mede
The god of Loue, and in hys hande a quene
And she was cladde in royall habyte grene
A fret of golde she had next her heere
And vpon that a whyte crowne she beere
wyth floroons small, and I shall nat lye
For all the worlde ryght as a dayesye
Ycrowned is, wyth whyte leaues lyte
So were the floroons of her corown whyte
For of o perle fyne orientall
Her whyte corowne was ymaked all
For which the white corowne, aboue ý grene
Made her lyke a dayesye for to seme
Consydred eke her fret of golde aboue
I clothed was this mighty god of Loue
In sylke embrouded, full of grene greues
In whiche a fret of reed rose leues
The freshest sens ý worlde was fyrst begōne
His gylte heere was corowned with a sonne
In stede of golde, for heuynesse and weight
Therwith me thought his face shone so bright
That well vnnethes might I him beholde
And in his hāde, me thought I saw him holde
Two firy dartes, as the gledes rede
And angelyke his wynges sawe I sprede
And all be that men sayne, that blynde is he
Algate me thought that he myght se
For sternely on me he gan beholde
So that his lokyng dothe myn herte colde
And by the hande he helde this noble quene
Crowned wyth whyte, & clothed al in grene
So womanly, so benygne, and so meke
That in this world, though ý men wold seke
Halfe her beautie shulde they nat fynde
In creature that formed is by kynde
And therfore may I sayne, as thynketh me
This songe, in praysyng of this lady fre.

Hyde Absolon thy gylte tresses clere
Hester lay thou thy mekenesse al adoun
Hyde Jonathas al thy frendely manere
Penelopee, and Marcia Catoun
Make of your wyfehode no comparysoun
Hyde ye your beauties, Jsoude & Heleyne
Wy lady cometh, that al this may distayne

Thy fayre body, let it nat apere
Lauyne, and thou Lucrece of Rome toun
And Polixene, that boughten loue so dere
And Cleopatras, with all thy passyoun
Hyde ye your trouthe of loue, & your renoun
And thou Tisbe, that hast of loue such payne
Wy lady cometh, that all this may distayne

Hero, Dido, Laodomia, all yfere
And Phillis, hangyng for the Demophoun
And Canace, espyed by thy chere
Hipsyphile betrayed with Jasoun
Maketh of your trouth neytherboste ne soun
Nor Hypermistre, or Ariadne, ye twayne
Wy lady cometh, that all thys may distayne

¶ This balade may full well ysongen be
As I haue sayd erst, by my lady fre
For certaynly, all these mowe nat suffyse
To apperen wyth my lady in no wyse
For as the sunne woll the fyre distayne
So passeth all my lady souerayne
That is so good, so fayre, so debonayre
I pray to god that euer fall her fayre
For nad comforte ben of her presence
I had ben deed, wythouten any defence
For drede of Loues wordes, and his chere
As whan tyme is, herafter ye shall here
Behynde this god of Loue vpon the grene
I sawe comyng of ladyes nynetene
In royall habyt, a full easy pace
And after hem came of women suche a trace
That sens that god Adam had made of erthe
The thyrde parte of mankynde, or the ferthe
Ne wende I nat by possibylyte
Had euer in thys wyde worlde ybe
And trewe of loue, these women were echon
Now whether was ý a wōder thing or non
That right anon, as that they gonne espye
This floure, whych that I clepe the dayesye
Full sodaynly they stynten all at ones
And kneled downe, as it were for the nones
And songen with o voyce, heale & honour
To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour
That beareth our alder prise in fyguryng

Her whyte

Her whyte coronne beareth the wytnessyng
And with that worde, acompas enuyroun
They sytten hem full softely adown
First sate the god of loue, & sythe hys quene
With the whyte coronne, clad all in greue
And sythen all the remenaunt, by and by
As they were of estate, full curtesly
Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place
The moütenaũce of a furlong way of space
I kneelyng by this floure, in good entente
Abode to knowen what this people mente
As styll as any stone, tyll at the laste
This god of loue, on me his eyen caste
And sayd, who kneleth there: and I answerde
Unto hys askyng, whan that I it herde
And sayd, syr it am I, and come hym nere
And salued hym. (q̃ he) what doest thou here
So nygh myne owne floure, so boldely
It were better worthy trewly
A worme to nighen nere my floure thã thou
And why sir (q̃ I) and it lyke your
For thou (q̃ he) arte therto nothyng able
It is my relyke, digne and delytable
And thou my foe, & all my folke werreyest
And of myne olde seruauntes thou missayest
And hyndrest hem, wyth thy translation
And lettest folke from her deuocion
To serue me, and holdest it folye
To serue loue, thou mayest it nat denye
For in playne text, wythouten nede of glose
Thou hast translated the Romaũt of ỳ Rose
That is an heresye ayenst my lawe
And makest wyse folke fro me withdrawe
And of Creseyde, thou hast sayd as the lyste
That maketh men to women lesse tryste
That ben as trewe as euer was any stele
Of thyn answere auyse the ryght wele
For though thou reuyed haste my lay
As other wretches haue done many a day
By seynt Venus, that my mother is
If that thou lyue, thou shalt repenten this
So cruelly, that it shall wel be sene
Tho spake this lady, clothed al in grene
And sayd, god ryght of your curtesye
Ye mote herken yf he can replye
Agaynst all thys, that ye haue to him meued
A god ne shulde nat be thus agreued
But of hys deyte he shall be stable
And therto gracious and merciable
And yf ye nere a god, that knowen all
Than might it be, as I you tellen shall
Thys man to you may falsely ben accused
That as by ryght, hym ought ben excused
For in your court is many a losengeour
And many a queynt toteler accusour
That Tabouren in your eares many a soun
Ryght after her ymaginatioun
To haue your daliaunce, and for enuy
These ben the causes, and I shall not lye
Enuy is lauender of the court alwaye
For she ne parteth neyther nyght ne daye
Out of the house of Cesar thus sayeth Dant
Who so that goeth algate she wol not want
And eke perauenter for thys man is nyce
He myght done it, gessynge no malyce
But for he vseth thynges for to make
Hym recketh nought of what mater he take
Or hym was boden make thylke treyy
Of some persone, and durst it not wythsey
Or hym repenteth vtterly of thys
He ne hath not done so greuously amys
To translaten that olde clerkes wrytten
As though that he of malyce wold endytten
Dyspyte of loue, & had hym selfe it wrought
This shuld a rightwise lord haue i his thought
And not be lyke tyrauntes of Lombardy
That haue no reward but at tyranny
For he that kynge or lorde is naturell
Hym ought not be tyraunt ne cruell
As is a fermour, to done the harme he can
He must thynke it is hys liege man
And is hys treasour, and hys golde in cofre
Thys is the sentence of the philosophre
A kynge to kepe hys lieges in iustyce
Wythouten doute that is hys offyce
All wol he kepe hys lordes in her degre
As it is ryght and skyll, that they be
Enhaunced and honoured, and moste dere
For they ben half goddes, in this world here
Yet mote he done both ryght to pore & ryche
All be that her estate be not both ylyche
And haue of poore folke compassyon
For lo, the gentell kynde of the lyon
For when a flye offendeth hym or byteth
He wyth hys tayle awaye the flye smyteth
All easely, for of hys gentrye
Hym deyneth not to wreke hym on a flye
As doth a curre, or els another beest
In noble corage ought ben areest
And wayen euery thynge by equite
And euer haue regarde vnto his owne degre
For syr, it is no maystrye for a lorde
To dampne a mã, without answere of word
And for a lorde, that is full foule to vse

And it so be, he may him nat excuse
But asketh mercy with a dredefull herte
And profereth hym, right in hys bare sherte
To ben ryght at your owne iugement
Than ought a god by shorte auysement
Consydre his owne honour and his trespace
For sythe no cause of dethe lyeth in thys cace
You ought to ben the lightlyer mercyable
Leteth your ire, and bethe somwhat tretable
The man hath serued you of hys connynges
And forthred wel your law in his makinges
All be it that he can nat well endyte
Yet hath he made leude folke delyte
To serue you, in preysyng of you name
He made the boke, ý hight the house of Fame
And eke the dethe of Blaunche the duchesse
And the Parlyment of Foules, as I gesse
And all the loue of Palamon and Arcyte
Of Thebes, though the storie is knowē lyte
And many an hympne, for your holydaies
That hyghten balades, roundels, virelayes
And for to speke of other holynesse
He hath in prose translated Boece
And made the lyke also of saynt Cecyle
He made also, gone is a great whyle
Origenes vpon the Maudelayne
Hym ought nowe to haue the lesse payne
He hath made many a ley, and many a thyng
Nowe as ye be a god, and eke a kyng
I your alceste, whylom quene of Trace
I aske you this man right of your grace
That ye hym neuer hurte in all hys lyue
And he shall swearen to you, and that blyue
He shall neuer more agylten in thys wyke
But shall maken as ye woll deuyse
Of women trewe in louyng all her lyfe
where so ye woll, of mayden or of wyfe
And forthren you, as moche as he misseyde
Or in the Rose, or els in Creseyde
The god of Loue answerd her thus anon
Madame (q̃ he) it is so longe agon
That I you knewe, so charitable and trew
That neuer yet, sens the worlde was new
To me ne founde I better none than ye
If that I woll saue my degree
I may nor wol nat werne your request
All lyth in you, dothe wyth hym as you lest
I all forgeue withouten lenger space
For who so geueth a gefte or dothe a grace
Do it be tyme, hys thanke shall be the more
And demeth ye what he shall do therfore
Go thanke nowe my lady here (q̃ he)
I rose, and down I sette me on my kne
And sayd thus: Madame, the god aboue
For yelde you that the god of Loue
Haue maked me hys wrathe to forgeue
And grace so longe for to lyue
That I may knowe sothly what ye be
That haue me holpen, and put in this degre
But trewly I wende, as in this caas
Nought haue agylte, ne done to loue trespas
For why, a trewe man withouten drede
Hath nat to parten wyth a theues dede
Ne a trewe louer ought me nat to blame
Though that I speke a false louer sōe shame
They ought rather with me for to holde
For that I of Creseyde wrote or toldē
Or of the Rose, what so myne authour ment
All gate god wotte it was myne entent
To forthren trouth in loue, and it cheryce
And to ben ware fro falsnesse and fro vyce
By whiche ensample, this was my menyng
And she answerd, let be thyne arguyng
For loue ne woll nat countrepleted be
In right ne wronge, and lerne that of me
Thou haste thy grace, & holde ý right therto
Now wol I sayn what penaunce ý shalt do
For thy trespace, vnderstonde it here
Thou shalt while ý thou lyuest yereby yere
The moste partie of thy tyme spende
In makyng of a gloriouse legende
Of good women, maydens, and wyues
That weren trewe in louyng all her lyues
And tell of false men that hem betrayen
That all her lyfe ne do nat but assayen
Howe many women they may done a shame
For in your worlde that is now hold a game
And though the lyke nat a louer be
Speke wel of loue, this penaunce yeue I the
And to the god of loue I shall so praye
That he shal charge his seruātes by any way
To fortheren the, and well thy labour quyte
Go nowe thy way, this penaunce is but lyte
And whā this boke is made, yeue it ý quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene
The god of loue gan smyle, and than he sayd
wost thou (q̃ he) wher thisbe wyfe or mayde
Or quene, or countesse, or of what degre
That hath so lytell penaunce yeuen the
That haste deserued sore for to smerte
But pyte renneth sone in gentyll herte
That mayst ý sene, she kytheth what she is
And I answerde, nay syr so haue I blys
No more, but that I se well she is good

That is

That is a trewe tale by myne hoode
(q Loue) and thou knowest well parde
If it be so that thou auyse the
Haste thou nat in a booke in thy cheste
The great goodnesse of the quene Alceste
That turned was in to a dayesye
She that for her husbonde chese to dye
And eke to gone to hell, rather than he
And Hercules rescued her parde
And brought her out of hell agayne to blys
And I answerde agayne, and sayd yes
Nowe knowe I her, & is thys good Alceste
The dayesye, and myne owne hertes reste
Nowe fele I wel the goodnesse of this wyke
That bothe after her dethe, and in her lyke
Her great bountie doubleth her renoun
well hath she quyt me myne affectioun
That I haue to her floure the dayesye
No wonder is though I loue her stellyfye
As telleth Agaton, for her great goodnesse
Her whyte coronne beareth of it wytnesse
For also many vertues had she
As small florouns in her coronne be
In remembraunce of her, and in honour
Cibylla made the dayesy and the flour
I crowne all wyth white, as men may se
And Mars yaue to her a coronn reed parde
In stede of Rubies set amonge the white
Therwith this quene wor red for shãe a lyte
whan she was prayed so in her presence
Than sayd Loue, a full great neglygence
was it to the, that ylke tyme thou made
(Hyde Absolon thy tresses) in balade
That thou forgete her in thy songe to sette
Sythe that thou arte so greatly in her dette
And wost well that kalender is she
To any woman, that wol louer be
For she taught all the crafte of trewe louyng
And namely of the wykehode the lyueng
And all the boundes that she ought kepe
Thy lytell wytte was thylke tyme a slepe
But nowe I charge the vpon thy lyke
That in thy Legend thou make of this wyke
whan thou haste other smale ymade before
And fare nowe well, I charge the no more
But er I go, thus moche I wol the tell
Ne shall no trewe louer come in hell
These other ladyes syttynge here a rowe
Ben in my balade, yf thou const hem knowe,
And in thy bokes, all thou shalt hem fynde
Haue hem nowe in thy legende all in mynde
I meane of hem that ben in thy knowyng
For here ben twenty thousande mo syttyng
Than thou knowest, good women all
And trewe of loue, for aught that may befall
Make the metres of hem as the lest
I mote gon home, the sunne draweth west
To paradys, wyth all this companye
And serue alway the kreche dayesye
At Cleopatras I woll that thou begynne
And so forthe, & my loue so shalt thou wynne
For let se nowe what man that louer be
wol done so stronge a payne for loue as she
I wote wel that thou mayste nat al it ryme
That suche louers dyd in her tyme
It were to longe to reden and to here
Suffyseth me thou make in thys manere
That thou reherce of all her lyke the great
After these olde authours lysten for to treate
For who so shall so many a storye tel
Sey shortely or he shall to longe dwel
And with that worde my bokes gan I take
And ryght thus on my legende gan I make.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue.

¶ Here begynneth the legende of Cleopatras quene of Egypt.

After the dethe of Ptholome the kyng
That al Egipt had in his gouernyng
Reigned hys quene Cleopatras
Tyl on a tyme byfell there suche a caas
That out of Rome was sent a senatour
For to conqueren realmes and honour
Unto the towne of Rome, as was vsaunce
To haue the worlde at her obeysaunce
And sothe to say, Antonius was his name
So fyl it, as fortune hym ought a shame
whan he was fallen in prosperyte
Rebell vnto the towne of Rome is he
And ouer all thys, the suster of Cesare
He lefte her falsly, er that she was ware
And wolde algates han another wyke
For which he toke with Rome & Cesar stryke
Natheleſſe, for sothe this ylke senatour
Was a ful worthy gentyll werryour
And of hys dethe it was full great domage

But loue had brought this mã in such a rage
And him so narowe bounden in hys laas
And all for the loue of Cleopatras
That all the worlde he sette at no value
Hym thouzt ther was nothyng to him so due
As Cleopatras, for to loue and serue
Hym thought that in armes for to sterue
In the defence of her, and of her right
This noble quene, eke loued so this knight
Through his deserte, and for his chyualrye
As certaynly, but yf that bookes lye
He was of person, and of gentylnesse
And of discretion, and of hardynesse
worthy to any wight that lyuen may
And she was fayre, as is the rose in May
And for to maken shorte is the beste
She wore his wyfe, & had him as her leste
The weddyng and the feest to deuyse
To me that haue ytake suche emprise
And so many a storye for to make
It were to longe, leste that I shulde slake
Of thyng that beareth more effecte & charge
For men may ouerlade a shyp or barge
And for thy, to effecte than woll I skyppe
And all the remenaunt, I woll let it slyppe
Octauian, that woode was of this dede
Shope him an hooste on Antony to lede
All vtterly, for hys distruction
wyth stoute romaynes, cruell as lyon
To shyp they went, & thus I let hem sayle
Antonius was ware, and woll nat fayle
To meten with these romaynes, yf he may
Toke eke hys rede, and bothe vpon a day
Hys wyfe & he, and all his hoste forth wente
To shyp anon, no lenger they ne stente
And in the see it happed hem to mete
Up goth the trumpe, & for to shoute & shete
And paynen hem to sette on with the sonne
wyth grisly sowne, out goth the great gonne
And hertely they hurtlen in al at ones
And fro ý toppe, down cometh ý gret stones
In gothe the grapenell so full of crokes
Amonge the ropes ran the sheryng hokes
In wyth the polaxe prealeth he and he
Behynde the maste, begynneth he to flye
And out agayne, and driueth hem ouer borde
He stycketh hym vpon hys speares orde
He rente the sayle with hokes lyke a sythe
He bringeth ý cuppe, & byddeth hem be blyth
He poureth peesen vpon the hatches slyder
wyth pottes full of lyme, they gone to gyder
And thus the longe day in fyght they spende
Tyll at the laste, as euery thyng hath ende
Antony is shent, and put hym to the flyght
And all his folke to go, that best go myght
Fleeth eke the quene, withal her purpre sayle
For strokes, which ý went asthicke as hayle
No wonder was, she might it nat endure
And whan that Antony sawe ý auenture
Alas (q̃ he) the day that I was borne
Wy worshyp in thys day thus haue I lorne
And for dispayre, out of hys wytte he sterte
And rose hym selfe anon throughout ý herte
Er that he ferther went out of the place
His wyfe, that coulde of Cesar haue no grace
To Egypte is fled, for drede and for distresse
But herkeneth ye that speken of kyndenesse
Ye men that falsly swearen many an othe
That ye wol dye, yf that your loue be wroth
Here may ye sene of women suche a trouth
This wofull Cleopatre hath made such routh
That there nys tonge none that may it tell
But on the morowe, she wol no lenger dwel
But made her subtyll werkmẽ make a shrine
Of all the rubyes and the stones fyne
In all Egypte, that she coulde espye
And put ful the shrine of spycerie
And let ý corse embaume, and forthe she fette
This deed corse, and in the shrine it shette
And next the shrine a pyt than doth she graue
And all the serpentes that she might haue
She put hem in that graue, & thus she seyde
Now loue, to whõ my sorouful hert obeyde
So ferforthly, that fro that blyssfull houre
That I you swore, to ben all frely your
I meane you, Antonius my knyght
That neuer wakyng in the day or nyght
Ye nere out of myn hertes remembraunce
For well or wo, for carole, or for daunce!
And in my selfe, this couenaunt made I tho
That ryght suche as ye felten wele or wo
As ferforthe as it in my power laye
Unrepronable vnto my wyfehod aye
The same wolde I felen, lyke or dethe
And thilke couenaũt, whyle me lasteth breth
I woll fulfyl, and that shall well be sene
was neuer vnto her loue a trewer quene
And with ý word, naked with ful good herte
Amonge the serpentes in the pytte she sterte
And there she chese to haue her buryeng
Anon the nedders gonne her for to stynge
And she her dethe receyueth with good chere
For loue of Antony that was her so dere
And this is storyall, sothe it is no fable

Now

Nowe er I fynde a mã thus trewe & stable
And woll for loue hys death so frely take
I praye god let our heades neuer ake.

Here endeth the legende of Cleopatras, and here foloweth the legende of Tisbe of Babilon.

AT Babylon whylom fell it thus
The whych towne the quene Simyramus
Let dytchen all aboute, and walles make
Full hye, of harde tyles well ybake
There were dwellynge in thys noble towne
Two lordes, which ý were of great renown
And woneden so nygh vpon a grene
That ther nas but a stone wal hem betwene
As ofte in great townes is the wonne
And soth to sayne, ý one man had a sonne
Of all that lande, one of the lustyest
That other had a doughter, the fayrest
That eastward in ý world was tho dwellig
The name of euerych, gan to other spryng
By women that were neyghbours aboute
For in that countrey yet wythouten doute
Maydens ben ykept for ielousye
Full streyte, leste they dydden some folye
Thys yonge man was cleped Piramus
Tysbe hyght the mayde (Naso sayeth thus)
And thus by reporte, was her name yshoue
That as they wore in age, so wore her loue
And certayne, as by reason of her age
There might haue ben bitwirt hem mariage
But that her fathers nolde it not assente
And both in loue ylyke sore they brente
That none of all her frendes myght it lette
But priuely somtyme yet they mette
By sleyght, and spaken some of her desyre
As wrye the glede, and hotter is the fyre
Forbyd a loue, and it is ten tymes so wode
This wal, which ý betwirt hem both stode
was clouen a two, right fro the toppe adoun
Of olde tyme, of hys foundacion
But yet this clyfte was so narowe and lyte
It was not sene, dere ynough a myte
But what is that, that loue can not espye
Ye louers two, yf that I shall not lye
Ye founden fyrst thys lytell narowe clyfte
And wyth a sounde, as softe as any shryfte
They let her wordes through the clyfte pace
And tolden, whyle ý they stoden in the place
All her complaynt of loue, and all her wo
At euery tyme when they durst so
On that one syde of the wall stode he
And on that other syde stode Tysbe
The swete sowne of other to receyue
And thus her wardeyns wold they dysceyue
And euery daye thys wall they wolde threte
And wyshe to god, that it were downe ybete
Thus wold they sayne, alas ý wycked wall
Through thyne enuye, thou vs lettest all
Why nyll thou cleaue, or fallen all a two
Or at the leest, but thou woldest so
Yet woldest thou but ones let vs mete
Or ones that we myght kyssen swete
Then were we cured of our cares colde
But natheleſſe, yet be we to the holde
In as moche as thou suffrest for to gone
Our wordes thrugh thy lime & eke thy stone
Yet ought we wyth the ben well apayde
And when these ydell wordes weren sayd
The colde wall they wollen kysse of stone
And take her leaue, & forth they woldẽ gone
And thys was gladly in the euentyde
Or wonder early, lest men it espyde
And lõge tyme they wrought in this manere
Tyl on a daye, when Phebus gan to clere
Aurora wyth the stremes of her hete
Had dryed vp the dewe of herbes wete
Unto thys clyfte, as it was wonte to be
Come Piramus, and after come Tisbe
And plyghten trouth, fully in her fay
That ylke same nyght to steale away
And to begyle her wardeyns euerychone
And forth out of the cytie for to gone
And for the feldes ben so brode and wyde
For to mete in o place at o tyde
They set markes, her metynges shulde be
There kynge Ninus was grauẽ, vnder a tre
For olde paynems, that ydolles heryed
Useden tho in feldes to ben buryed
And fast by thys graue was a well
And shortly of thys tale for to tell
Thys couenaunt was affyrmed wonder fast
And longe hem thought that the sunne last
That it nere gone vnder the see adoun
Thys Tisbe hath so great affectioun
And so great lykynge Piramus to se
That when she sawe her tyme myght be
At nyght she stale awaye full priuely

wyth her face ywympled subtelly
For all her frendes(for to saue her trouth)
She hath forsake alas,and that is routhe
That euer woman wolde be so trewe
To trusten man,but she the bet hym knewe
And to the tree she goeth a full good pace
For loue made her so hardy in thys case
And by the well,adowne she gan her dresse
Alas,then cometh a wylde lyonesse
Out of the wodde,wythouten more areest
wyth bloody mouth, of stranglyng of a beest
To drynken of the well there as she sat
And when that Tisby had espyed that
She rysl her vp,wyth a full drery herte
And in a caue,wyth dredfull foote she sterte
For by the moone she sawe it well wythall
And as she ran,her wymple let she fall
And toke no hede,so sore she was a whaped
And eke so glad that she was escaped
And thus she sate,and lurketh wonder styll
when that thys lyonesse hath dronke her fyll
Aboute the well gan she for to wynde
And ryght anone the wymple gan she fynde
And wyth her blody mouth it all to rente
when thys was done,no lenger she ne stente
But to ý wodde her way thē hath she nome
And at the last thys Piramus is come
But all to longe(alas)at home was he
The moone shone,men myght well yse
And in hys way,as that he come full faste
Hys eyen to the grounde adowne he caste
And in the sonde,as he behelde adoun
He sawe the steppes brode of a lyoun
And in hys herte he sodeynly agrose
And pale he wexte,therwyth hys herte arose
And nere he came,& foūde the wymple torne
Alas(quod he)the daye that I was borne
Thys o nyght wyll both vs louers slee
Howe shulde I asken mercy of Tisbee
when I am he that haue you slayne,alas
Wy bydynge hath you slayne in thys caas
Alas,to bydde a woman gone by nyght
In place there as peryll fallen myght
And I so slowe,alas I ne had be
Here in thys place,a furlonge way er ye
Nowe what lyoun that is in thys forest
Wy body mote he rente,or what beste
That wylde is,gnawen mote he myne herte
And with that worde,he to ý wymple sterte
And kyst it ofte,and wept on it full sore
And sayd wymple alas,there nys nomore
But thou shalt fele as well the bloode of me
As thou haste felte the bledynge of Tisbe
And wyth ý worde, he smote hym to ý herte
The bloode out of the woūde as brode sterte
As water,when the conduyt broken is
Nowe Tisbe,whych that wyst not thys
But syttynge in her drede,she thought thus
Yf it so fall that my Piramus
Be comen hether,and may me not yfynde
He may me holden false,and eke vnkynde
And out she cometh,& after hym gan espyen
Both wyth her herte, and wyth her eyen
And thought,I woll hym tellen of my drede
Both of the lyonesse and of my dede
And at the laste her loue then hath she foūde
Beatynge wyth hys heeles on the groūde
All blody,and therwythall abacke she sterte
And lyke the wawes,quappe gan her herte
And pale as boxe she woxe, and in a throwe
Auysed her,and gan hym well to knowe
That it was Piramus her herte dere
who coulde wryte wych a deedly chere
Hath Tisbe nowe,& how her heere she rente
And howe she gan her selfe to turmente
And how she lyeth & swouneth on ý groūde
And how she wept of teeres full his woūde
How medleth she his bloode,w̄ her cōplaint
How w̄ her bloode,her seluen gan she paynt
Howe clyppeth she the deed corse,alas
Howe doth thys wofull Tisbe in thys caas
Howe kysseth she hys frosty mouthe so colde
who hath don this & who hath ben so bold
To sleen my lefe,o speake Piramus
I am thy Tisbe,that the calleth thus
And therwythall she lyfteth vp hys heed
Thys wofull mā,that was not fully deed
when that he herde the name of Tisbe cryen
On her he cast hys heuy deedly eyen
And downe agayne,& yeldeth vp the goost
Tisbe rysl vp,wythout noyse or boost
And sawe her wymple and hys empty sheth
And eke hys swerde,ý nym hath don to deth
Then spake she thus,thy woful hāde(q̄ she)
Is stronge ynough in such a werke to me
For loue shall yeue me strength & hardynesse
To make my wounde large ynough I gesse
I woll the folowen deed,and I woll be
Felowe,and cause eke of thy dethe (q̄ she)
And though ý nothynge saue the deth only
Wyght the fro me departe truely
Thou shalt no more departe nowe fro me
Then fro the deth,for I woll go wyth the
And nowe ye wretched ielouse fathers our

we

we that weren whylom chyldren your
we prayen you, wythouten more enuye
That in o graue we moten lye
Sens loue hath brought vs this pitous end
And ryghtwyse God, to euery louer send
That loueth truly more prosperite
Then euer had Piramus and Tisbe
And let no gentyll woman her assure
To putten her in suche an auenture
But god forbyd but a woman can
Ben as trewe and louynge as a man
And for my parte, I shall anone it kyth
And wyth ý word, his swerd she toke swyth
That warme was of her loues blode, & hote
And to the herte she her seluen smote
And thus are Tisbe and Piramus ygo
Of trewe men I kynde but fewe mo
In all my bokes, saue thys Piramus
And therfore haue I spoken of hym thus
For it is deynte to vs men to kynde
A man that can in loue be trewe and kynde
Here maye ye sene, what louer so he be
A woman dare, and can as well as he.

Here endeth the legende of Tysbe of Babilon, and here foloweth the legende of Dido quene of Cartage.

GLorie and honoure Virgyle Mantuan
Be to thy name, and I shall as I can
Folowe thy lanterne, as thou goest byforne
Howe Eneas to Dido was forsworne
In thyne Eneyde, and Naso woll I take
The tenour and the great effectes make
when Troye brought was to dystruction
By grekes sleyght, and namely by Synon
Faynynge the horse offred vnto Minerue
Through which ý many a troyã must sterue
And Hector had after hys death apered
And kyre so wode, it myght not ben stered
In all the noble toure of Ilion
That of the cytie was the chefe dongeon
And all the countre was so lowe ybrought
And Priamus the kynge fordone & nought
And Eneas was charged by Venus
To flyen awaye, he toke Ascanius
That was his son, in his right hãde & fledde
And on hys backe he bare, & wyth hym ledde
His olde father, cleped Anchyses
And by the way hys wyke Creusa he lees
And mokell sorowe had he in hys mynde
Er that he coulde his felawshyp fynde
But at the laste, whan he had hem founde
He made hym redy, in a certayne stounde
And to the see ful faste he gan hym hye
And sayleth forthe, with all hys companye
Towarde Itayle, as wolde destynee
But of his auentures in the see
Nys nat to purpose for to speke of here
For it acordeth nat to my matere
But as I sayd, of hym and of Dido
Shall be my tale, tyll that I haue do
So longe he sayled in the salte see
Tyll in Libye vnneth arryued he
So was he wyth the tempest all to shake
And whan that he the hauen had ytake
He had a knight was called Achatees
And hym of all hys felawshyp he thees
To gone wyth hym, the countrey for tespye
He toke wyth hym nomore companye
But forth they gone, & lefte his shyppes ryde
His feere and he, wythouten any gyde
So longe he walketh in this wyldernesse
Tyll at the laste he mette an huntereſſe
A bowe in honde, and arowes had she
Her clothes cutted were vnto the knee
But she was yet the fayrest creature
That euer was yformed by nature
And Eneas and Achates she grette
And thus she to hem spake, whã she hẽ mette
Sawe ye (q̃ she) as ye han walked wyde
Any of my sustren walke you besyde
Wyth any wylde bore, or other beest
That they haue hunted to in this forest
Itucked vp, wyth arowes in her caas
Nay sothly lady (q̃ this Eneas)
But by thy beautie, as it thynketh me
Thou myghtest neuer erthely woman be
But Phebus suster art thou, as I gesse
And yf so be that thou be a goddesse
Haue mercy on our labour and our wo
I nam no goddesse sothly (q̃ she) tho
For maydens walken in this countre here
wyth arowes & with bowe, in this manere
This is the realme of Libye, there ye bene
Of whiche that Dido lady is and quene
And shortly tolde all the occasyon
why Dido came in to that regyon
Of whyche as nowe me lysteth nat to ryme
It nedeth

It nedeth not, it nere but losse of tyme
For thys is all and some, it was Venus
Hys owne mother, ý spake wyth hym thus
And to Cartage she bad he shulde him dyght
And vanyshed anone out of hys syght
I coulde folowe worde for worde Vergyle
But it wolde lasten all to longe whyle
Thys noble quene that clypped was Dido
That whylom was the wyfe of Sitheo
That fayrer was then the bryght sonne
This noble towne of Cartage hath begonne
In whych she raygneth in so great honour
That she was holde of all quenes flour
Of gentyllesse, of fredome, and of beautee
That well was hym that myght ones see
Of kynges and lordes so desyred
That all ý worlde her beauty had yfyred
She stode so well in euery wyghtes grace
when Eneas was come vnto the place
Unto the mayster temple of all the toun
There Dido was in her deuocioun
Full priuely hys waye then hath he nome
when he was in the large temple come
I can not sayne, yf that it be possyble
But Venus had hym maked inuisible
Thus sayeth the boke wythouten any lees
And when thys Eneas and Achates
Hadden in thys temple ben ouer all
Then founde they depaynted on a wall
Howe Troye and al the lãde dystroyed was
Alas that I was borne (quod Eneas)
Through ý world our shame is kyd so wyde
Nowe it is paynted on euery syde
we that weren in prosperite
Ben nowe dysclaundred, and in suche degre
No lenger for to lyuen I ne kepe
And wyth ý worde, he brast out for to wepe
So tenderly, that routhe it was to sene
Thys freshe lady of the cyte quene
Stode in the temple, in her estate royall
So rychely, and eke so fayre wyth all
So yonge, so lusty, wyth her eyen glade
That yf that god, that heuen & earth made
wolde haue a loue, for beauty and goodnesse
And womanheed, troth, and semelynesse
whom shulde he louen, but thys lady swete
There nys no woman to hym halfe so mete
Fortune, that hath the world in gouernaũce
Hath sodaynly brought in so newe a chaunce
That neuer was there yet so frened a caas
For all the company of Eneas
whych we wende haue lorne in the see
Armed is nought ferre fro that cyte
For whych the greatest of hys lordes, some
By auenture ben to the cyte come
Unto the same temple for to seke
The quene, and of her socour her beseke
such renõe was ther sprõge of her goodnesse
And when they had tolde all her dystresse
And all her tempest and all her harde caas
Unto the quene appered Eneas
And openly beknewe that it was he
who had ioye then, but thys meyne
That haddẽ foũde her lorde, her gouernour
The quene sawe they dyd hym such honour
And had herden ofte of Eneas, er tho
And in her herte had routh and wo
That euer suche a noble man as he
Shall ben dysherited in suche degre
And sawe ý man, ý he was lyke a knyght
And suffysaunt of persone and of myght
And lyke to ben a very gentylman
And well hys wordes he besette can
And had a noble vysage for the nones
And formed well of brawne and of bones
And after Venus, had suche fayrnesse
That no mã myght be halfe so fayre I gesse
And well a lorde hym semed for to be
And for he was a straunger, somwhat she
Lyked hym the bette, as god do boote
To some folke, often newe thynge is swote
Anone her herte hath pyte of hys wo
And wyth pyte, loue came also
And thus for pyte and for gentylnesse
Refreshed must he ben of hys dystresse
She sayde: certes, that she sory was
That he hath had such peryl and such caas
And in her frendly speche, in thys manere
She to hym spake, and sayd as ye may here.
Be ye not Venus sonne and Anchyses
In good fayth, all the worshyp and encrees
That I maye goodly done you, ye shall haue
Your shyppes and your meyne shall I saue
And many a gentyll worde she spake hym to
And commaunded her messangers to go
The same daye wythouten any fayle
Hys shyppes for to seke, and hem vytayle
Full many a beest she to the shyppes sent
And wyth the wyne she gan hem to present
And to her royall paleys she her spedde
And Eneas alwaye wyth her she ledde
what nedeth you the feestes to dyscryue
He neuer better at ease was in hys lyue
Full was the feest of deynties and rychesse

Of instrumentes of songe, and of gladnesse
And many an amorous lokynge and deuyse
Thys Eneas is come to paradyse
Out of the swolowe of hell, and thus in ioye
Remembreth hym of hys estate in Troye
To dauncynge chābres ful of paramentes
Of ryche beddes, and of pauementes
Thys Eneas is ledde after the meete
And wyth the quene when that he had seete
And spyces parted, and the wyne agone
Unto hys chambre was he ladde anone
To take hys ease, and for to haue hys reste
wyth all hys folke, to done what so hem leste
There nas courser well ybridled none
Ne stede for the iustynge well to gone
Ne large palfrey, easy for the nones
Ne iowell fret full of ryche stones
Ne sackes full of golde, of large wyght
Ne ruby none that shyneth by nyght
Ne gentyll hauten faukon heronere
Ne hounde for herte, wylde bore, or deere
Ne cuppe of golde, wyth floreyns newe ybet
That in the lande of Libye may ben gette
That Dido ne hath it Eneas ysent
And all is payed, what that he hath spent
Thus cā this honorable quene her gestes cal
As she that can in fredome passen al
Eneas sothely eke, wythout lees
Hath sent to hys shyppe by Achates
After hys sonne, and after ryche thynges
Both sceptre, clothes, broches, & eke rynges
Some for to weare, and some to presente
To her, that al these noble thinges him sent
And bad his sonne howe that he shuld make
The presentynge, and to the quene it take
Repayred is thys Achates agayne
And Eneas full blysfull is and fayne
To sene hys yonge sonne Ascanyus
For to hym it was reported thus
That Cupido, that is the god of loue
At prayer of hys mother hye a boue
And the lykenesse of the chylde ytake
Thys noble quene enamoured for to make
On Eneas, but of that scripture
Be as be maye, I make of it no cure
But soth is thys, ꝑ quene hath made suche
Unto this child, that wōder is to here (chere
And of the presente that hys father sent
She thanked hym ofte in good entent
Thus is thys quene in pleasaunce & ioye
wyth all these newe lusty folke of Troye
And of the dedes hath she more enquyred
Of Eneas, and all the storye lered
Of Troye, and all the longe day they twey
Entendeden for to speke and for to pley
Of whych there gan to breden suche a fyre
That sely Dido hath nowe suche desyre
wyth Eneas her newe geste to deale
That she loste her hewe and eke her heale
Nowe to the effecte, nowe to the frute of all
why I haue tolde thys storye, and telle shall
Thus I begynne, it fell vpon a nyght
when that the moone vpreysed had her lyght
Thys noble quene vnto her reste wente
She sygheth sore, & gon her selfe turmente
She waketh, waloweth, & mademany braid
As done these louers, as I haue herde sayd
And at the laste, vnto her suster Anne
She made her mone, & rizt thus spak she thā
Nowe dere suster myne, what may it be
That me agasteth in my dreme (quod she)
Thys ylke newe troyan is so in my thought
For that me thynketh he is so wel ywrought
And eke so lykely to ben a man
And therwyth so mykell good he can
That al my loue and lyke lyeth in hys cure
Haue ye not herde hym tell hys auenture?
Nowe certes Anne, yf that ye rede me
I woll fayne to hym ywedded be
Thys is ꝑ effecte, what shulde I more seyne
In hym lyeth all, to do my lyue or deyne
Her suster Anne, as she ꝑ coulde her good
Said as her thought, & somdele it withstode
But here of was so longe a sermonynge
It were to longe to make rehersynge
But fynally, it maye not be wythstonde
Loue woll loue, for no wyght wol it wonde
The dawnynge vp rysl, out of the see
Thys amerous quene chargeth her meyne
The nettes dresse, and speares brode & kene
In huntynge woll thys lusty fresche quene
So prycketh her thys newe ioly wo
To horse is all her lusty folke ygo
Unto the court the houndes ben ybrought
And vp on courser swyfte as any thought
Her yonge knyghtes heuen all aboute
And of her women eke an huge route
Upon a thycke palfraye, paper whyte
wyth sadell reed, enbrouded wyth delyte
Of golde the barres, vp enbossed hygh
Sate Dido, all in golde and perrey wrygh
And she is fayre, as is the bryght morowe
That healeth sycke folkes of nyghtes sorow
Upon a courser, startlynge as the fyre

Men myght turne hym wyth a lytell wyre
But Eneas, lyke Phebus to deuyse
So was he freshe arayed in hys wyse
The fomy bryddell, wyth the bytte of golde
Gouerneth he ryght as hym self hath wolde
And forth thys noble quene, thys lady ryde
On huntynge, wyth thys troyan by her syde
The heerde of hartes, founden is anone
With hey gobet, prycke thou, let gon, let gone
Why nyll the lyon comen or the beare
That I might him ones metē w̄ this speare
Thus sayne this yonge folke, & vp they kyll
The wylde hartes, & haue hem at her wyll
Amonge al thys, to romblen gan the heuen
The thonder rored wyth a grysly steuen
Downe come ꝑ rayne, w̄ hayle & slet so faste
Wyth heuens fyre, that made so sore agaste
Thys noble quene, and also her meyne
That eche of hem was glad awaye to flye
And shortly fro the tempest her to saue
She sled her selfe, into a lytell caue
And wyth her went thys Eneas also
I not wyth hem yf there went any mo
The auctoure maketh of it no mencion
And here began the depe affection
Bytwixt hem two this was ꝑ fyrst morowe
Of her gladnesse, & gynnyng of her sorowe
For there hath Eneas ykneled so
And tolde her all hys hurte and all hys wo
And sworne so depe to her to be trewe
For well or wo, and chaunge for no newe
And as a false louer, so well can playne
That sely Dido rewed on hys payne
And toke him for husbōde, & became his wife
For euer more, whyle that hem laste lyfe
And after thys, when ꝑ the tempest stente
With myrth out as they came, home they wēt
The wycked fame vp rose, and that anone
Howe Eneas hath wyth the quene ygone
In to the caue, and demed as hem leste
And when ꝑ kyng (ꝑ Yarbas hyght) it wyst
As he that had her loued euer hys lyfe
And wowed her to haue to hys wyfe
Such sorow as he hath maked, & suche chere
It is a ruthe and pyte for to here
But as in loue, aldaye it happeth so
That one shall laughen at anothers wo
Nowe laugheth Eneas, and is in ioye
And more richesse, then euer was in Troye
O sely woman, full of innocence
Full of pyte, of truthe, and contynence
What maked you to men to trusten so?
Haue ye such routh vpon her fayned wo
And haue suche olde ensamples you beforne
Se ye not all howe they ben forsworne
Where se ye one, that he ne hath lafte his lefe
Or ben vnkynde, or done her some myscheke
Or pylled her, or bosted of hys dede
Ye maye as well it seue, as ye may rede
Take hede nowe of thys great gentylman
Thys troyan that so well her please can
That fayneth hym so trewe and obeysynge
So gentyll, and so preuy of hys doynge
And can so well done all hys obeysaunce
To her, at feestes and at daunce
And whē she goeth to temple, & home ageine
And fasten tyll he hath hys lady seyne
And bearen in hys deuyses for her sake
Not I not what, and songes wolde he make
Justen, and done of armes many thynges
Sende her letters, tokens, broches, & rynges
Now herkneth how he shal his lady serue
There as he was in peryll for to sterue
For honger and for myscheke in the see
And desolate, and fledde fro hys countree
And all hys folke wyth tempest al to dryuen
She hath her body & eke her realme yeuen
In to hys honde, there she myght haue bene
Of other lande then of Cartage a quene
And lyued ī ioy ynough, what wold ye more
Thys Eneas, that hath thus depe yf wore
Is wery of hys crafte wythin a throwe
The hote ernest is all ouerblowe
And priuely he doth hys shyppes dyght
And shapeth hym to steale awaye by nyght
Thys Dido hath suspection of thys
And thought well that it was all amys
For in hys bedde he lyeth a nyght and syketh
She asketh him anone, what him mislyketh
My dere herte, whych that I loue moste
Certes (q̄ he) thys nyght my fathers gost
Hath in my slepe, me so sore turmented
And eke marcury his message hath presented
That nedes to the conquest of Itayle
My destyne is soone for to sayle
For which me thinketh, brostē is myne herte
Therwyth hys false teeres out they sterte
And taketh her wythin hys armes two
Is that in ernest (q̄ she) woll ye so
Haue ye not sworne, to wyfe me to take
Alas, what woman woll ye of me make
I am a gentyl woman, and a quene
Ye woll not feo your wyfe thus foule flene
That I was borne alas, what shall I do

To tellen in short, this noble quene Dido
She seketh halowes, and doth sacrifyce
She kneleth, cryeth, ÿ routhe is it to deuyse
Conjureth hym, and proffreth hym to be
His thral, his seruaũt, in the best degree
She falleth hym to foote, & swoumeth there
Discheuyle with her bryght gylt heer
And sayth, haue mercy, let me w̃ you ryde
These lordes, which ÿ wonnen me besyde
woll me destroyen only for your sake
And ye woll me now to wyf take
As ye haue sworn, thã wol I yeue you leue
To sleen me w̃ your swerd, now sone at eue
For than yet shall I dyen as your wyfe
I am with chylde, & yeue my chylde his lyfe
Mercy lorde, haue pytie in your thought
But al this thing auayleth her ryght nought
And as a traytour forth gan to sayle
Towarde the large countre of Itayle
And thus hath he left Dido in wo & pyne
And wedded there a lady hyght Rauyne
A cloth he laft, & eke his swerde stõdynge
whan he fro Dido stale in her slepyng
Ryght at her beddes heed, so gan he hye
whan that he stale awaye to his nauye
which cloth, whã sely Dido gan awake
She hath it kyst full oft for his sake
And sayd, o swete cloth, while iupiter it lest
Take my soule, vnbynde me of this vnrest
I haue fulfylled of fortune all the course
And thus alas, withouten his socourse
Twenty tyme yswouned hath she than
And whan that she vnto her suster Anne
Cõplayned had, of which I may not wryte
So great routh I haue it to endyte
And bad her norice and her sustren gon
To fetchen fyre, and other thynges anon
And sayd that she wolde sacrifye
And whan she myght her tyme wel aspy
Upon the fyre of sacrifyce she sterte
And w̃ his swerde she rofe her to the hert
But as myn auctor sayth, yet thus she seyd
Or she was hurt, before or she deyed
She wrote a letter anon, and tus began
Ryght so (q̃ she) as the whyte swan
Ayenst his deth begynneth for to synge
Ryght so to you I make my cõplaynyng
Not that I trowe to getten you agayne
For wel I wot it is all in vayne
Syns ÿ the goddes ben cõtrarions to me
But syn my name is lost thrugh you (q̃ she)
I may well lese a worde on you or letter
All be it, I shalbe neuer the better
For thilke wynde ÿ blew your shyp away
The same winde hath blowaway your fay
But whoso wol al this letter haue in minde
Rede Ouyde, and in hym he shal it fynde

Here endeth the legende of Dido quene of Cartage: And here foloweth the legend of Hypsiphile and Medea.

Thou rote of false louers, duke Jason
Thou sleer, deuourer, and confusion
Of gentle women, gentle creatures
Thou madest thy reclaymyng & thy lures
To ladyes of thy scathlyche apparaunce
And of thy wordes farsed with pleasaunce
And of thy fayned trouth, and thy manere
with thyne obeysaunce and humble chere
And w̃ thy counterfayted payne and wo
There other falsen one, thou falsed two
O oft swore thou, that thou woldest dye
For loue, whan thou ne feltest malady
Saue foule delyte, whiche thou callest loue
Yet that I lyue, thy name shalbe shoue
In englysh, that thy disceyte shalbe knowe
Haue at the Jason, now thyne honoure is
But certes, it is both routh and wo (blowe
That loue with false louers worketh so
For they shal haue well better loue & chere
Than he that hath bought loue ful dere
Or had in armes many a blody bore
For euer as tender a capon eateth the fore
Though he be false, & hath ÿ foule betrayde
As shall the good man ÿ therfore payde
Although he haue to ÿ capon skil and right
The false fore wol haue his parte at nyght
On Jason this example is wel ysene
By Hypsiphyle and Medea the quene
In Thessalye, as Ouyde telleth vs
There was a knyght that hyght Pelleus
That had a brother which that hyght Esõ
And whã for age he myght vnethes gon
He yaue to Pelleus the gouernyng
Of al his reygne, & made hym lord & kynge
Of which Eson, this Jason getten was
That in his tyme, and in al ÿ land there nas
Not suche a famous knyght of gentlenesse
Of fredome, of strength, and of lustynesse
After his fathers death he bare hym so

That there was none that lyst ben his fo
But dyd hym al honour and company
Of which this Pelleus hath great enuy
Imaginyng, that Jason myght be
Enhaunced so, and put in suche degree
with loue of lordes of his regyoun
That frō his reigne, he may be put adoun
And in his wyt a nyght compassed he
How Jason myght best destroyed be
withouten sclaunder of his compasment
And at the last he toke aduysement
That to sendē him into some ferre countrie
There as this Jason may destroyed be
This was his wyt, al made he to Jason
Great chere of loke, and of affectioun
For drede lest his lordes it espyde
So fyll it, as fame ronneth wyde
Ther was suche tydyng ouer al, & such loos
That in an yle that called was Colcos
Beyonde Troy estwarde in the see
That ther was a ram that men myght se
That had a flees of golde ý shone so bryght
That nowher was ther such another syght
But it was kept alwaye with a drogoun
And many other maruayles vp and doune
And with two bulles maked al of bras
That spyttē fyre, & moche thyng there was
But this was eke the tale nathelees
That whoso wolde wynnen thilke flees
He must both, or he it wynne myght
with the bulles and the dragon fyght
And kynge Otes lorde was of that yle
This Pelleus bethought vpon this wyle
That he his neuewe Jason wolde exhort
To saylen to that londe, him to disport
And sayd, neuewe, yf it myght be
That suche worthyp myght fal the
That thou this famous tresure might win
And bringe it my region within
It were to me great plesaunce and honour
Than were I holde to quyte thy labour
And all the costes I woll my selfe make
And chose what folke thou wolt ẃ thetake
Let se now, darst thou taken this voyage
Jason was yonge, and lusty of corage
And vndertoke to done this ylke emprise
Anon Argus his shyppes can deuyse
with Jason went the stronge Hercules
And many an other that he with hym ches
But whoso asketh, who is with hym gone
Let hym rede Argonautycon
For he woll tell a tale longe ynough

Philoctetes anon the sayle vp drough
whan the wynde was good, & gan him hye
Out of his countrie, Callled Thessalye
So longe he sayled in the salt see
Tyll in the yle of Lemnon arryued he
Al be this not reherced of Guydo
yet sayth Ouyde in his epystles so
And of this yle lady was and quene
The fayre yonge Hypsiphile the shene
That whylom Thoas doughter was the
Hypsiphile was gone in her playing (kyng
And romyng on the cleuys by the see
Under a banke anon espyed she
where lay the shyp, that Jason gan aryue
Of her goodnesse adowne she sendeth blyue
To weten, yf that any straunge wyght
with tempest thyder wer yblowe anyght
To don hym sucour, as was her vsaunce
To furthren euery wyght, & don plesaunce
Of very bountie and of curtesye
This messenger adowne hym gan to hye
And founde Jason and Hercules also
That in a cogge to londe were ygo
Hem to refreshen, and to take the ayre
The mornyng attempre was and fayre
And in her way this messenger hem met
Ful cōnyngly these lordes two he gret
And dyd his message, askyng hem anon
yf ý they were broken or ought wo begon
Or had nede of lodesmen or vytayle
For socour they shulde nothyng fayle
For it was vtterly the quenes wyl
Jason answered mekely and styll
My lady (q̃ he) thanke I hertely
Of her goodnesse, vs nedeth truly
Nothyng as now, but that we wery be
And come for to playe out of the see
Tyl that the wynde be better in our way
This lady rometh by the clyffe to play
with her meyne, endlonge the stronde
And fyndeth this Jason, & this other stond
In spekyng of this thyng as I you tolde
This Hercules and Jason gan beholde
How ý the quene it was, & fayre her gret
Anon rygh̃t as they with this lady met
And she toke hede, & knewe by her manere
By her arraye, by wordes and by chere
That it were gentlemen of great degree
And to the castel with her ledeth she
These straūge folk, & doth hem great honor
And asketh hem of trauayle and of laboure
That they haue suffred in the salte see

So

So that within a daye, two or thre
She knewe by the folke ý in his shyppes be
That it was Jason full of renomee
And Hercules that had the great loos
That soughten the auentures of Colcos
And dyd hem honour more than before
And with hem dealed euer longer the more
For they ben worthy folke wouten lees
And namely moost she spake w̃ Hercules
To hym her hert bare, he shulde be
Sad, wyse, and true of wordes anysee
withouten any other affection
Of loue, or any other ymagynacion
This Hercules hath this Jason prayseed
That to the sun he hath it vp rayseed
That half so true a man there nas of loue
Under the cope of heuen that is aboue
And he was wyse, hardy, secret and ryche
Of these. iii. pointes ther nas non him lyche
Of fredome passed he, and lustyhede
All tho that lyuen, or ben deed
Therto so great a gentleman was he
And of Thessalye lykely kynge to be
There nas no let, but that he was agast
To loue, and for to speake shamefast
Hym had leuer him selfe to murdre & dye
Than that men shulde a louer hym espye
As wolde god that I had ryeue
My blood and flesh, so ý I myght lyue
with ý nones, ý he had ought where a wyke
For his estate, for suche a lusty lyke
She shulden lede, with this lusty knyght
And al this was cõpassed on the nyght
Betwirt him Jason, & this Hercules
Of these two here was a shreude lees
To come to house vpon an innocent
For to bedote this quene was her entent
And Jason is as coye as is a mayde
He loketh pytously, but nought he sayd
But frely yaue he to her counsaylers
Yeftes great, and to her offycers
As wolde God I leyser had and tyme
By processe, all his woing for to ryme
But in this house, yf any false louer be
Right as him self now doth, right so did he
with faynyng, and w̃ euery subtyl dede
Ye get nomore of me, but ye wol rede
Thoriginall that telleth all the caas
The soth is this, ý Jason wedded was
Unto this quene, & toke of her substaunce
whatso him lyst vnto his purueyaunce
And vpon her begat chyldren two
And drough his sayle, & saw her neuer mo
A letter sent she hym certayne
which were to longe to wryten & to sayne
And hym reproueth of his great vntrouth
And prayeth hym on her to haue som routh
And on his chyldren two, she sayd him this
That they be lyke of all thyng ywys
To Jason, saue they couth nat begyle
And prayed god, or it were longe whyle
That she that had his hert yreft her fro
Must fynden hym vntrue also
And that she must both her chyldren spyll
And all tho that suffreth hym his wyll
And true to Jason was she al her lyke
And euer kept her chaste, as for his wyke
Ne neuer had she ioy at her hert
But dyed for his loue of sorowes smerte
To Colcos come is this duke Jason
That is of loue deuourer and dragon
As Wayre appeteth forme alway
And from forme to forme it passen maye
Or as a well that were botomlesse
Ryght so can Jason haue no pees
For to desyren through his appetyte
To done with gentyl women his delyte
This is his lust and his felicitie
Jason is roomed forth to the cytie
That whylom cleped was Jasonicos
That was the master towne of al Colcos
And hath ytolde ý cause of his comyng
Unto Otes, of that countrey kynge
Praying him ý he must done his assaye
To get the fleese of golde, yf that he may
Of which the kynge assenteth to his boone
And doth hym honour, as it is to doone
So ferforth, ý his doughter and his heyre
Medea, which that was so wyse and fayre
That fayrer saugh there neuer man w̃ eye
He made her done to Jason company
At meate, and syt by hym in the hall
Nowe was Jason a semely man withall
And lyke a lorde, and had a great renoun
And of his loke as royall as a lyoun
And goodly of his speche, and familiere
And coude of loue al the craft & arte plenere
withouten boke, w̃ euerycche obseruaunce
And as fortune her ought a foul mischaũce
She wore enamored vpon this man
Jason (qy she) or ough I se or can
As of this thyng, ý which ye ben about
Yea and your selfe I put in moche dout
For whoso woll this auenture atcheue

He may nat wele asterten, as I leue
withouten deth, but I his helpe be
But natheleſſe, it is my wyll (q̃ ſhe)
To forthren you, ſo that ye ſhall nat dye
But tournen ſound home to your Theſſaly
My ryght lady (q̃ this Jaſon) tho
That ye haue of my deth or of my wo
Any regarde, and done me this honour
I wote wel that my myght ne my labour
May nat deſerue it in my lyues daye
God thanke you, there I ne can ne may
Your man am I, and lowly you beſeche
To ben my helpe, withouten more ſpeche
But certes for my deth ſhall I nat ſpare
Tho gan this Medea to hym declare
The peril of this caſe fro poynt to poynt
Of his battayle, and in what diſioynt
He mote ſtande, of which no creature
Saue only ſhe, ne myght his lyke aſſure
And ſhortly ryght to the poynt for to go
They ben accorded fully betwixe hem two
That Jaſon ſhal her wed as true knyght
And terme yſet to come ſoone at nyght
Unto her chambre, and make there his othe
Upon the goddes that he for leſe or loth
Ne ſhulde her neuer falſen nyght ne day
To ben her huſbond whyle he lyue may
As ſhe that from his deth hym ſaued here
And herepon at nyght they met yfere
And doth his oth, and goth with her to bed
And on the morowe vpwarde he hym ſped
For ſhe hath tauzt him how he ſhal not fayl
The fleeſe to wyn, and ſtynten his battayle
And ſaued hym his lyfe, and his honour
And gat hym a name as a conquerour
Right thrugh the ſleight of her enchaũtmẽt
Now hath Jaſõ the fleeſe, & home is wẽt
with Medea, and treaſoures ful great won
But vnwyſt of her father ſhe is gone
To Theſſaly, with duke Jaſon her lefe
That afterward hath brouzt her to miſchef
For as a traytour he is from her go
And with her left yonge chyldren two
And falſely hath betrayed her, alas
And euer in loue a chefe traytour he was
And wedded yet the thyrde wyfe anon
That was the doughter of kynge Creon
This is the mede of louynge and guerdon
That Medea receyued of duke Jaſon
Right for her trouth, aud for her kyndneſſe
That loued hym better thã her ſelf I geſſe
And left her father, and her heritage
And of Jaſon this is the baſſalage
That in his dayes nas neuer none yfounde
So falſe a louer going on the grounde
And therfore in her letter thus ſhe ſayde
First whã ſhe of his falſeneſſe hym vnbraid
why lyked me thy yelowe heer to ſe
More than the boundes of myne honeſtie
why lyked me thy youth and thy fayrneſſe
And of thy tonge, ꝑ infinite graciouſneſſe
O haddeſt thou in thy conqueſt deed ybe
Ful mykel vntrouth had there dyed w̃ the
wel can Ouyde her letter in verſe endyte
which were as now to longe for to wryte.

Here endeth the legende of Hipſyphile and Medea. And here followeth the legende of Lucreſſe of Rome.

Now mote I ſayne therylyng of kynges
Of Rome, for her horrible doinges
Of the laſt king Tarquinius
As rayth Ouyde (nibs and Tytus Liuius
But for that cauſe tell I nat this ſtory
But for to prayſen, and drawen in memory
The very wyfe, the very Lucreſſe
That for her wyfehode & her ſtedfaſtneſſe
Nat only that theſe paynyms her cõmende
But that cleped is in our legende
The great Auſtyn, that hath compaſſioun
Of this Lucrece that ſtarke in Rome toun
And in what wyſe, I wol but ſhortly treat
And of this thyng I touche but the great
whan Ardea beſieged was about
with Romaynes ꝑ full ſterne were & ſtout
Full longe lay the ſiege & lytle wroughten
So ꝑ they wer half ydle as hem thoughtẽ
And in his play Tarquinius the ponge
Gan for to iape, for he was lyght of tonge
And ſayd, that it was an ydle lyfe
Noman dyd there more than his wyfe
And let vs ſpeake of wyues that is beſt
Prayſe euery man his owne as him leſt
And with our ſpeche let vs eaſe our hert
A knyght (that hyght Colatyn) vp ſtert
And ſayd thus, nay ſyr, it is no nede
To trowen on the worde, but on the dede
I haue a wyfe (q̃ he) that as I trowe
Is holden good of all that euer her knowe

Go we to Rome to nyght, and we shul se
Tarquinius answerd, that lyketh me
To Rome be they come, and fast hem dight
To Colatyns house, and downe they lyght
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatyne
The husbond knewe ý ekters well and fyne
And full priuely into the house they gone
Nor at the gate, porter was there none
And at the chambre dore they abyde
This noble wyke sat by her beddes syde
Discheueled, for no malyce she ne thought
And soft woll sayth Liui that she wrought
To kepen her fro slouth and ydlenesse
And bad her seruaūtes done her besynesse
And asketh hem what tydynges heren ye
How sayth men of the siege, how shal it be-
God wold the walles were fallen adowne
Myn husbōd is to longe out of this towne
For which drede doth me so to smerte
Ryght as a swerd, it styngeth to myne hert
whan I thynke on this or of that place
God saue my lord, I pray him for his grace
And therwithall ful tenderly she gan wepe
And of her werke she toke nomore kepe
But mekely she let her eyen fall
And thylke semblaunt sate her wel withall
And eke her teares ful of heuynesse
Embelesed her wykelye chastnesse
Her countenaunce is to herte digne
For they accordeden in dede and signe
And with that worde her husbōd Colatin
Or she of hym was ware came sterlyng in
And sayd, drede the nat for I am here
And she anon vprose with blyssful chere
And kyssed hym, as of wyues is the won
Tarquinius this proude kynges sonne
Conceyued hath her beauty e and her chere
Her yelewe heer, her bountie, & her manere
Her hewe, her wordes ý she hath cōplayned
And by no craft her beauty was nat fayned
And caught to this lady suche desyre
That in his hert he brent as any fyre
So woodly, that his wyt was al forgoten
For wel thought he she shulde nat be goten
And aye the more he was in dispayre
The more coueyteth, and thought her fayre
His blynde lust was all his couetyng
On morowe whā the bryde began to synge
Unto the siege he cōmeth full priuely
And by hym selfe he walketh sobrely
The ymage of her recordyng alway newe
thus lay her heer & thus fresh was her hew
Thus sate, thus span, this was her chere
Thus fayr she was, & this was his manere
All this conceyte his herte hath newe ytake
And as the see, with tempest al to shake
That after whan the storme is al ago
Yet wol the water quap a day or two
Right so, though ý her forme were absent
The plesaunce of her forme was present
But natheleſſe nat plesaunce, but delyte
Or an vnryghtfull talent with despyte
For maugre her, she shal my lemman be
Hap helpeth hardy man alway (q̃ he)
What ende that I make, it shalbe so
And gyrt hym w̄ his swerde, & gan to go
And he forth ryght, tyl to Rome hecome
And al alone his way that he hath nome
Unto the house of Colatyne ful ryght
Down was ý sun, & day hath lost his light
And in he come, vnto a priuy halke
And in the nyght full theuelye can he stalke
whan euery wight was to his rest brought
Ne no wight had of treasō suche a thought
whether by windowe, or bo other gyn
with iwerde ydrawe shortly he cōmeth in
There as she lay, this noble wife Lucresse
And as she woke, her bed she felt presse
what beest is that (q̃ she) that wayeth thus
I am the kynges sonne Tarquinius
(q̃ he) but & thou crye, or any noyse make
Or yf thou any creature awake
By thilke god that formed man of lyue
This swerd through thyne hert I shal riue
And therwithall vnto her throte he sterte
And set the swerde all sharpe on her hert
No word she spake, she hath no myght ther
what shal she sayne, her wyt is al ago (to
Ryght as a wolfe ý fayneth a lambe alone
To whom shall she cōplayne or make mone
what, shal she fyght with an hardy knyght
wele wot men a woman hath no myght
what, shal she crye, or how shal she asterte
That hath her by ý throte w̄ swerde at hert
She asketh grace, and sayd al ý she can
No wolt thou nat (q̃ this cruel man)
As wysely Jupiter my soule saue
I shall in the stable slee thy knaue
And laye hym in thy bed, and loude crye
That I the fande in suche auoutry
And thus thou shalt be deed, and also lese
Thy name, for thou shalt nat chese
This romaynes wyues louedē to her name
At thilke tyme, and dredden so the shame

That what for fere of slaūder & dred of deth
She lost both at ones wyt and breth
And in a swough she lay, & wore so deed
Yen myghten smyte of her arme or heed
She feleth nothing neither foule ne fayre
Tarquinius that art a kynges heyre
And shuldest, as by lynage and by rygh
Done as a lorde, and a very knyght
why hast thou done despyte to cheualrye:
why hast thou done thy lady vylanye:
Alas of ý this was a vylaynous dede
But now to ý purpose, in the story I rede
whan he was gone, & this mischaūce is fall
This lady sent after her frendes all
Father, mother, & husbond all yfere
And dischevelled with her heer clere
In habyt suche as women vsed tho
Unto the burying of her frendes go
She sat in hall, with a sorowfull syght
Her frendes asken what her ayleu myght
And who was deed, & she sat aye wepynge
A word for shame ne may she forth out brīg
Ne vpon hem she durst nat beholde
But at the last of Tarquiny she hem tolde
This ruful case, & al this thyng horryble
The wo to tel, were impossible
That she and all her frendes make at ones
All had folkes hertes, ben of stones
It myght haue maked hem vpon her rewe
Her hert was so wysely and so trewe
She sayd, that for her gilt ne for her blame
Her husbād shuld not haue the foule name
That wolde she nat suffren by no waye
And they answerde all vnto her faye
That they forgyaue it her, for it was rygh
It was no gylt, it laye not in her myght
And sayden her samples many one
But all for nought, for thus she sayde anon
Be as be may (q̃ she) of forgyuyng
I wyll not haue no forgyft for nothynge
But priuely she caught forth a knyfe
And therwithall she raft her selfe her lyfe
And as she fell adowe, she cast her loke
And of her clothes, yet hede she toke
For in her fallyng, yet she had a care
Lest that her fete, or suche thynges lay bare
So wel she loued clennesse, and eke trouth
Of her had all the towne of Rome routh
And Brutus hath by her chast bloud swore
That Tarquin shuld vbanished be therfore
And all his kyn, and let the people call
And openly the tale he tolde hem all
And openly let cary her on a bere
Through al the town, ý men maye se & here
The horryble dede of her oppressioun
Ne neuer was ther kyng in Rome towne
Syns thilke day, & she was holden there
A saynt, and euer her day yhalowed dere
As in her lawe: and thus endeth Lucresse
The noble wyse Tytus bereth wytnesse
I tell it, for she was of loue so trewe
Ne in her wyl she chaunged for no newe
And in her stable hert, sad and kynde
That in these women men may al day fynd
There as they cast her hert, ther it dwelleth
For wel I wot, that Chryst him selfe telleth
That in Israel, as wyde as is the londe
That so great fayth in al ý londe he ne fond
As in a woman, and this is no lye
And as for men loke ye suche tyrannye
They done all day, assay them whoso lyst
The trewest is full brotell for to tryst.

Here endeth the legende of Lucrece of Rome, and here foloweth the legende of Ariadne of Athenes.

Udge infernall Mynos,
of Crete kynge
now cōmeth thy lot, thou
comest on the rynge
Nat for thy sake onlye,
wrytten is this storye
But for to cleape ayen
vnto memorye
Of Thelius the great vntrouth of loue
For which the goddes of heuen aboue
Ben wroth, & wrath hath take for thy syn
Be red for shame, now I thy lyfe begyn
Mynos ý was the myghty kyng of Crete
That had an hundred cyties strong & great
To schole hath sent his son Androgeus
To Athenes of the which it happed thus
That he was slayne lerning philosophye
Rygh in that citie, nat but for enuye
The great Mynos of the which I speke
His sonnes deth is come for to wreke
Alcathoe he besieged harde and longe
But nathelesse the walles be so stronge
And Nisus, that was kynge of that cytie
So chyualrous, that lytel dredeth he
Of Mynos or his hoste, toke he no cure
Tyl on a daye befel an auenture

That

That Nisus doughter stode vpon the wall
And of the siege sawe the maner all
So happed it, that at scarmishyng
She cast her herte vpon Mynos the kinge
For his beautie, and his chiualrye
So sore, that she wende for to dye
And shortly of thys processe for to pace
She made Mynos wynnen thylke place
So that the cite was al at his wyll
To sauen whom hym lyste, or els spyll
But wykedly he quyt her kyndnesse
And let her drenche in sorowe and distesse
Nere that the goddes had of her pyte
But that tale were to longe as now for me
Athenes wan thys kyng Mynos also
As Alcathoe, and other townes mo
And this the effecte, ý Mynos hath so driuē
Hem of Athenes, that they mote hym yeuen
Fro yere to yere, her owne chyldren dere
For to be slayne, as ye shal after here
This Mynos hath a mōster, a wicked beest
That was so cruel, that wythout areest
whā ý a mā was brought in to his presence
He nolde him eate, there helpeth no defence
And euery thyrde yere, wythouten doute
They casten lotte, as it came aboute
On ryche and poore, he must his sonne take
And of hys chylde he must present make
To Mynos, to saue hym or to spyll
Or let his beeste deuoure him at his wyll
And this hath mynos done right in dispyte
To wreke his sonne was set al hys delyte
And make hem of Athenes hys thral
Fro yere to yere, whyle he lyuen shal
and whō he sayleth whan this toun is won
This wycked custome is so longe yronne
Tyl of Athenes kyng Egeus
Mote senden hys owne sonne Theseus
Sens that the lotte is fallen him vpon
To ben deuoured, for grace is there non
and forth is ladde this woful youge knight
vnto the coūtre of king Mynos ful of might
And in a prison fettred fast is he
Tyl the tyme he shulde yfreten be
wel maist thou wepe, O woful Theseus
That art a kynges sonne & dampned thus
Me thynketh this, that thou art depe yhold
To whom that saued the fro cares colde
And nowe yf any woman helpe the
wel oughtest thou her seruaunt for to be
And ben her trewe louer yere by yere
But nowe to come ayen to my matere

The toure, there this Theseus is throwe
Downe in the bottome derke & wonder low
was ioynyng to the wal of a foreyne
Longyng vnto the doughtren tweyne
Of Mynos, that in her chambres grete
Dwelten aboue the maystre strete
Of the towne, in ioye and in solas
Not I nat howe, it happed par caas
As Theseus complayned hym by nyght
The kynges doughter, that Ariadne hyght
And eke her suster Phedra, herden al
Hys complaynte, as they stode on the wal
And loked vpon the bryght moone
Hem lyste not to go to bedde so soone
And of hys wo they had compassion
A kynges sonne to be in such prison
And ben deuoured, thought hem great pyte
Than Ariadne spake to her suster fre
And sayd: Phedra leue suster dere
This woful lordes sonne may ye not here
How pitously he complayneth hys kynne
And eke hys poore estate that he is inne?
And gyltlesse, certayne nowe it is routh
And yf ye wol assent by my trouth
He shal ben holpen howe so that we do
Phedra answerde, ywys me is as wo
For hym, as euer I was for any man
And to hys helpe the beste rede that I can
Is, that we done the gayler priuely
To come and speake wyth vs hastely
And don thys woful mā wyth hym to come
For yf he may this monster ouercome
Thā were he quyte, ther is non other boote
Let vs wel taste hym at hys herte roote
That yf it so be, that he a weapen haue
where that he is lyke dare kepe or saue
Fyghten wyth thys fende, and hym defende
For in the prison, there as he shal discende
Ye wote wel, that the beest is in a place
That is not derke, & hath rōme & eke space
To welde an axe, or swerde, stacke, or knyfe
So that me thynketh he shulde saue his life
If that he be a man, he shal do so
And we shal make hym balles eke also
Of wexe & towe, that whan he gapeth faste
Into the beestes throte he shal hem caste
To sleke his honger, and encomber his teth
And ryght anon, whan that Theseus seth
The beest acheked, he shall on hym leepe
To sleen him, or they comen more to heepe
Thys weapen shal the gayler, or that tyde
Ful priuely within the prison hyde

And for the house is crencled to and fro
And hath so queynte wayes for to go
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought
Therto haue I a remedye in my thought
That by a clewe of twyne, as he hath gone
The same way he may returne anone
Folowyng alway ý threde as he hath come
And whan thys beest is ouercome
Than may he flyen away out of this stede
And eke the gayler may he wyth him lede
And hym auaunce at home in hys countre
Sens that so great a lordes sonne is he
Thys is my rede, yf that ye dare it take
what shulde I lenger sermon of it make
The gayler cometh, and with him Theseus
whan these thynges ben accorded thus
Downe sate Theseus vpon hys kne
The ryght lady of my lyfe (q̃ he)
I sorouful man, ydampned to the deth
Fro you, whyles that me lasteth breth
I wol not twynne, after thys auenture
But in your seruyce, thus I wol endure
that as a wretch vnknow, I woll you serue
For euermore, tyl that myne herte sterue
Forsake I wol at home myne heritage
And as I sayd, bene of your courte a page
If that ye vouchsafe that in thys place
Ye graunt me to haue such a grace
that I may haue, nat but my meate & drinke
And for my sustynaunce yet wol I swinke
Right as you lyste, ý Mynos ne no wyght
Sens that he saw me neuer with eien sight
Ne no man els shal me espye
So slyly, and so wel I shal me gye
And me so wel diffygure, & so lowe (know
That in this worlde there shal no man me
To haue my lyfe, and to haue presence
Of you, that none to me thys excellence
And to my father shal I sende here
Thys worthy man, that is your gaylere
And hym so guerdon, that he shal wel be
One of the greatest men of my countre
And yf I durst sayne, my lady bryght
I am a kynges sonne, and eke a knyght
As wolde god, yf that it myght be
Ye weren in my countre al thre
And I wyth you, to beare you companye
Than shulde ye sene yf that I therof lye
And yf that I profer you in lowe manere
To ben your page, & seruen you ryght here
But I you serue as lowly in that place
I praye to Mars to yeue me such grace
That shames deth on me there mote fal
And dethe and poueite to my frendes al
And that my spirite by nyght mote go
After my deth and walke to and fro
That I mote of traytoure haue a name
For which my spirite mote go to do me sha-
And yf I clayme euer other degre (me
But ye vouchsafe to yeue it me
As I haue sayde, of shames death I dey
And mercy lady, I can naught els sey
A semly knyght was thys Theseus to se
And yonge, but of twenty yere and thre
But who so had ysene hys countenaunce
he wold haue wept for routh of his penaũce
For which this Ariadne in thys manere
Answerde to hys profer and to hys chere
A kynges sonne, & eke a knyght (q̃ she)
To bene my seruaunt in so lowe degree
God shylde it, for the shame of women al
And lene me neuer such a case befal
And sende you grace, & sleyght of herte also
You to defende, & knyghtly to sleen your foe
And leene here after I may you fynde
To me, and to my suster here so kynde
That I ne repente nat to yeue you lyfe
Yet were it better I were your wyfe
Syth ye ben as gentyl borne as I
And haue a realme nat but faste by
Than ý I suffred youre gentyllesse to sterue
Or that I let you as a page sterue
It is no profyte, as vnto your kynrede
but what is ý, that mã woll nat do for drede
And to my suster syth that it is so
That she mote gone with me, yf that I go
Or els suffre dethe as well as I
That ye vnto your sonne as trewely
Done her be wedded, at your home coming
Thys is the final ende of al thys thyng
Ye swere it here vpõ al that may be swoorne:
Ye lady myne (q̃ he) or els to torne
Mote I be, w̃ the Mynotaur or to morow
And haueth here of myn hert blod to borow
If that ye wol, yf I had knyfe or speare
I wolde it letten out, and theron sweare
For that at erste, I wotte ye wolde me leue
By Mars, that is chefe of my beleue
So that I myght lyuen, and nat fayle
To morowe for to taken my batayle
I nolde neuer fro thys place flye
Tyl that ye shulde the very profe se
For nowe, yf that the soth I shal you say
I haue loued you ful many a day

Though

Though ye ne wyst not, in my countre
And aldermoste desyred you to se
Of any erthly lyuynge creature
Upon my trouth I sweare, and you assure
Thys seuen yere I haue your seruaunt be
Nowe haue I you, and also haue ye me
My dere herte, of Athenes Duchesse
Thys lady smyleth at hys stedfastnesse
And at hys hertely wordes and at his chere
And to her suster sayd in thys manere
And sothly suster myne (quod she)
Nowe be we duchesses both I and ye
And sykerde to the regals of Athenes
And both hereafter lykely to be quenes
And saued fro hys deth a kynges sonne
As euer of gentyl women is the wonne
To saue a gentyl man, enforth her myght
In honest cause, and namely in his right
me thiketh no wyght ought vs herof blame
Ne bearen vs therfore an yuel name
And shortly of thys mater for to make
Thys Theseus of her hath leaue ytake
And euery poynte was performed in dede
As ye haue in this couenaunt herde me rede
his wepē, his clew, his thing ý I haue sayd
was by the gayler in the house ylayd
Ther as the Mynotaur hath his dwellyng
Ryght faste by the dore, at hys entryng
And Theseus is ladde vnto hys deth
And forth vnto thys Mynotaure he geth
And by the teachyng of this Adriane
He ouercame thys beest, and was hys bane
And out he cometh by the clewe agayne
Ful priuely, whan he thys beest hath slayne
And the gayler gotten hath a barge
And of hys wyues treasure gan it charge
And toke hys wyfe, and eke her suster fre
And by the gayler, and wyth hem al thre
Is stole away out of the lande by nyght
And to the countre of Enuye hym dyght
There as he had a frende of hys knowyng
There feesten they, there daūsen they & sing
And in hys armes hath thys Adriane
That of ý beest hath kepte him fro his bane
And get hym there a noble barge anone
And of hys countrey folke a ful great wone
and taketh his leaue, & homward sayleth he
And in an yle, amydde the wylde see
There as there dwelte creature none
Saue wylde beestes, and that ful many one
He made hys shyppe a londe for to sette
And in that yle, halfe a daye he lette
And sayd, that on the lande he must him rest
His maryners haue done ryght as him leste
And for to tel shortly in thys case
whan Ariadne hys wyfe a slepe was
For that her suster fayrer was than she
He taketh her in his hand and forth goth he
To shyppe, and as a traytour stale away
whyle that thys Ariadne a slepe lay
And to hys countreywarde he sayleth blyue
A twenty dyuelway, the wynde hym dryue
And founde hys father drenched in the see
Ye lyst no more to speake of hym parde
These false louers, poyson be her bane
But I wol turne agayne to Adriane
That is wyth slepe for werynesse ytake
Ful sorowfully her herte may awake
Alas, for the myne herte hath pyte
Ryght in the dawnyng awaketh she
and gropeth in the bed, & fonde ryght nought
Alas (q̃ she) that euer I was wrought
I am betrayed, and her heere to rente
And to the stronde bare fote fast she went
And cryed: Theseus myne herte swete
where be ye that I may not with you mete
And myght thus wyth beestes bene yslayne
The holow rockes answerde her agayne
No man she sawe, and yet shone the moone
And hye vpon a rocke she went soone
And sawe his barge, saylyng in the see
Colde wore her herte, & ryght thus sayd she
Weker than ye, fynde I the beestes wyld
Hath he nat synne, that he her thus begylde
she cryed, O turne agayne for routh & synne
Thy barge hath not al hys meyne inne
Her kerchefe on a pole stycked she
Ascaunce he shulde it wele yse
And him remembre that she was behynde
and turne agayne, & on the stronde her finde
But al for naught, his way he is gone
And downe she fel a swowne on a stone
And vp she rylt, and kyssed in al her care
The steppes of his fete, there he hath fare
And to her bedde ryght thus she speketh tho
Thou bedde (q̃ she) ý hast receyued two
Thou shalt answere of two, and not of one
where is the greater parte, away gone
alas, wher shal I wretched wight become
For though so be that bote none here come
Home to my countrey dare I not for drede
I can my selfe in thys case nat rede
what shulde I tel more her cōplaynyng
It is so longe it were an heauy thyng

In her

In her epistle, Naso telleth all
But shortly to the ende tell I shall
The goddes haue her holpen for pyte
And in the signe of Taurus men may se
The stones of her crowne shyne clere
I wyl no more speake of this matere
And thus thys false louer can begyle
His trew loue, the dyuel quyte him his wyle

Here endeth the legende of Ariadne and here foloweth the legende of Phylomene.

Thou yeuer of the formes
that hast wrought
The fayre world, & bare
it in thy thought
Eternallye, er thou thy
werke began
why madest thou vnto
the slaunder of man
Or al be that it was not thy doyng
As for that fende, to make such a thyng
why suffredest ÿ that Tereus was bore
That is in loue so false and so forswore
That fro this worlde vp to the fyrste heuen
Corrumpeth, whan ÿ folke his name neuen
And as to me, so grislye was hys dede
That whan that I thys foule storye rede
Myne eyen weren foule, and sore also
Yet lasteth the venyme of so longe ago
That infecteth hym that wolde beholde
The storye of Tereus, of whyche I tolde
Of Trace was he lorde, & kynne to Marte
The cruel god that stante wyth blody darte
And wedded had he wyth blysful chere
Kynge Pandyonis fayre doughter dere
That hyght Progne, floure of her countre
Though Juno lyste nat at the feest be
Ne Hymeneus, that god of weddyng is
But at the feest redy bene ywys
The furys thre, with al her mortal bronde
The oule al night aboute the balkes wonde
That prophete is of wo, and of mischaunce
Thys reuel, ful of songe and ful of daunce
Laste a fourtenyght, or lytel lasse
But shortly of thys storye for to passe
(For I am wery of hym for to tel)
Fyue yere hys wyfe and he togyther dwel
Tyl on a day she gan so sore longe
To sene her suster that she sawe not longe
That for desyre she nyst not what to say
But to her husbonde gan she for to pray
For goddes loue, that she mote ones gone
Her suster for to sene, and come ayen anone
Or els but she mote to her wende
She prayed hym ÿ he wold after her sende
And thys was day by day al her prayere
wyth al hũblesse of wifehode, worde & chere
This Tereus let make hys shyppes yare
And in to Grece hym selfe is forth yfare
Unto hys father in law gan he praye
To vouchsafe, that for a moneth or twaye
That Phylomene hys wyues suster myght
On Progne his wife, but ones haue a sight
And she shal come to you agayne anone
My selfe with her, I wyl both come & gone
And as my hertes lyfe I wyl her kepe
This olde Pandion, this kyng gan wepe
For tendernesse of herte, for to leue
His doughter gon, and for to yeue her leue
Of al thys worlde he loued nothyng so
But at the laste leaue hath she to go
For Phylomene wyth salte teares eke
Gan of her father grace for to beseke
To sene her suster, that her longeth so
And him enbraceth, wyth her armes two
And there al so yonge and fayre was she
That whan that Tereus sawe her beaute
And of array, that there was none her lyche
And yet of beaute was she to so ryche
He cast his firy herte vpon her so
That he wolde haue her, howe so that it go
And wyth hys wyles kneled, and so prayde
Tyl at the last Pandion thus sayde
Nowe sonne (q̃ he) that art to me so dere
I the betake my yonge doughter dere
That beareth the key of al myne hertes lyfe
And grete wel my doughter, and thy wyfe
And yeue her leaue somtyme for to pley
That she maye se me ones or I dey
And sothly he hath made hym ryche feest
And to hys folke, the moste and eke the leest
that with him came, & yafe him giftes grete
And hym cõueyeth through ÿ maister strete
Of Athenes, and to the see hym brought
And turneth home no malyce he ne thought
The ores pulleth forth the vessell faste
And in to Trace arryueth at the laste
And vp in to a forest he her ledde

And

And to a caue priuely hym spedde
And in thys derke caue, yf her lyste
Or nought, he badde her for to rest
Of which her herte agrose, and sayde thus:
where is my suster, brother Tereus.
And there wythal she wepte tenderly
And quoke for feare pale and pytously
Ryght as the lābe, that of the wolfe is bittē
Or as the culuer, ý of the Egle is smytten
And is out of hys clawes escaped
yet it is a ferde, and a waped
Leste it be hente eftsones: so sate she
But vtterly it may none other be
By force hath thys traytour done a dede
That he hath reft her of her maydenhede
Maugre her heed, by strength & by his myzt
Lo here a dede of men, and that a ryght
She cryed suster wyth ful loude steuen
And father dere helpe me god in heuen
Al helpeth not, and yet thys false theſe
Hath done thys lady yet a more mischefe
For feare, leste she shulde hys shame crye
And done hym openly a vyllany
And wyth hys swerde her tonge of kerfe he
And in a castel made her for to be
Ful priuely in prison euermore
And kept her to hys vsage and to hys store
So that she ne myght neuer more astarte
O sely Phylomene, wo is in thyne herte
Huge bene thy sorowes, and wonder smert
God wreke the, and sende the thy bone
Nowe is tyme I make an ende sone
Thys Tereus is to hys wyfe ycome
And in hys armes hath his wyfe ynome
And pytously he wepte, and shoke hys heed
And swore her, that he foūde her syster deed
For which thys sely Progne hath such wo
That nygh her sorouful hert brake in two
And thus in teeres lette I Progne dwell
And of her suster forth I woll you tell
Thys woful lady ylerned had in youth
So that she worken and enbrauden couth
And weauen in stole the radeuore
And it of women hath be woued yore
And sothly for to sayne, she hath her fyl
Of mete and drynke, of clothyng at her wyl
And couth eke rede wel ynough and endyte
But wyth a penne she coulde nat write
But letters can she weaue, to and fro
So that by the yere was al a go
She had wouen in a stames large
how she was brouzt fro Athenes in a barge
And in a caue howe that she was brought
And all the thynge ý Tereus hath wrought
She waue it well, & wrote the storye aboue
Howe she was serued for her susters loue
And to a man a ryngе she yaue anone
And prayed hym by signes for to gone
Unto the quene, and bearen her that cloth
And by signe swore many a othe
She sholde him yeue what she getten myzt
This man anone vnto the quene him dight
And toke it her, and al the maner tolde
and whā ý Progne hath this thing beholde
No word she spake, for sorow & eke for rage
But fayned her to gone on pylgrymage
To Baccus temple, and in a lytle stounde
Her dombe suster syttyng hath she founde
wepyng in the castel her selfe alone
Alas the wo, constraynte, and the mone
that Progne vpō the dombe suster maketh
In armes euerych of hem other taketh
And thus I let hem in her sorowe dwell
The remenaunt is no charge to tel
For thys is al & some, thus was she serued
That neuer agylte, ne deserued
Unto thys crewel man, that she of wyste
Ye may beware of men yf that you lyste
For al be that he wolde not for shame
Done as Tereus, to lese hys name
Ne serue you as a murtherer or a knaue
Ful lytle whyle shul ye trewe hym haue
that wol I sayn al were he now my brother
But yt so be that he may haue another

Here endeth the legende of Phylomene, and here koloweth the legende of Phillis.

By proue, as wel as by auctorite
That wycked fruite commeth of wycked tre
That may ye finde, if that it lyketh you
But for thys ende I speke thys as nowe
To tel you of false Demophon
In loue a falser herde I neuer non
But it were hys father Theseus

God for hys grace fro such one kepe vs
Thus these women prayen, that it here
Nowe to the effecte turne I of my matere
Dystroyed is of Troye the cite
Thys Demophon came saylyng in the see
Towarde Athenes, to hys paleys large
with him came many a ship & many a barge
Ful of folke, of whych ful many one
Is wounded sore, and sicke and wo begone
And they haue at the seige longe playne
Behynde him came a wynd, and eke a raine
that shoke so sore, hys sayle myght nat stōde
Him were leuer than al the worlde alonde
So hunteth hym the tempest to and fro
So derke it was, he coulde no where go
And wyth a waue brusten was hys stere
Hys ship was rente so lowe, in such manere
That carpenter coulde it not amende
The see by nyght as any torche brende
For woode, and posseth hym vp and downe
Tyl Neptune hath of him compassioun
And Thetis Chorus, Tryton, and they al
And maden hym vp on londe to fal
wherof that Phillis lady was and quene
Lycurgus doughter, fayrer vnto sene
Than is the floure agayne the bright sonne
Unneth is Demophon to londe ywonne
weake & eke wery, and hys folke forpyned
Of werynesse, and also enfamyned
And to the deth he was almost ydryuen
His wyse folke counsayle haue him yeuen
To seken helpe and socour of the quene
And loken what hys grace myght bene
And maken in that lande some cheuesaunce
And kepen hym fro wo, and fro mischaunce
For sycke he was, and almost at the dethe
Unneth myght he speke, or drawe brethe
And lythe in Rodopeya him for to rest
whā he may walke, hym thourt it was best
Unto the countre to seken for socour
Men knewe hym well, and dyd him honour
For at Athenes duke and lorde was he
As Theseus hys father hath ybe
That in hys tyme was great of renoun
No man so great in al hys regioun
And lyke hys father of face and of stature
And false of loue, it came hym of nature
As doth the fore Renarde, the fores sonne
Of kynd he coulde his olde fathers wonne
wythout lore, as can a drake swymme
whan it is caught, & caryed to the brymme
this honorable quene phillis doth himchere
Her lyketh wel hys sporte and hys manere
But I am agroted here beforne
To write of hem ý in loue bene forsworne
And eke to hast me in my legende
which to performe, god me grace sende
Therfore I passe shortly in thys wyse
Ye haue wel herde of Theseus the gyse
In the betrayeng of fayre Adriane
That of her pyte kept hym fro hys bane
At shorte wordes, ryght so Demophon
The same way, & the same pathe hath gone
That dyd hys false father Theseus
For vnto Phillis hath he sworne thus
To wedden her, and her hys trouth plyght
And pyked of her al the good he myght
whā he was hole & sounde, and had his rest
And doth wyth Phillis, what so ý hym lest
As wel I coulde, yf that me lyst so
Tellen al hys doyng to and fro
He sayd to hys countrey mote he sayle
For there he wolde her weddyng apparayle
As fyl to her honoure, and hys also
And openly he toke hys leaue tho
And to her swore he wolde not soiourne
But in a moneth agayne he wolde retourne
And in that lande let make hys ordynaunce
As bery lorde, and toke the obeysaunce
wel and humbly, and hys shyppes dyght
And home he goth the next way he myght
For vnto Philles yet came he nought
And that hath she so hard and sore ybought
Alas as the storye doth vs recorde
She was her owne deth wyth a corde
whan she sawe that Demophon her trayed
but fyrst wrote she to him, & fast him prayed
He wolde come and delyuer her of payne
As I reherce shal a worde or twayne
Ye lyst nat vouchsafe on hym to swynke
Dispenden on hym a penne ful of ynke
For false in loue was he, ryght as his syre
The dyuel sette her soules both on a fyre
But of the letter of Phyllis wol I write
A word or twayne, althour it be but lyte
Thyn hostesse (q̃ she) O Demophon
Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon
Of Rhodopeye, vpon you mote complayne
Ouer the terme sette betwyxt vs twayne
That ye ne holden forwarde, as ye sayde
Your ancre, whych ye in our hauen layde
Hyght vs, that ye wolde comen out of dout
Or that the moone ones went about
But tymes foure, ý mone hath hyde her face

Sens thylke daye ye wente fro thys place
And foure tymes lyght the worlde agayne
But for all that, yet shall I sothly sayne
Yet hath the streme of Scython not brought
From Athenes the shyp, yet came it nought
And yf that ye the terme reken wolde
As I or other trewe louers do sholde
I playne not (god wote) before my day
But all her letter wrytten I ne may
By order, for it were to me a charge
Her letter was ryght longe, and therto large
But here and there, in ryme I haue it layde
There as me thought that she hath wel sayd
She sayd, the sayles cometh not agayne
Ne to the worde, there nys no fey certayne
But I wote why ye come not (quod she),
For I was of my loue to you so fre
And of the goddes that ye haue swore
That her vengeaunce fall on you therfore.
Ye be not suffysaunt to beare the payne
To moche trusted I, well may I sayne
Upon your lynage, and your fayre tonge
And on your teeres, falsly out wronge
Howe coude ye wepe so by crafte (quod she)
Haye there suche teeres fayned be
Nowe certes, yf ye wold haue in memorie
It ought be to you but lytell glorie
Ta haue a sely mayde thus betrayde
To god (q̃ she) pray I, and ofte haue prayde
That it be nowe the greatest pryce of all
And moste honour, that euer you shal befall
And when thyne olde aunceters paynted be
In whych men may her worthynesse se
Then praye I god, thou paynted be also
That folke may reden, forth by as they go
Lo thys is he, that wyth hys flatterye
Betrayed hath, and done her villanye
That was hys trew loue, in thought & dede
But sothly of o poynt yet maye they rede
That ye ben lyke your father, as in thys
For he begyled Ariadne ywys
wyth such an arte, and suche subtelte
As thou thy seluen haste begyled me
As in that poynt, all though it be not feyre
Thou folowest certayne, and arte his heyre
But sens thus synfully ye me begyle
My body mote ye sene, wythin a whyle
Ryght in the hauen of Athenes fletynge
wythouten sepulture and buryenge
Though ye ben harder then is any stone
And whē thys letter was forth sent anone
And knewe how brotel & how false he was
She for dyspayre fordyd her selfe alas
Such sorowe hath she, for she beset her so
Beware ye women of your subtyll foe
Sens yet thys daye, men maye ensample se
And trusteth nowe in loue no man but me.

Here endeth the legende of Phillis, and here foloweth the legende of Hipermester.

IN Grece whylom weren
brethren two
Of whych that one was
called Danao
That many a sonne hath
of hys body wonne
As such fals louers oft cō
Amonge hys sonnes all there was one
That aldermoste he loued of euerychone
And whē this chyld was borne, this Danao
Shope hym a name, and called hym Lyno
That other brother called was Egiste
That was of loue as false as euer hym lyste
And many a doughter got he in hys lyfe
Of whych he got vpon hys ryght wyfe
A doughter dere, and dyd her for to call
Hypermestra, yongest of hem all
The whych chylde of her natiuite
To all good thewes borne was she
As lyked to the goddes or she was borne
That of the shefe she shulde be the corne
The werdes that we clepen destyne
Hath shapen her, that she muste nedes be
Pytous, sadde, wyse, trewe as stele
And to thys woman it accordeth wele
For though ỳ Venus yaue her great beaute
wyth Jupiter compowned so was she
That conscience, trouth, & drede of shame
And of her wyfehode for to kepe her name
Thys thought her was felicyte as here
And reed Mars, was that tyme of the yere
So feble, that hys malyce is hym rafte
Repressed hath Venus hys crafte
And what wyth Venus, & other oppression
Of houses, Mars hys venym is a don
That Hypermester dare not handle a knyfe
In malyce, though she shulde lese her lyfe
But natheleſſe, as heuen gan tho turne

Two badde aspectes, hath she of Saturne
That made her to dye in prison
And I shall after make mencion
Of Danao and Egystes also
And though so be ý they were brethren two
For thylke tyme nas spared no lynage
It lyked hem to maken mariage
Betwyxte Hypermestre, and hym Lino
And casten suche a daye it shalbe so
And full accorded was it vtterly
The aray is wrought, the tyme is fast by
And thus Lyno hath of hys fathers brother
The doghter wedded, & ech of hē hath other
The torches brennen, & the lampes bryght
The sacrifyce ben full redy dyght
Thensence out of the fyre reketh soote
The floure the leefe, is rent vp by the roote
To maken garlandes and crownes hye
Full is the place of sounde of mynstralcye
Of songes amourous of mariage
As thylke tyme was the playne vsage
And thys was in the paleys of Egyste
That i his house was lord, right as him lyst
And thus that daye they dryuen to an ende
The frendes taken leue, & home they wende
The nyght is comen, ý bryd shal go to bedde
Egyste to hys chambre fast hym spedde
And pryuely let hys doughter call
when ý the house voyded was of hem all
He loketh on hys doughter with glad chere
And to her spake, as ye shall after here
My ryght doughter tresour of myne herte
Sens fyrst ý day, that shapē was my sherte
Or by the fatall suster had my dome
So nye myne herte neuer thynge ne come
As thou Hypermestre, doughter dere
Take hede what thy father sayeth the here
And werke after the wyser euermo
For alderfyrst doughter I loue the so
That all the worlde to me nys halfe so lefe
Ne nolde rede the to thy myschefe
For all the good vnder the colde moone
And what I mene, it shalbe sayd right soone
wyth protestacion, as sayne these wyse
That but thou do, as I shall the deuyse
Thou shalt be deed, by him ý al hath wrought
At short wordes thou ne scapest nought
Out of my paleys, or that thou be deed
But thou consent, and werke after my reed
Take thys to the fearfull conclusyon
Thys Hypermister caste her eyen doun
And quoke as doth the leefe of aspe grene
Deed wext her hewe, & lyke as asthen to sene
And sayd: lorde and father all your wyll
After my myght, god wote I shall fulfyll
So it be to me no confusyon
I nyll (quod he) haue none excepcion
And out he caught a knyfe, as rasour kene
Hyde thys (q̃ he) that it be not ysene
And when thyne husbande is to bedde go
whyle that he slepeth, cutte hys throte a two
For in my dremes it is warned me
Howe that my neuewe shall my bane be
But wyych I not, wherfore I woll be syker
yf thou say nay, we two shall haue a byker
As I haue sayd, by him that I haue sworne
This Hipermister hath nigh her wyt forlorn
And for to passen harmlesse out of ý place
She graūted hi, ther was none other grace
And wythal a costrel taketh he tho
And sayd, herof a draught or two
Yeue hym drynke, when he goeth to reste
As he shall slepe as longe as euer the leste
The narcottikes and apies ben so stronge
And go thy way, lest ý hym thynke to longe
Out cometh ý bryd, & with ful sobre chere
As is of maydens ofte the manere
To chābre brought, with reuel & with songe
And shortly, lest thys tale be to longe
Thys Lino and she beth brought to bedde
And euery wyght out at the dore him spedde
The nyght is wasted, and he fell a slepe
Full tenderly begynneth she to wepe
She rysl her vp, & dredfully she quaketh
As doth the braūche, that zephirus shaketh
And hushte were all in Argone that syte
As colde as any frost nowe wexeth she
For pyte by the herte strayned her so
And drede of deth doth her so moche wo
That thryse downe she fyll, in suche a were
She ryste her vp, and stakereth here & there
And on her handes fast loketh she
Alas, shall myne handes bloody be
I am a mayde, and as by my nature
And by my semblaunt, and by my vesture
Myne handes ben not shapen for a knyfe
As for to reue no man fro hys lyfe
what dyuell haue I wyth the knyfe to do
And shall I haue my throte corue a two
Then shall I blede alas, and be shende
And nedes thys thynge mote haue an ende
Or he or I mote nedes lese our lyfe
Nowe certes (quod she) sens I am hys wyfe
And hath my fayth, yet is it bette for me

For

For to be deed, in wykely honeste
Then be a traytour, lyuynge in my shame
Be as be may, for ernest or for game
He shall awake, and ryse and go hys way
Out at thys gutter, er that it be day
And wept full tenderly vpon hys face
And in her armes gan hym to embrace
And hym she roggeth, and awaketh softe
And at the wyndowe lepe he fro the lofte
whē she hath warned hym, & don hym boote
Thys Lino swyfte was, and lyght of foote
And from her ran, a full good paas
Thys sely woman is so weake, alas
And helpelesse, so that er she ferre wente
Her cruell father dyd her for to hente
Alas Lyno, why arte thou so vnkynde
why ne haste thou remembred in thy mynde
And taken her, and ledde her forth wyth the
For when she sawe that gone away was he
And that she myght not so faste go
Ne folowen hym, she sate downe ryght tho
And tyll she was caught, & kettred in prison
Thys tale is sayd for thys conclusyon.

¶ Thus ende the legendes of good women.

¶ A goodly Balade of Chaucer.

Other of norture, best be loued of all
And freshest floure, to whō good thrift god sēde
Your chylde, yf it lust you me so to call
All be I vnable my selfe so to pretende
To your dyscrecion I recomende
Myne herte and all, wyth euery circūstaūce
All hooly to be vnder your gouernaunce

Moste desyre I, and haue, and euer shall
Thing, which might your herts ease amēde
Yaue me excused, my power is but small
Natheleſſe of ryght ye ought to cōmende
My good wyll, whych fayne wolde entende
To do you seruyce, for all my suffysaunce
Is holy to be vnder your gouernaunce

Meulx vn: in herte, whych neuer shall apall
Aye freshe & newe, & ryght glad to dyspende
My tyme in your seruyce, what so befal
Besechynge your excellence to defende
My symplenesse, yf ignoraunce offende
In any wyse, syth that myne affyaunce
Is holy to ben vnder your gouernaunce

Daysy of lyght, bery grounde of comforte
The Sunnes doughter (ye hyght) as I rede
For whē he westreth, farwel your dysporte
By your nature anone ryght for pure drede
Of p̄ rude nyght, p̄ wyth his boystous wede
Of darkenesse, shadoweth our emyspere
Then closen ye, my lyues lady dere

Dawynge the daye, to hys kynde resorte
And Phebꝰ your father, w̄ his stremes rede
Adorneth the morowe, consumynge the sorte
Of mysty cloudes, that wolden ouerlede
Trewe humble hertes, wyth her mystyhede
Nere comforte a dayes, when eyen clere
Dysclose and sprede my lyues lady dere

Je vouldray: but great god dysposeth
And maketh casuell by hys prouidence
Suche thinge, as mās frele wytte purposeth
All for the best, yf that our conscience
Not grutche it, but in humble pacience
It receyue, for God sayeth wythout fable
A faythfull herte euer is acceptable

Cautels, who so vseth gladly gloseth
To eschewe suche it is ryght hygh prudence
what ye sayd ones, my herte opposeth
That my wrytynge iapes in your absence
Pleased you moche better then my presence
Yet can I more, ye be not excusable
A faythfull herte euer is acceptable

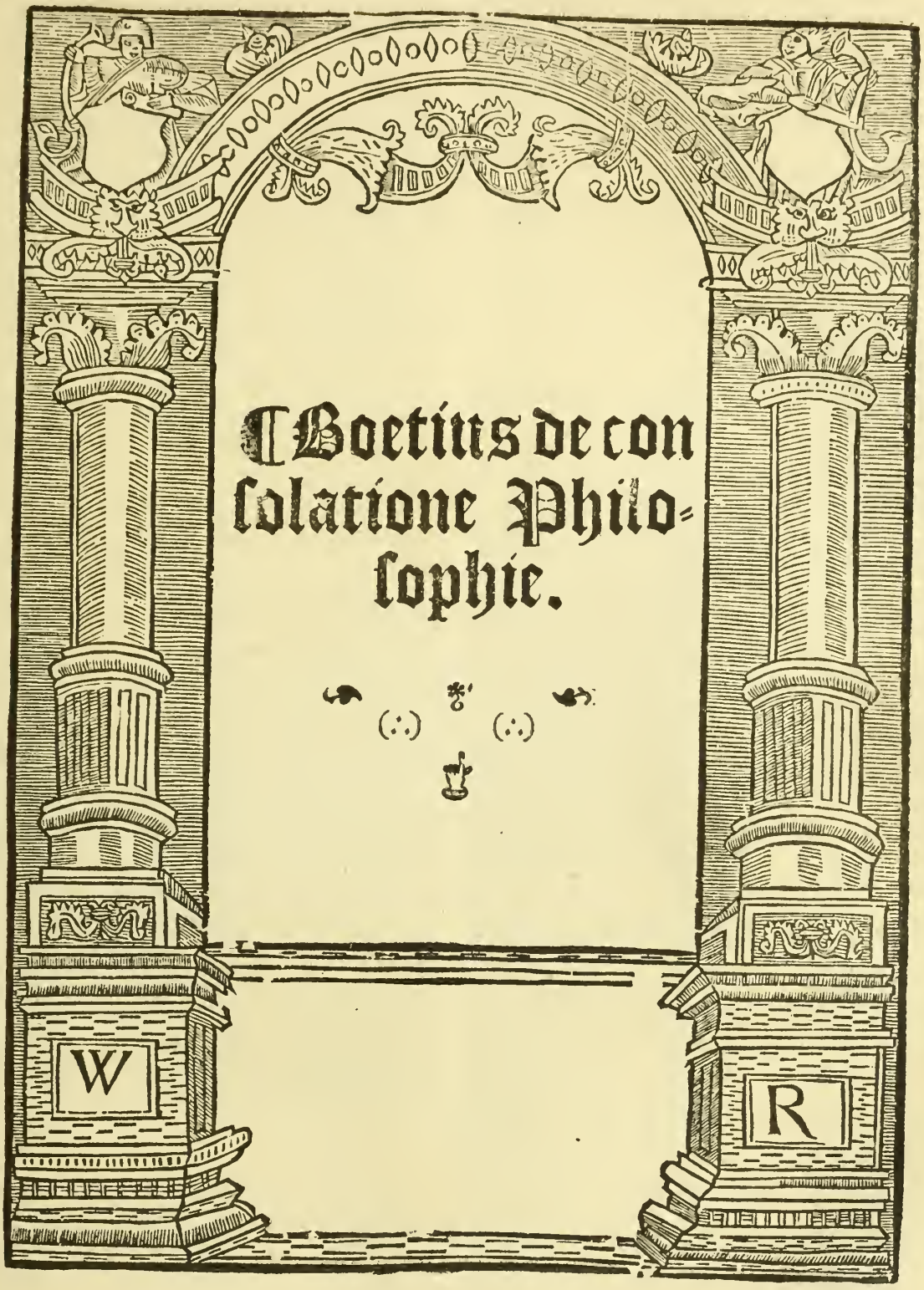
Quaketh my penne, my spyrit supposeth
That in my writing ye fynd wol some offēce
Myn hert welkneth thus sone, anon it riseth
Now hotte, now colde, and efte in feruence
That mysse is, is caused of negligence
And not of malyce, therfore beth merciable
A faythfull herte euer is acceptable.

¶ Lenuoye.

¶ Forth cõplaynt, forth lackynge eloquence
Forth lytell lettre of endytynge lame
I haue besought my ladyes sapience
Of thy behalfe, to accepte in game
Thyne inabilite, do thou the same
Abyde, haue more yet: Je serue Jouesse
Now forth, I close the in holy Venus name
The shall vnclose my hertes gouernesse.

¶ FINIS.

¶ Thus endeth thys balade: And here foloweth the boke of Boecius de consolatione philosophie.


Boetius de con
colatione Philo=
sophie.
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Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi
Flebilis heu mestos cogor inire modos.

Las, I weppynge am constrayned to begyn vers of sorowfull mater, that whylom in flourisshynge studye madedelitable dytees For lo, rendynge muses of poetes, endyten to me thynges to be written, and drery teeres. At last no drede ne myght ouercome tho muses, that they ne weren felowes and folouden my way, that is to say: whan I was exiled, they that weren of my youthe whylom weleful and grene, comforten nowe sorowfull wyerdes of me olde man: for elde is comen vnwarely vpon me, hasted by ꝑ harmes that I haue, and sorowe hath cõmaunded hys age to be in me. Heeres hore arne shadde ouertymelyche vpon my heed: and the slacke skynne trembleth of myn empted body. Thylke dethe of men is weleful, that ne cometh nat in yeres that bedwete but cometh to wretches often ycleped. Alas, alas, with howe deefe an eere dethe cruel turneth awaye fro wretches, and nayeth for to close weppynge eyen. Whyle fortune vnfayth full fauoured me wyth lyght goodes, the sorowfull houre, that is to saye, the dethe, had almoste dreynt myn heed: But nowe for Fortune cloudy hathe chaunged her deceyuable chere to mewarde, myne vnpytous lyfe draweth alonge vnagreable dwellynges. O ye my frendes, what or wherto auaunted ye me to ben weleful: for he that hath fallen, stode in no stedfast degre.

Hec dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem, querimoniamq; lachrimabilem stili officio designarem: astitisse mihi supra verticem visa est mulier reuerendi admodum vultus, oculis ardentibus, ⁊ vltra communem. ⁊c.

IN the meane whyle that I styl recorded these thynges with my selfe, and marked my wepely complaynt wyth offyce of poyntell: I saugh stondynge aboue the hyght of myne heed, a woman of full great reuerence by semblaunte: Her eyen brennynge, and clere seyng ouer the commen myght of men, wyth a lyuely colour, ⁊ wyth suche vigour and strength, that it ne myght nat ben nempned, all were it so that she were full of so great age, that men ne wolden nat trowē in no maner that she were of our elde. The stature of her was of doutous iugemēt, for somtyme she constrayned and shronke her seluen lyke to the commen mesure of men: And somtyme it semed that she touched the heuen wyth the height of her heed. And whā she houe her heed hyer, she perced the selfe heuen, so that the syght of men lokynge was in ydell: her clothes were maked of ryght delye thredes and subtyll crafte of perdurable matiere. The whiche clothes she had wouen wyth her owne handes, as I knewe well after by her selfe declaryng, and shewyng to me the beaute: the which clothes a derknesse of a forleten and dispysed elde had dusked ⁊ derked, as it is wonte to derke by smoked ymages. In ꝑ nethereſt hēme or bordure of these clothes, men redde ywouen therin a grekishe A. that signifieth the lyfe Actyue, and aboue that letter in the hyest bordoure a grekysshe C. that signyfyeth the lyfe Contemplatyfe. And bytwene these two letters there were sene degrees noblywrought in maner of ladders, by which degrees men might clymben from the nethereſt lettre to the vpperest: Nathelesse handes of some men hadden kerue that clothe by violence or by strength, and euerych man of hem had borne awaye suche peces as he myght geten. And forsothe thys foresayde woman bare smale bookes in her right hande, and in her lyfte hande she bare a sceptre. And whan she sawe these poetycall muses approchyng aboute my bed, and ditynge wordes to my weppynges, she was a lytell amoued, and glowed wyth cruell eyen. Who (q̃ she) hath suffred approchen to thys sycke man these comen trompettes, of wyych is the place, that men callen Theatre, the whiche onelye ne aswagen nat hys sorowes with remedies, but they wold feden and nourishe hym wyth swete venym. Forsothe that ben tho that with thornes and prickynges of talētes of affections, which that ben nothing fructuous nor profytable, distroyen the corne

plentuous of fruites of reason. For they holden hertes of men in vsage, but they ne delyuer no folke fro maladye. But yf the muses had wythdrawen fro me wyth youre flatteryes anye an vnconnynge and vnprofytable man, as ben wonte to fynde comenly among the people, I wolde well suffre the lasse greuously. For why, in suche an vnprofytable man, myne ententes were nothyng endamaged. But ye wythdrawen fro me this man, that hathe ben nourysshed in my studyes or scholes of Eleaticis and of Achademicis in Grece. But goth nowe rather awaye ye mermaydens, whyche that ben swete tyll it be at the laste, and suffreth thys man to be cured and heled by my muses, that is to saye, by my notefull sciences. And thus thys companye of muses yblamed, casten wrothly the chere downwarde to the erthe, and shewynge by reednesse her shame, they passeden sorowfully the thresshold. And I of whome the syght plounged in teeres was derked, so that I ne might nat knowe, what that woman was of so imperyall auctorite, I wore all abasshed and stonyed, and cast my syght downe to the erthe, and began styll for to abyde what she wolde done afterwarde. Than came she nere and set her downe vpon the vtterest corner of my bedde, and she beholdynge my chere that was caste to the erthe, heauy and greuous of wepyng, cōplayned wyth these wordes (that I shall sayne) the perturbacion of my thought.

Heu q̃ precipiti mersa profundo,
Mens hebet, & propria luce relicta,
Tendit ad externas ire tenebras:
Terrenis quoties flatibus acta,
Crescit in immensum noxia cura.
Hic quondam celo liber aperto. &c.

Las, how the thought of this man dreynt in ouerthrowyng depnesse, dulleth & forletteth his propre clerenesse, mynting to gone in to forayne derkenesse, as ofte as hys anoyous busynes wereth without mesure, that is driuen wyth worldely wyndes. This man that whylom was free, to whom the heuen was open and knowen, and was wonte to gone in heuenly pathes, and sawe the lightnesse of the reed sunne, and behelde the sterres of the colde moone, and whiche sterre in heauen vseth wandrynge recourses yflytte by dyuers spheres. Thys man ouercomer had comprehended all this thynge by nombre of acomptyng in astronomye. And ouer this he was wont to seken the causes, whence ý sownyng wyndes mouen, and beryen the smothe water of the see. And what spyrite tourneth the stable heuen. And why the sterre rysseth out of the reed este, to fallen in the westren wawes. And what attempreth the lusty houres of the fyrst sommer season, and hyghteth and apparayleth the erth wyth rosy floures. And who maketh the plentuous Autumpne in full yeres fleten wyth heuy grapes. And eke thys man was wonte to tell the dyuers causes of nature that were hydde. Alas howe lightly is empted the lyght of hys thought, and hys necke is pressed wyth heuy cheynes, and beareth hys chere enclyned a downe for the great weight, and is constrayned to loken on the fole erthe.

Sed magis medicine (inquit) tempus est q̃ querele. Boe. Tū vero totis in me intenta luminibus. Philo. Tu ne ille es (ait) qui nostro quondam lacte nutritus, nostris educatus alimētis, i virilis animi robur euaseras. &c.

Ut tyme is nowe of medicine (q̃ she) more thā complaynte: Forsothe than she entendyng to me warde wyth all the lokyng of her eyen sayde. Arte not thou he (q̃ she) that whylom I nourished with my mylke, and fostred wyth my metes, were escaped and comen to the corage of a parfayte man? Certes I yaue the suche armures, that yf thou thy selfe ne haddest fyrste caste hem awaye, they shulden haue defended the in sykernesse, that may nat be ouercomen. Knowest thou not me? why art thou stil? is it for shame or for astonyenge? It were me leuer it were for shame, but it semeth me that astonyenge hathe oppressed the. And whan she sawe me not onely styll, but rather

but rather wythout offyce of tonge and all dombe, she layde her hande softely vpon my breste, and sayde: Here is no peryll (q̃ she) he is fallen in to a lytarge, whiche that is a comune sycknesse to hertes that ben disceyued. He hath a lytell forgeten him selfe. But certes he shall lightly remembren hym selfe, yf so be that he hath knowen me or nowe. And that he maye doone so, I wyll wype hys eyen a lytell that be derked by the cloude of mortall thynges. These wordes sayd she, and wyth the lappe of her garnemẽt yplited in a froũce she dried myne eyen that weren full of the wawes of my weppynges.

Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebre: Luminibusq; prior redit vigor. Ut cum precipiti glomerantur sidera choro. Nimbosisq; polus stetit imbribus. Sol latet, ac non dum celo venientibus astris. &c.

Hus whan that nyght was discussed away, derkenesse for lete me, and to myne eyen repayred agayn her first strẽgth And right as by ensample, as the sonne is hydde whan the sterres ben couerde with cloudes, by a swylte wynde that hyght Chorus, and the firmament stante derked by wete plungy cloudes. And that the sterres not aperen vpon the heuen, so that the nyght semeth spread vpon the erthe. If than the wynde that hight Boreas, ysent out of the caue of the coũtrey of Trace, beateth thys nyght, that is to sayne, chaseth it awaye, and discouereth the closed daye, than shyneth Phebus yshaken with sodayne lyght, and smyteth with hys beames in marueylyng eyen.

Haud aliter tristicie nebulis dissolutis, hausi celum, & ad cognoscendã medicantis faciem, mentem recepi. Itaq; vbi in eã deduxi oculos, intuitumq; defixi, respicio nutricem meam, in cuius ab adolescentia. &c.

Ight so and no other wyse, ỳ cloudes of sorowe dissolued & done away, I toke heuen and receyued mynde to knowen the face of my phisycien: so that I sette myne eyen vpon her and fastned my lokyng. I beheld my norice Philosophie in whose house I had conuersed fro my youthe, and I sayde thus. O thou maystresse of al vertues discended from the souerayne sete, why art thou comen in to this solitary place of myne exile? Arte thou comen for thou arte made coulpable wyth me of false blames? O (quod she) my norice, shulde I forsake the nowe, and shulde I not parten with the by comen trauayle ỳ charge that thou haste suffred for enuy of my name? Certes it were not lefull ne syttyng to Philosophie to leten wythont company the way of hym ỳ is innocent: Shuld I than redoute my blame, and agrise as though there were befallen a new thyng? For trowest thou that Philosophie be nowe alder kyrste assayled in peryls by folke of wycked maner? Haue I not stryuen wyth full great stryke in olde tyme before the age of my Plato, ayenst the foolehardynesse of folye? And eke the same Plato lyuyng, hys mayster Socrates deserued victorie of vnryghtfull dethe in my presence. The herytage of the whyche Socrates, the heritage is to sayne the doctryne, of the whyche Socrates in hys opinyon of felycite, that I cleape welefulnesse: whan that the people of Epycuriens and Stoiciens, & many other enforced them to go rauiche, euery man for hys parte, that is to sayne: that euerych of hem wolde drawen to the defence of hys opinyon the wordes of Socrates. They as in partye of their praye to drawen me cryenge and debatynge therayenst, and corven and renten my clothes that I had wouen wyth myne owne handes. And wyth tho clothes that they had araced out of my clothes they wenten awaye, wenynge that I had gone wyth hem euerye dele. In whyche Epicuryens and Stoiciens for as moche as there semed some traces and steppes of my habyte: The folye of wenyng tho Epicuryens and Stoiciens my famyliers, peruerted some through the erroure of the wycked multytude of hem: Thys is to sayne for they semed Philosophers they werẽ pursued

sued to the dethe and slayne. So yf thou hast not knowen the exilynge of Anaxagoras, ne the enpoysonynge of Socrates, ne the turmentes of zeno, for they weren straungers, yet myghtest thou haue knowen the Senecas, the Canios, and the Soranos: Of whyche folke the renomme is neyther ouer olde ne vnsolempne. The whyche men no thynge els ne brought to the dethe, but onely for they were enformed of my maners, and semeden moste vnlyke to the studyes of wycked folke. And for thy thou oughtest not to wondren, though that I in the bytter see be dryuen wyth tempestes blowynge aboute. In the whych this is my moste purpose, that is to sayn to displesen wicked men. Of which shrewes all be the hooste neuer so great, it is to dispyse, for it is not gouerned with no leader of reason, but it is rauysched onely by fletynge errour, foltly and lightly. And yf they somtyme make an hooste ayenste vs, assayle vs as strenger: oure leder draweth togyther hys richesses in to hys tour, and they ben ententyke aboute sarpleris or sachelles vnprofytable for to taken. But we that ben hygh abouen, syker frome all tumulte and woode noyse, warnestored and enclosed in such a paleys, whyther as that claterynge or anoyeng foly may not attayne, we scorne suche raueners and henters of foulest thynges.

Quisquis composito serenus euo,
Fractum sub pedibus egit superbum:
Fortunamq; tuens vtrãq; rectus,
Inuictum potuit tenere vultum. ꝛc.

Ho so it be that clere of vertue, sad, and well ordynate of lyuyng, that hath put vnderfoot the proude wyerdes, & loketh vprygh vpon eyther fortune, he maye holden hys chere vndyscombyted. The rages ne the manaces of the see commouynge and chasynge vnware heate frome the bottome, ne shall nat moue that man, ne the vnstable mountayne that hyght Vesenus, that wytheth out through hys broken chymeneyes smokynge fyres, ne the waye of thonder leyte, that is wonte to smyten hygh toures ne shall nat moue that man. Wherto than wretches drede ye tyrauntes, that ben wood and felonous wyth any strength? Hope after nothynge, ne drede thou not: and so shalte thou disarmen the ire of thylke vnmyghty tyraunte. But who that quakynge dredeth or desyreth thynge that is not stable of hys right, that man that so doth hathe caste awaye his shilde, and is remoued fro his place, and enlaseth him in the chayne, wyth the whyche he may be drawen.

Sentis ne (inquit) hec? atq; animo illabuntur tuo? Expers ne es lyre? Quid fles? Quid lachrimis manas? Si operã medicantis expectas, oportet vt vulnus detegas tuum. ꝛc.

Elyst thou (q̃ she) these thynges? and entren they aught in thy corage? Arte thou lyke an asse to the harpe? Why wepest thou? Why spyllest tho teeres? If thou abydest after helpe of thy leche, ꝓ behoueth discouer thy wounde. Tho I had gathered strength in my corage and answerde and sayd, and ne deth it (q̃ I) of reherynge or of amonicion, and sheweth it not ynough by hym selfe the sharpnesse that wereth woode ayenst me? Ne moueth it not the to se the face or the maner of thys place? Is this the librarye that thou haddest chosen for a ryght certayne syege to the in myne house, there as thou dysputest oft wyth me of the science of thynges, touchynge dyuynite and touchynge mankynde? Was than myne habyte suche as it is nowe? was my face or chere suche as is now, whan I sought wyth the secretes of nature, whan thou enformedest my maners and the reason of all my lyfe, to thensample of the orde of heauen? Is not thys the guerdon that I referre to the, to whom I haue be obeysaunt? Certes thou enformedest by the mouthe of Plato thys sentence, that is to sayne: that comen thynges or compynaltees weren blissfull, yf they that had studyed all fully to wysdome gouerneden thylke thynges: or els yf it so

it so befell that the gouernours of comynaltees studiden to get wysedome, thou saydest eke by the mouthe of the sayde Plato, that it was a necessarye cause, wyse men to taken and desyren the gouernaunce of comen thynges, for that the gouernemētes of cytes yleft in the handes of felonous tourmentours, cytezeins ne shulden not bryngen in Pestilence and distruction to good folke. And therfore I folowynge thylke auctours desyred to put forthe in execution and in acte of comen administracion thylke thynges, that I had lerned of the among my secrete restyng whyles, thou and god that put in the thoughtes of wyse folke, ben knowynge wyth me, that nothynge ne brought me to maistrye or dignyte but the comen studye of all goodnesse. And therfore cometh it that bytwene wyked folke and me haue ben greuous dyscordes, that ne myghten not be released by prayers: for this lyberte hath the fredom of cōscience, that the wrathe of more myghty folke hathe alwaye ben dispysed of me for sauacyon of ryght. Howe ofte haue I resysted and wythstande that man that hyght Canigast, that made alway thassaute aienst the prosper fortunes of poore feoble folke? Howe ofte eke haue I put of or caste out hym Triguyl prouost of the kynges house, bothe of the wrongeges that he had begonne to done, and eke fully perfourmed? Howe often haue I couered and defended by ÿ auctorite of me put ayenst peryls, that is to sayne: put myne auctorite in peryl for the wretched poore folke that the couetyse of straungers vnpunyshed turmenteden alwaye wyth miseases and greuaūces out of nombre? Neuer man yet drowe me fro ryght to wronge. Whan I sawe the fortunes and the rychesses of the people of the prouynces ben harmed and amenused, eyther by priuy rauynes or by comen trybutes or cariages, as sory was I as they that suffreden the harme. Glose. Whan that Theodorike kynge of Gothes in a deed yere had hys garners full of corne, and commaunded that no man shulde bye no corne tyll hys corne were solde, and at a greuous dere price: Boece wythstode that ordynaunce, and ouercame it, knowynge all thys the kyng Theodorike hym selfe. Coempcion is to say comen achate or byenge togyther, that were astablysshed vpon the people by suche a maner impoſycion, as who so bought a busshell of corne, he muste yeuen the kynge the fyfthe parte. Textus. Whā it was in the sore hongry tyme, there was establysshed greuous and vnprofytable coempcion, that men sene well it shulde greatlye turmenten and endomagen al the prouynce of Campayne. I toke stryke ayenst the Prouost of the pretorie for the comen profyte. And the knowynge of it, I ouercame it, so that the coempciō was not asked ne tooke effecte.

Paulyne a counsaylour of Rome, the rychesses of the whyche Paulyne the houndes of the paleys, that is to saye, thoffycers wolden haue deuoured by hope and couetyse: yet drawe I out of the iawes of hem that gapeden. And for as moche as the payne of the accusacion aiuged before ne shulde not sodaynly henten ne punyshen wrongfully Albyne a coūsaylour of Rome, I put me ayenst the hates and indignacions of the accusour Cipzian. Is it not than ynough sens that I haue purchased great discordes ayenst my selfe? But I ought be more assured ayenst other folke, that for the loue of ryghtwysnesse I neuer reserued nothyng to my selfe to hem warde of the kynges hall, by whych I were the more syker. But through tho same accusours accusynge I am condempned. Of the nombre of whiche accusours one Basilius ÿ whylom was chased out of ÿ kynges seruice is nowe compelled in accusynge of my name for nede of forayne money. Also Opilion and Gaudencius haue accused me: Albe it so that the iustyce regall had whylom demed them bothe to gone in to exyle for her trecheryes and fraudes without nombre. To which iudgement they nolden not obey, but defended hem by the sykernesse of holy houses, that is to sayne, stedden in to seyntwary: And than whan this was apperceyued by the kyng, he cōmaunded but if they voyded the cyte of Rauenne by certayne daye assigned, that menne shulde markē hem on ÿ forheed with an hote yron, and chasen hem out of the town. Nowe what thyng semeth might be lykened to this cruelte, for certes this same daye was receyued the accusyng of my name by thylke same accusours? what may be sayd hereto? Hathe my studye and my connynge deserued thus, or els the foresayde dampnacion of me made them ryghtfull accusours or no? Was not

fortune

I had greythed deth to al good men, algates fortune a shamed of thys: Certes all had nat fortune ben ashamed ý innocence was accused, yet ought she haue had shame of ý fylthe of myne accusours. But aske thou in some of what gylte I am accused. Yen sayne that I wolde sauen the companye of the senatours. And desyrest thou to heren in what maner I am accused, that I shulde haue distourbed the accusoure to bearen letters, by whyche he shulde haue made the senatours gyltye ayenst the kynges royall mayeste: O maystresse, what demest thou of thys: shal I forsake thys blame, that I ne be no shame to the: Certes I haue wolde it (that is to saye) the sauacion of the senate, ne I shall neuer lette to wylne it, and that I confesse and am a knowe, but thentente of the accusoure to ben distourbed shall cease. Shall I cleape that a felonye or a synne that I haue desyred the sauacyon of the order of the senate: And certes had thylke same senate doone through her decretes and her iugemētes as though it were a synne and a felonye, that is to wylne the sauacyon of them. But folye that lyeth alwaye to hym selfe, maye not chaunge the meryte of thynges, ne I trowe not by the iugement of Socrates that it were lefull to me to hyde the sothe, ne assente to leasynges: but certes howe so euer it be of this, I put it to gessen or prysen of the iugement of the and of wyse folke, of whych thynge all the ordynaunce and the sothe (for as moche as folke that ben to comen after oure dayes shall knowen it) I haue put it in scripture and in remembraunce. For touchynge the letters falsely made, by whyche letters I am accused to haue hoped the fredome of Rome, what apertayneth me to speken therof. Of whyche letters the fraude had ben shewed apertely, yf I had had lybertye for to haue vsed and ben at confessyon of myne accusours, the whyche thynge in all nedes hathe great strength. For what other fredom may men hopen: Certes I wold that some other fredome myght be hoped, I wolde than haue answerde by the wordes of a man that hyght Camus: for whan he was accused of Canyus, Cesar Germanes sonne, that he was knowynge and consentynge of a coniuracion ymade agaynste him. Thys Canyus answerde thus: yf I had wyste it, thou haddest not wyste it. In which thynge sorowe hath not so dulled my wytte, that I playne onely that shreude folke apparaylen felonyes agaynste vertue, but I wōder greatly howe that they maye perfourme thynges that they haue hoped for to doone, for why ne wyll ne shreudenesse that cometh perauenture of oure defaute. But it is lyke a monstre and a meruayle howe that in the presente syght of god, maye ben acheued and perfourmed suche thynges, as euerye felonous manne hath conceyued in hys thought ayenst innocentes. For whyche thynge one of thy famylyers not vnskylfully asked thus. If god is: whence comen wycked thynges But all had it ben lefull that felonous folke, that nowe desyren the bloode and the dethe of al good men, and eke of the Senate, haue wylned to gone distroyen me, whome they haue sene alwaye batayllen and defenden good men, and eke all the senate, that had not deserued of the fathers (that is to sayne of the senatours) that they shulden wyll my distruction. Thou remembrest well as I gesse that whan I wolde done or sayne any thyng thou thy selfe alwaye presente ruledest me. At the cytye of Verone whan that the kynge gredy of comen slaughter, caste hym to transporten vpon all the order of the senate the gylte of hys royall mayestye, of the whyche gylte that Albyne was accused, wyth howe great sykernesse of peryll to me, defended I all the senate: Thou wottest well that I saye sothe, ne I ne auaunted me neuer in praysynge of my selfe. For alwaye whan any wyght receyueth precyous renome in auaun tynge of hym selfe or hys werkes, he amenuseth the secree of hys conscience. But nowe thou mayste well sene to what ende I am comen for myne innocencye, I receyue payne of false felonye, for gwerdone of verye vertue. And what open confessyon of felonye had euer iudges so accordaunte in cruelte, that is to sayne, as myne accusynge hathe, that eyther errour of mannes wytte, or els condicyon of fortune, that is vncertayn to all mortall folke ne submytted some of hem, that is to saye, ý it ne enclyned some iuge to haue pyte or cōpassyon. For all though I had ben accused that I wold brenne holy houses, and strāgle preestes with wycked swerde, or that

the sen

I had greythed deth to al good mē, algates the sentence shuld haue punished me present confessed and conuict. But now I am remoued from the cyte of Rome almost. U.C.M. paas, I am wythoute defence dampned to proscrepcion and to deathe, for the studyes and bountyes that I haue doone to the Senate. But o wel bene they worthy of merite, as who saith: nay ther myght yet neuer non of hem be conuicte of suche a blame as mine is. Of whych trespace myne accusours seen full wel the dignite, for they wolde derken it wyth medlyng of some felonye. They baren me on honde and sayde, that I had polute & defouled my cōscience wyth sacrilege for couetyse of dignitie: and certes thou thy selfe that arte planted in me, chacedest out of the siege of my corage al couetise of mortal thinges, ne sacrilege ne had no leaue to haue a place in me before thyne eyen. For thou dropedest euerye daye in myne eares and in my thought thylke commaundement of Pythagoras, that is to saye: Men shall seruen to God, and not to goddes. Ne it was not conuenient ne none nede to takē helpe of the foulest spirites, I that thou hast ordeigned and sette in suche excellence that thou madest me lyke to God, and ouer thys the ryght cleane secrete chābre of myne house, that is to saye my wyfe, and the company of myne honeste frendes, and my wyues father, as well holy as worthy to be reuerensed for his dedes, defenden me from al suspection of such blame. But oh malice. For they that accusen me takē of the philosophy feyth of so great blame for they trowen that I haue had affynite to malefyce or enchauntement, bycause that I am replenyshed and fulfylled wyth thy teachynges and enformed of thy maners. And thus it suffyceth not onelye ý thy reuerence ne aueyle me naught, but yf thou of thy frewyll rather be blemyshed wyth myne offencion. But certes to the harmes that I haue, there betydethe yet thys encrease of harme, that the gessynge and the iugement of much folke ne lokē no thyng to the desertes of thinges, but onely to the auēture of fortune, and iudgen that onelye suche thynges bene purueyed of God, whyche that temporall wylfulnesse cōmaūdeth. Glosa. As thus, that yf a wyght haue prosperite, he is a good mā and worthy to haue that prosperyte, & who so hathe aduersite, he is a wycked man, and God hath forsake hym, and he is worthy to haue that aduersyte. Thys is the opinion of some folke, and therof cometh that good gessyng fyrste of all thynge forsaked wretches. Certes it greueth me to thynke ryght nowe in dyuers sentences that the people sayth of me: And thus moch I saye, ý the last charge of contraryous fortune is thys, that whan anye blame is layde vpon a catyfe, men wenen that he hathe deserued that he suffrethe And I that am put awaye from good men, and dispoyled of dignites, and defouled of myname by gessynge haue suffred turmentes for my good dedes. Certes me semeth ý I se the felonous couynes of wicked mē haboūden in ioy & in gladnesse: & I se that euery lorel shapeth hym to fynde newe fraudes for to accuse good folke & I se ý good folke be ouerthrowen for drede of my peryll, and euery luxurious turmētour dare done al felonye vnpunyshed, and be excited therto by yeftes, and innocentes be not onely dispoyled of sykernesse, but of defence. And therto me lyst to crien to god in thys maner.

O stelliferi conditor orbis, qui perpetuo nixus solio, rapido celum turbine versas, legemq; pati sydera cogis, vt nūc pleno lucida cornu. Totis fratris obuia flammis condat stellas luna minores: Nūc obscuro pallida cornu Phebo propior lumina pardat. &c

Thou maker of ý whele that beareth the sterres, whyche that arte fastned to thy perdurable chayre, and turneste the heuen wyth a rauyshing sweyghe, and constrayneste the sterres to suffre thy lawe: so that ý mone somtyme shynyng wyth her ful hornes metynge wyth all the beames of thy sunne her brother, hydeth the sterres ý bene lesse. And somtime whā the mone pale, with her derke hornes approcheth the sūne leseth her lyghtes: and ý the euyn sterre Hesperus, whyche that in the fyrst tyme of the nyght bryngeth fyrst her colde aryslynge, cometh eft ayen her vsed course, and is pale by the morow at ryslynge of the sunne, and than yclyped Lucifer. Thou restrayneste the daye by shorter

dwellynge in the tyme of the coulde wynter that maketh the leaues fall. Thou deuydest the swyft tydes of the nyght, when the hote sommer is comen. Thy myghte attempreth the variaunte seasons of the yere, so that zephirus the debonayre wynd bryngeth ayen in ý kyrst sómer season the leues ý the winde that hyght Boreas, hath refte away in Autumpne, that is to saye, the last ende of sommer, and the seedes ý the sterre that hyghte Arcitures sewe, beworen high cornes, whã the sterre Sirius enchaseth hem. There is nothynge vnbounden from thys olde lawe, ne forletteth the werke of hys propre estate. O thou gouernour, gouernynge al thynges by certayne ende, why refusest thou onely to gouerne the werkes of men by dewe maner: why suffrest thou, that slyding fortune tourneth so great enterchaunges of thynges, so that anoyous paine that shulde duly punish felons, punysheth innocentes: And folke of wycked maners sytten in high chayres, and annoyeng folke treden (& ý vnryghtfully) on the neckes of holy mẽ. And vertue clere & shynyng naturelly, is hyde in derke derkenesses and the rightful man beareth the payne and the blame of the felons. Ne the forsweryng, ne the fraud couerde and kempt with a false coloure, ne annoyeth not to shreudenesse, the whyche shreudnesse, whan hem lyst vsen her strẽgth, they reioysen hem to put vnder hem the soueraynekynges, whiche that the people wythout nombre dreden. O thou what so euer thou be that knyttestе all bondes of thynges, loke on these wretches, erthes, we men that bene not a foule parte, but a fayre parte of so great a werke: we bene tourmented in this see of fortune. Thou gouernoure, wythdrawe and restreyne the rauysching flodes, and fasten and ferme these erths stable wyth thylke bonde, wyth whyche thou gouernest heauen that is so large.

Hec vbi cõtinuato dolore delatraui: illa vultu placido, nihilq; meis questibus mota. Phi. Cum te (inquit) mestum, lacrimantemq; vidissem: illico miserum exulemq; cognoui. Sed q̃ id longinquum esset exilium. &c.

Han I had wyth a continual sorowe sobbed or broken oute these thynges, she wyth her chere pesible, and nothynge amoued with my complayntes sayde thus. whan I saye the (quod she) sorowfull and weppynge, I wyste anone that thou were a wretche and exiled: But I wyste neuer howe ferre thyne exyle was, yf thy tale ne had yshewed it me. But certes al be thou ferre fro thy countrey, thou narte not put oute of it, but thou haste fayled of thy way and gone amysse. And if thou haste leuer for to wene that thou be put oute of thy countrey, than haste thou put out thy selfe, rather than anye other wyghte hathe, for no wyghte (but thou thy selfe) ne myght neuer haue doone that to the: For yf thou remembre the of what countrey thou arte borne, it nys not gouerned by Emperours ne by gouernement of multitude, as weren the countreyes of hem of Athenes, but one Lorde and one kynge, and that is God, that is Lorde of thy countrey, whych that reioyseth hym of the dwellynge of hys cytezeyns and not for to put hem in exyle. Of the whyche Lorde it is a fredome to be gouerned by the brydle of hym and obeye to hys iustice. Haste thou forgotten thylke olde law of thy citye, in the whyche citye it is ordayned and establysched, that what wyghte hathe leuer founde therin hys seate, or hys house than els where, he maye not be exiled by no right from that place. For who so that is conteyned wythin the paleys of thylke citye, there is no drede that he may deserue to be exiled. But who so letteth the wyll tenhabyte there he forletteth also to deserue to be a Citezeyn of thylke Citye. So that I saye, that the face of thys place ne mouethe me not so mykell, as thyne owne face. Ne I ne alke nat rather the walles of thy lybrarye, apparayled and wrought wyth yuore & with glasse, than after the seate of thy thought, in which I put not whylome bookes, but I put that, that maketh bookes worthy of pryce or precyous: that is to saye sentence of my bokes. And certaynly of thy desertes bestowed in comen goodes, thou haste sayde sothe: but after the multitude of thy good dedes thou hast sayd fewe. And of the honestie or of the falseneſſe of thynges ý bene opposed ayenst the,

the, thou haste remembred thynges that be knowen to al folke. And of the felonyes and fraudes of thyne accusours, it semeth the to haue touched it forsoth ryghtfully & shortly al myghten tho same thynges better & more plentuously bene couth in the mouthe of the people that knoweth al this. Thou hast eke blamed greatly & complayned of the wrongful dede of the Senate. And thou hast sorowed for my blame and thou hast wopen for the damage of thy renoune that is apeyred: and thy last sorowe enchased ayen fortune, complaynest the guerdons be not euēly yolden to the desertes of folke. And in thy latter ende of thy woode muse, thou praydeste that thylke peace that gouerneth the heuen shulde gouerne the earth. But for that many tribulacions of affections haue assayled the and sorowe and yre and weppyng to drawen the diuersly, as ȳ art now feeble of thought myghtyer remedyes ne shullen not yet touchen the, for which we wyllen somdele vsen lyghter medicynes, so that thylke passyons that bene waxen harde in swellynge by perturbations flowyng in to thy thought, mowen waxe easy & soft to receyue the strength of a more myghtye and more egre medicyne by an easyer touchynge.

Cum Phebi radiis graue cancri sidus inestuat, tum qui largo negantibus, sulcis semina credidit, elusus Cereris fide, quarnas pergat ad arbores Nunq̄ purpureū nemus lecturus violas petas. &c.

WHā that the heuy sterre of the Cancre enchafeth by ȳ beames of Phebus: that is to sayne, whan that Phebus the sonne is in the sygne of the Cancre, who so yeueth than largelye hys sedes to ȳ feldes that refusen to receiue hem, lette hym gone begyled of trust that he had to hys corne, to akehornes of okes. If thou wylte gather violettes, ne go thou nat to the purple wodde, whan the felde chyrkynge agriseth of colde, by the feinesse of the wynde that hyght Aquilone. If thou desyrest or wylte vsen grapes, ne seke thou not a gloutons hande to strayne & presse the stalkes of the vyne in the fyrst sommer season. For Baccus the God of wyne, hathe rather yeuē hys yeftes to Autumpne the later ende of sommer. God tokeneth and assigneth the tymes ablyng hem to her proper offyces, ne he suffreth not the stoūdes, which that hym selfe hathe deuided and constrayned to bene ymedled togither: and for thy he that forletteth certayne ordynaunce of doyng by ouerthrowing way, he hath no glad issue or ende of hys werkes.

Primum igitur, pateris ne me paucis rogationibus statum tue mētis attingere, atq̄ tētare? vt quis modus sit tue curacionis intelligam. &c.

FIrst woldest thou suffre me to touch and assay the estate of thy thought by a few demaundes, so that I may vnderstande by, the maner of thy curaciō? Aske me (quod I) at thy wyll, that thou wolte, and I shall answere. Tho sayde she thus: whether weneste thou (quod she) that thys worlde be gouerned folyshly by happes and fortunes, or els weneste thou that there be in it any gouernement of reason? B. Certes (quod I) I ne trowe nat in no maner that so certayne thynges shulde be moued by fortunous fortune, but I wote well that God, maker and mayster is gouernour of his werke, ne was neuer yet daye that myghte put oute of the sothnesse of that setence. P. So is it (quod she) for the same thynge sange thou a lytell here beforne, and bewayledst and weptest, that onelye men were put out of the cure of God, for all other thynges thou ne douteste not, that they nere gouerned by reason. But ough, I wonder certes greatly why ȳ thou arte sycke, sens that thou arte put in so holsome a sentence: But let vs seken deper. I coniecte that there lacketh I not what. But saye me thys. Sens that thou ne douteste not that thys worlde be gouerned by God, wyth which gouernayle takeste thou hede ȳ it is gouerned? Unneth (q̄ I) knowe I the sentence of thy questyon, so that I ne maye not yet answeren to thy demaūdes. I was not disceiued (quod she) that there ne fayled

somwhat, by whyche the malady of perturbacion is crepte in to thy thought, so as the strēgth of thy paleis shynyng is opē: but say me thys. Remembrest thou what is thende of thynges: and whyder thentencion of all kinde tēdeth: I haue herde tolde it somtime (q̃ I) But drerynesse hath dulled my memorye. Certes (q̃ she) thou wotest well whence al thynges be comen and proceden. I wote wel (q̃ I) and answered, that god is begynnynge of al. And howe maye thys be (q̃ she) that sens thou knowestе the begynnynge of thynges, that thou ne knowest nat what is the ende of thynges, but suche ben the customes of perturbation, and thys power they hanne that they may moue a man from hys place, that is to say, from the stablenesse and perfection of hys knowyng, but certes they maye nat all arace hym, ne alien hym in all: but I wolde that thou woldeste answere to this. Remembrest thou that thou art a mā. B. why shuld I not remembre that (q̃ I) Phi. Waist thou not tel me thā (q̃ she) what thynge is a man: Askest thou not me (q̃ I) whether ẏ I be a reasonable mortal beaste, I wote well and confesse that I am it. wyst thou neuer yet ẏ thou were any other thyng (quod she): No (quod I). Nowe wel know I (quod she) other cause of thy malady, and that ryght great: Thou hast left for to knowen thy selfe what thou art, thorow whych I haue playnly founden the cause of thy maladye, or els the entre of recouerynge of thy heale. For why: For thou arte confounded wyth forgetynge of thy selfe: For thou sorrowdeste that thou arte exiled of thy propre goodes. And ẏ ne wyste what is thende of thinges, for thy demeste thou that felonous and wycked mē, be myghty and welful: and for thou haste forgeten by whyche gouernementes the worlde is gouerned, for thy wenest thou that these mutacions of fortune fleten wythout gouernour. These ben the causes not onlye to maladye, but certes greate causes to deathe: But I thanke the auctour and the maker of heale, that nature hathe not al forleten the. I haue great nourysching of thyne heale, and that is the soth sentence of gouernaunce of the worlde, that thou byleuest that the gouernyng of it is not subiect ne vnderput to the foly of these happes auēturous but to the reasonne of god, and therfore dout the nothing, for of this lytle sparke thyne heate of lyfe shall shyne. But for as moch as it is not time yet of faster remedies and the nature is of thoughtes thus disceyued, that as ofte as they caste away soth opinions, they clothen hem in false opinions. Of the whych false opinions the darkenesse of perturbacion wexeth vp, that cōfoundeth the very insyght. And that derkenesse shal I somwhat assaye to makē thynne and weake by lyght and meanelyche remedyes, so that after that the darkenesse of disceyuyng thinges be done away, thou may know the shynyng of very lyght.

Nubibus atris cōdita nullum fundere possunt sydera lumen. Si mare voluens turbidus auster miscat estū Vitrea dudum, parq̃ serenis. ꝛc.

The sterres couered with blacke cloudes ne mowe yeten adoun no lyght, yf the trouble wynde that hight Auster, turning and walowyng the see medleth the heate, that is to sayne the boylynge vp from the bottome. The wawes that were whylom clere as glasse, ꝛ lyke to the fayre bryght dayes, withstant anone the syghtes of men, by the filth and ordure that is resolued. And the fleting streme that reyleth downe diuersly from hygh mountaynes is arrested and resisted oft time by thencoūtryng of a stone, that is departed and fallen from some rocke And for thy, if thou wylt loken ꝛ deme sothe wyth clere lyght, and holden the way wyth a right path, weyue thou ioy, driue fro drede fleme thou hope, ne let no sorowe approche, that is to sayne: Let none of these foure passions ouercome or blende the. For cloudye ꝛ darke is thylke thoughte and bounde wyth bydels, where as these thynges reignen.

Explicit liber primus.

Post hec paulisper obticuit, atq̃ vbi attentionem meam modesta taciturnitate collegit, sic exorsa est. Si penitus egritudinis tue causas, habitumq̃. ꝛc.

After

After thys she stynte alytell, & after that she had gadered by a temper stylnesse myne attēcion, as who so myght sayne thus. After these thynges she stynt a lytle, and she aperceyued by a temper stylnesse, that I was ententyfe to heren her, she began to speake in thys wyse. Yf I (quod she) haue vnderstāden and knowen vtterly, the causes and the habite of thy malady, thou languyshest and art defected for desyre & talent of thy rathar fortune. She that ylke fortune onely that is chaunged as thou faynest to the warde, hathe peruerted the clerenesse and the estate of thy courage. I vnderstonde the fele or manyfolde colours and discrytes of thylke merueylous monstre fortune, and she vseth full flateryng familiaryte wyth hem that she enforceth to begyle, so longe, tyl that she confounde with vnsufferable sorowe, hem that she hath lefte in dispayre vnpurueyed. And if thou remembrest wel the kynde, the maners, and the deserte of thylke fortune, thou shalt well know that as in her thou neuer ne haddest, ne hast ylost any fayre thynge: But (as I trowe) I shal not greatly trauaylen to done the remēbren on these thynges. For thou were wont to hurtelen & dispysen her wyth many wordes, whan she was blandyshynge and present, and pursudeste her with sentences that weren drawen oute of myne entre, that is to say, of myn enformacyon: but no sodayne mutation ne betydeth not wythout a maner chaūgyng of corages. And so it is befal, that thou art a lytyl departed fro the peace of thy thought, but nowe is time that thou drynke and ataste some softe and delytable thinges so ý whan they be entred wythin the, it mowen make waye to strenger drynkes of medicins. Come nowe forth therfore the suasion of swetnesse rethoryen, whych that goth onelye the ryght waye, whyle she forsakethe not myne estatutes. And wyth Rethoryke come forthe musyke a damosel of our house, that syngeth nowe lyghter modes or prolacions and nowe heuyer. What ayleth the man: what is it that hath cast the into muruyng and in to weppyng: I trowe that thou haste sene some newe thynge and vncouthe: Thou wenest that fortune be chaūged ayenme, but thou weneste wronge yf that thou wene alway tho ben her maners. She hath rather kepte as to the warde, her proper stablenesse in the chaungynge of her selfe: ryght suche was she flatterde the and dysceyued the, wyth vnlefull lykynges and false welefulnesse. Thou haste nowe knowen and atteynte the doubtous or double vysage of thylke blynde goddesse fortune. She that yet couerethe and wymplethe her to other folke, hathe shewed her selfe euerye deale to the: If thou apporuest her and thinkest that she is good, vse her maners and playne the not, and thou agrykeste her false trecherye, dispyse and caste awaye her that playeth so harmefullye, for she that is nowe cause of so muche sorow to the, shulde be to the cause of peace and of ioy. She hath forsaken the forsothe, the which that neuer man maye be syker that she ne shall forsaken hym. Glose. But nathlesse some bokes haue the text thus Forsoth she hathe forsaken the, ne there nys no man syker that she ne hathe not forsaken. Holdeste thou than thylke welefulnesse precyous to the that shall passen, and is present deare worthe to the, whyche that nys not fayethfull for to dwell, and whan she gothe awaye that she bryngeth a wyght in sorow. For sens she maye not be wyth holden at a mannes wyll, she makethe hym a wretche whan she depertethe fro hym. what other thynge is flyttyng fortune, but a maner shewynge of wretchenesse that is to come. Ne it sufficeth not onely to loken on thyng that is present before the eyen of a man, but wisdome loketh and measureth thende of thynges, and the same chaungynge from one to another, that is to sayne, from aduersyte in to prosperyte, makethe that the manaces of fortune ne bene not for to dreden, ne the flateryng to be desyred. Thus at the last it behouethe the to suffren wyth euen wyll in pacience, al that is done wythin the floure of fortune, that is to say in this worlde, syth thou hast ones put thy necke vnder ý yoke of her. For if thou wolt writen a lawe of wending & of dwellyng to fortune, whyche that thou haste chosen frely to bene thy lady: Art thou not wrongfull in that, and makeste fortune wrothe and asper by thyne impacience, and yet thou mayst not chaungen her:

If thou cōmyttest and be takeste thy sayles to the wynde, thou shalte be shouen, nat

thyder that thou woldeste, but whyder that the wynde shoueth the. If thou casteste thy seedes in the feldes, thou shouldeste haue in mynd ý the eares ben amonges otherwhile plenteous, & otherwhile bareyn. Thou hast betaken thy selfe to the gouernaunce of fortune, and for thy it behoueth the to ben abey saunt to the maners of thy lady. Enforceste thou the to aresten or wyth holdē the swyftnesse and the sweygh of her turning whele. O thou fole of all mortall fooles, yf fortune began to dwell stable, she cesled than to ben fortune.

Hec cum superba verterit vices dextra, erestuantis more fertur Euripi. Dudū tremendos seua proterit reges humilemqz victi subleuat fallax vultū. Nō illa dura miseros audit, haud curat fletus. &c.

WHyā Fortune wyth a proud ryght hande with turned her chaunging stoundes, she fareth lyke the maners of the boylynge Eurype.

Glosa Euripe is an arme of the see, ý ebbeth and floweth, and somtyme the streme is on o syde and somtyme on that other

Text. She crewel fortune casteth adown kinges that whylom weeren ydrad, and she disceiuable enhaunceth vp the humble cheer of hym that is discomfyted, ne she nether hereth ne recketh of wretched weppynges. And she is so harde, that she laugheth & scorneth the weppyng of hem, the which she hath maked to wepe with her frewil. Thus she playeth and thus she proueth her strēgthes, and sheweth a great wonder to al her seruaūtes yf that a wyghte is seen welefull, and ouerthrowe in an hour.

Vellem autem pauca tecum Fortune ipsius verbis agitare. Tu igitur an ius postulet animaduerte. P. Quid tu o homo ream me agis quotidianis querelis. &c.

CErtes I wolde pleden wyth the a fewe thynges, vsyng the wordes of fortune: take hede now thy selfe, yf that she aske ryght.

O thou man, wherfore makeste thou me gyltye by thine euerye dayes playnynges. what wronge haue I done the. what goodes haue I beraft the ý were thyne. Striue or pleate wyth me before what iudge that ý wylt, of the possession, of rychesses, or of dignites, & yf thou mayst shewen me, that euer any mortall man hathe receyued anye of tho thynges to bene hys in proper, than wyll I graunt frely, that thylke thynges were thyn whyche that thou askest. whan that nature brought the forth out of thy mothers wōbe I receyued the naked and nedye of all thynges, and I nourished the with al my rychesses, and was redye and ententyfe thorowe my fauoure to sustayne the: and that maketh the nowe impacient ayenst me. And I enuyronned the wyth all habondaunce and shynyng of al goodes, that bene in my right now it lyketh me to wythdrawe myn honde Thou hast had grace as he that hathe vsed forayne goodes. Thou haste no ryghte to playne the, as though thou haddeste vtterly forlorne, al thy thinges. why playneste thou thā. I haue done the no wronge. Richesses, honours, and such other thinges ben of my right. My seruauntes knowen me for her lady: they come wyth me, & departed whan I wende. I dare wel afferme hardely, ý yf tho thynges, of whiche thou playneste that thou hast forlorne had ben thyne, thou ne haddest not lorn hem. Shal I thā be defended only to vse my right. Certes it is leful to ý heuen to make clere daies & after that to ouercome tho same dayes wyth derke nyghtes. The yere hath eke leaue to apparayle the vysage of ý erth, now w̄ floures, & nowe with frute and to cōfounde hem somtyme with raynes and wyth colde. The see hath eke his right to bene somtyme calme and blandyshynge, with smoth water and somtyme to be horrible wyth wawes and wyth tempestes. But couetyse of men, that maye not be staunched shall it bynde me to be stedfaste, sythen that stedfastnesse is vncouthe to my maners. Such is my strength, and such play I play comenly. I turne the whirlyng whele wyth the tournyng cerkle. I am glad to chaungen the loweste to the hyest, and the hyest to the lowest. worthe vp yf thou wolte, so it be by thys lawe, that thou ne holde not that I do the wronge, thoughe thou discende adowne whan the reasonne of my playe asketh it.

wyste

wist thou nat how Cresus king of Lidiens of which kynge Cyrus was ful sore agast a lytle beforenethat this Cresus was caught of Cyrus, and led to the fyre to be brent, but that a rayne discended from heauen that rescowed him. And is out of minde how that Paulus consull of Rome, whan he had taken the kynge of Perciens, weped pytously for the captiuitie of the selfe kynge. what other thynge bewaylen the cryinge of tragedyes, but onely the dedes of fortune, that w̃ an aukewarde stroke ouertourneth the realmes of great nobley. Glose. Tragedye is to sayne, a ditee of a prosperite for a tyme that endeth in wretchednesse. Learnedst not thou in Grece whan thou were yonge, that in the entrie or in the seller of Jupiter, there ben couched two tonnes, that one is full of good, that other is ful of harme.

what ryght haste thou to playne, yf thou hast taken more pleteously of the good syde that is to sayne, of rychesse and prosperitie. And what eke yf I be not al departed from the. what eke if thy mutable yeueth ẏ right full cause of hope to haue yet better thynges Natheleſſe, dismaye the not in thy thought And thou that art put in the cõmune realm of all, ne desyre not to lyuen by thyne owne propre ryght.

Si quãtas rapidis flatibus incitus Pontus versat arenas: Aut quot stellifers edita noctibus celo sydera fulgent: Tantas fundat opes, nec retrahat manum pleno copia cornu: Humanum miseras had ideo genus Cesset flere querelas. ⁊c

THoughe plentye goddesse of rychesse hylde a downe with a ful horne, and withdrawe not her hande, as many rychesse as the see turneth vpwarde sandes, whan it is moued with rauyshyng blastes, or els as many rychesses as there shynen bryght sterres in the heuen on the sterry nyghtes; yet for all ẏ mankynde wold not cesse to wepe wretched playntes. And al be it so, that god receyued her prayers, and yeueth hem as foole large moche golde, and apparayleth coueytous folk with noble or clere honours: yet semeth hym haue gotten nothing. But alway cruel rayne deuouryng all that they haue gottẽ sheweth other gapynges, that is to say, gapen and desyren yet after more rychesses. what bryddes myght witholden to any certayne ende the disordinate couetyse of men, whan euer the rather that it fleeth in large yeftes, the more brenneth in hem the lust of hauyng. Certes he that quakyng and dredfull weneth hym selfe nedy, he ne lyueth neuermore ryche.

His igitur, si pro se tecũ, verbis fortuna loqueretur, quod profecto cõtra hisceres, non haberes. At si quid est, quo querelam tuam iure tuearis, proferas oportet. ⁊c.

THerfore yf that fortune spake w̃ the for her selfe in this maner, for sothe thou ne haddeste not what thou myghtest answere. And yf thou hast any thing, wherwith thou mayst ryghtfully defenden thy cõplaynte, it behoueth the to shewen: ⁊ I woi yeuen to ẏ space to tellen il. Boece. Certaynly (quod I) than, these ben fayr thynges, and anoynted with hony swetnesse of rethoryke and musycke, ⁊ only whyle they be hearde and sowne in eares, they ben delicious. But to wretches it is a deper felyng of harme, this is to sayne, that wretches felen the harme, that they suffre more greuously, than the remedyes or ẏ delytes of these wordes may gladden or cõfort hem. So that whan these thynges stinten for to sowne in eares, ẏ sorow that is inset greueth the thought. P. Right so it doth (q̃ she) For these ne ben yet no remedyes of the maladye, but they bene a maner norysshyng of thy sorowes, that rebell ayenst thy curacion. For whan tyme is I shall moue ⁊ aiust such thynges that percen hem ful depe But natheleſſe that thou shalt not wyne to leeten thy selfe a wretche. Haste thou forgeten the nombre and the maner of thy welfulnesse. I speake nat how ẏ the soueraigne men of the cytie toke the in cure, and keping whan thou were orphelyn of father and of mother, and were chosen in affinitie or princes of the cytie. And thou begã rather to be lefe and dere, thã for to be a neyghbour, the

which thyng is the mooste precyous kynde of any propinquite or alyaunce that may be who is it that ne sayd tho that thou ne wer ryght welefull, with so great nobley as thy fathers in lawe, and with the chastite of thy wyfe, and with thoportunitie and noblesse of thy masculyne chyldren, that is to sayne, thy sonnes. And ouer all this (me lyst to passen of comē thynges) how thou hadst in thy youth dignityes, that were warned to olde men, but it deliteth me now to comen to the synguler vpheapyng of thy welefulnesse. Yf any frute of mortall thynges maye haue any wyght or pryce of welefulnesse, myghtest thou euer forgeten for anye charge of harme that myght befall, the remembrauce of thylke daye, that thou sawe thy two sonnes made counsaylours, and lad togyther from thy house, vnder so greate assemble of senatours, and vnder the blythenesse of the people: and whan thou sawe hem set in the courte in hye chayres of dignities. Thou rethorien or pronouncer of kynges prayseynges deseruedst glory of wyt and of eloquēce whan thou syttynge betwene thy two sonnes counsaylours, in the place that hyghte Cyrco, and fulfylleddest the bydding of the multitude of people that was spread aboute the with so large prayseynge and laude, as men synge in vyctoryes. Tho yaue thou to fortune as I trowe, that is to saye, tho feodest thou fortune with glorious, and deceyueddest her, whan she acoyed and norysshed the as her owne delyces. Thou bare awaye of fortune a yeft, that is to saye, suche guerdon that she neuer yafe to priuate man wylte thou therfore laye a rekenynge wyth fortune: She hath nowe fyrst twinked vpō the with a wycked eye. Yf thou consydre the nombre and the maner of thy blysses and of thy sorowes, thou mayest nat forsaken that narte yet blyssfull. For yf therfore thou wenest thy selfe not welefull, for tho thynges that semeden ioyfull bene passed, there nys not why ȳ shuldest seme thy selfe a wretche, for thynges that seme now sory, passed also Art thou nowe comen a sodayne geste into the shadow or tabernacle of this lyfe: or trowest thou that any stedfastnesse be in mans thynges: whan oft a swyft houre dissolueth the same man, that is to saye, whan the soul departed from the body. For although that selde is there any fayth that fortunous thinges wolde dwellen, yet natheleſſe, the laste day of mans life is a maner deth to fortune and also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therfore what wenest thou darre recke, yf thou forlette her in dyinge, or els that she fortune forlette in flyinge awaye.

Cum polophebus roseis quadrigis
Lucem spergere ceperit: Pallet albentes hebetata vultus
Flammis stella prementibus. ꝛc.

When Phebus the sunne begynneth to spred his clerenesse with rosen charyottes, than the sterre dymmed paleth her whyte cheres by the flambes of the sunne, that ouercommeth the sterre lyghte, that is to sayne, whan the sunne is rysen, the daye sterre wexeth pale, and leseth her lyght: For the great lyghtnesse of the sunne, whan the wodde wexeth rodye of rosen floures in the fyrst somer season, through the breth of the wynde zepherus that wexeth warme, if the cloudye wynde Auster blowe fellyche, than goth awaye fayrenesse of thornes. Ofte the see is cleare and calme with mouynge floudes, and ofte the horryble wynde Aquilon moueth boylynge tempestes, and ouerwhelueth the see. Yf the fourme of this worlde is so selde stable, and yf it turneth by so many entrechaunges: wylte thou than trusten in the tomblynge fortunes of men: wylt thou trowen on flyttyng goodes: It is certayne and establysshed by lawe perdurable, that nothynge that is engendred is stedfaste, ne stable.

Tum ego, vera inq̃, cōmemoras o virtutum omnium nutrix: nec inficiari possum prosperitatis mee velissimum cursum. Sed hoc est quid. ꝛc.

Than said I thus: O norice of al vertues, thou sayst ful sothe I may not forsake ȳ right swift course of my prosperite that is to sayne, that the prosperitye, ne be comen to me wondre swyftlye and soone

But

But this is a thynge that greatly smerteth me, whan it remēbreth me. For in all aduersites of fortune the most vnsely kynd of contrarious fortune is to haue ben weleful. P. But that thou abyest thus (q̃ she) ꝓ turment of thy false opinion, ꝓ mayst thou not rightfully blamen ne aretten to thynges, as who sayth, that thou hast yet many haboudaunces of thynges. Tertus. For al be it so that the ydle name of auēturous welfulnesse moueth ꝓ nowe it is leful that thou reken with me of how many thynges thou hast yet plētie. And therfore yf that thylke thynge that thou haddest for more precious in all thy rychesse of fortune be kepte to the yet by the grace of god vnwēmed & vndefouled mayst thou than playne ryghtfully vpon the myschefe of fortune, sythē thou hast yet thy best thynges. Certes yet lyueth in good poynte thilke precious honour of mankynde. Symachus thy wyues father, which that is a man made of all sapience, and vertue, the which mā thou woldest bye with ꝓ price of thyne owne lyke, he bewayleth the wrōges that men doone to the, and not for him selfe. For he lyueth in sykernesse of anye sentence put ayenste hym. And yet lyueth thy wyfe, that is attempre of wyt, and passynge other women in clennesse of chastitie. And for I wolde closen shortelye her bountyes, she is like her father: I tel the, that she lyueth loth of this lyfe, and kepeth to the only her gost, and is al mate and ouercomen by wepynge and sorowe for desyre of the. In the whiche thyng only I not graūten the, that thy wilfulnesse is amenused.

What shall I sayne eke of thy two sonnes counsailours, of which as of children of her age there shyneth the lykenesse of the wytte of her father and of her elde father. And sythen the souerayne cure of all mortall folke is to sauen her owne lyues, yf thou knowe thy selfe, thy goodes make the more welful For yet bene there thynges dwelled to the warde, that noman douteth that they ne bē more derewoorth to the thā thyne owne life.

And for thy, dryye thy teeres, for yet is not euery fortune hateful to thewarde, ne ouer great tempest, ne hath not yet fallen vpō the whan thyne aneres cleuen fast: that neither wol suffren the cōfort of this tyme present, ne the hope of tyme commyng to passen, ne to faylen. B. And I praye (q̃ I) that faste mote they holden: for the whyles that they holden, howsoeuer that thynges ben, I shal wel fleten forth and escapē. But thou mayest well sene how great apparayles, and araye, that me lacketh that be passed awaye from me. P. I haue somwhat auaunced & furthered the (quod she) yf that thou anoye not or forthynke not of all thy fortune, as who sayth, I haue somwhat comforted the so that thou temptest not the thus with all thy fortune, sythen thou haste yet thy beste thynges. But I may not suffren thy delices that playnest so wepyng and anguyshous, for that there lacketh somwhat to thy welfulnesse. For what man is he that is so sad, or of greate perfyte welefulnesse, that he ne strynyeth and playneth on some halfe ayen the qualitie of his estate. for why ful anguishious thing is the condicion of mans goodes. For eyther it cōmeth not al togyther to a wyght, or els it ne lasteth not perpetuell. For some man hath greate rychesse, but he is asshamed of his vngentyll lynage. And some man is renomed of noblesse of kynred, but he is enclosed in so greate anguysshe of nede of thynges, that him were leauer that he were vnknowe. And some man abounded both in rychesse and noblesse, but yet he bewayleth his chaste lyfe, for he ne hath no wyfe. And some man is, and selily maryed, but he hath no chyldren, and nourisheth his rychesses to straunge folke. And some man is gladded with chyldren, but he wepeth ful sore for the trespasse of his sonne, or of hys doughter. And for this there ne accordeth no wyght lyghtly to the condicion of his fortune. For alwaye to euerye man there is in somwhat, that vnassayed, he ne wote nought or els he dredeth, that he hath assayed. And adde this also, that euery weleful man hath a full delycate felyng: so that but yf all thynges be fallen at his owne wyll, he is impacient, or is not vsed to haue none aduersitie, anon he is throwen downe for euerye lytell thynge. And full lytle thynges ben tho that withdrawen the summe, or the perfection of blysfulnesse fro hem that ben moost fortunate. Howe many men trowest thou wolde demen hem selfe to be almooste in heuen, yf they myghten attayne to the leest partie of ꝓ rēnaunt of thy fortune. This same place

that

that thou clepest exyle, is countreye to hem that enhabyten here.

And for thy nothyng wretched, but whã thou weneſt it, as who ſayth: Thou thy ſelf ne no wyght els nis a wretche, but whã he weneth hym ſelfe he is a wretche by reputacyon of his corage. And ayenwarde: All fortune is blyſful to a man, by the agreabylitie or by the egallitie of hym that ſuffreth it. what man is that, that is ſo welefull, that nolde chaungen his eſtate whã he hath loſt his patience? The ſwetneſſe of mans welefulneſſes is ſprayint with many bitterneſſes The whiche welefulneſſe, although it ſeme ſwete and ioyfull to hym that vſeth it, yet maye it not ben witholden, that it ne goeth awaye whan it woll.

Than is it well ſene howe wretched is the blyſfulneſſe of mortall thynges, that neither it dureth perpetuel with hem, that euerye fortune receyuen agreablye or egally, ne it delyteth nat in all to them that bene anguyſſhyous.

O ye mortall folke, what ſeke ye than blyſfulneſſe out of your owne ſelfe, whyche is put in your ſelfe? Errour and follye confoundeth you. I ſhall ſhewe the ſhortlye the poynt of ſouerayne blyſſulneſſe.

Is there any thyng to the more precyous than thy lyfe? Thou wylt anſwer, naye.

Than, yf it ſo be that thou arte myghtye ouer thy ſelfe, that is to ſayne, by tranquyllitie of thy ſoule, than haſte thou thynge in thy power, that thou noldeſt neuer leſe: Ne fortune maye not bynemme it the. And that thou mayeſt know, that blyſſulneſſe ne may not ſtande in thynges that been fortunous and temporel, now vnderſtande and gather it togyther thus.

Yf blyſfulneſſe be the ſouerayne good of nature that lyueth by reaſon: ne thylke thynge is not ſouerayne good that maye be taken awaye in any wyſe.

For more worthye thynge is and more digne thylke thynge that maye not be take away. Than ſheweth it well that the vnſtableneſſe of fortune, maye not attayne to receue very blyſfulneſſe.

And yet moreouer what man that this tombylynge welefulneſſe leadeth, eyther he wote that it is chargeable, or els he wote it not? And yf he wot it not, what blyſfull fortune maye there be in the blyndeneſſe of ignorauncе? And yf he wot, that it is chaũgeable, he mote alwaye bene adradde, that he ne leſe that thynge, that he ne doubteth not but that he maye leſen it. As who ſayeth, he mote alwaye be agaſt, leaſt he leſe that, that he woteth ryght wel he may leſe. For which the continuell drede that he hath, ne ſuffreth hym not to be welefull. Or els if he leſe it, he weneth to be deſpyſed and forleten. Certes eke that is a full lytle good, that is borne with euen herte whan it is loſte, that is to ſayne, that men doo more force of the loſſe, than of the hauynge.

And for as moch as ỹ thy ſelf art he, to whõ it hath be ſhewed and preued by full manye demonſtrations as I wote well, that the ſoules of menne, ne mowen not dyen in no wyſe. And eke ſyns it is clere and certayne, that fortunous welefulneſſe endeth by the deth of the body: it may not be doubted that yf death maye take awaye blyſſulneſſe, that all the kynde of mortall thyng ne diſcendeth into wretchedneſſe by the ende of deth.

And ſythen we knowe well, that manye a man hath ſought the frute of blyſſulneſſe, not onely with ſuffrynge of death, but eke with ſuffrynge of paynes and tourmentes: how myght than this preſent lyfe make men bliſſull, ſyns that thylke ſelfe lyfe ended it ne maketh folk no wretches.

Quiſquis volet perennem
Cautus ponere ſedem,
Stabiliſq; nec ſonori
Sterni flatibus Euri
Et fluctibus minantem
Curat ſpernere pontum
Montis cacumen alti
Bibulas vitet arenas. ꝛc.

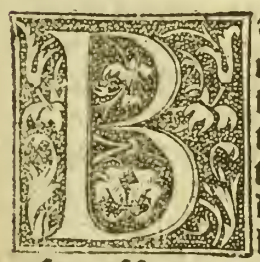
What maner of folke, ware and ſtable that wyll founden hem a perdurable ſeate, and ne wyl not be caſte downe, wyth the loude blaſtes of the wynde Eu

rus, and wil dispyse the see menasyng with floudes: Lette hym eschewe to buylden on the coppe of the moũtaygne, or in the moyst sandes. For yf the fell wynde Auster tourmenteth the coppe of the mountaygnes w̃ all her strengthes, and the lose sandes refusen to beare the heauy weyghtes.

And for thy, yf thou wylt flyen the perylous auenture, that is to saye, of the worlde haue mynde certaynlye to set thyne house of a mery scate in a lowe stone.

For although the wynde troublynge the see, thondre with ouerthrowyng, thou that arte putte in quyete, and welefull, by strength of thy paleys, shalt leade a cleare age, scornynge the woodnesse and the yres of the ayre.

Sed quoniam rationum iam in te mearum fomenta descendunt, paulo validioribus vtendum puto. Age enim. Si iam caduca ac momentaria fortune. &c.



But, for as moche as the nourysshynges of my reason descenden nowe into the, I trowe it wer tyme to vsen a lytle strenger medicens. Now vnderstand here, all were it so, that ỳ yeftes of fortune ne were not brytle ne transytorye, what is there in hem that maye be thyne in any tyme? or els that it ne is foule, yf that it be loked and consydred perfectlye. Rychesses ben they precyous by the nature of them selfe, or elles by the nature of the? what is moste worth of rychesse? is it not golde or myght of moneye assembled? Certes that golde and that money shyneth and yeueth better renoume to hem that dispenden it, than to thylke folke that mokeren it: for auarye maketh alwaye muckerers to ben hated, and largesse maketh folke cleare of renoume. For syth that suche thynges as ben transferred from one man to an other, ne maye not dwell with no manne, certes, than is that moneye precyous, whan it is translated in to other folke, and stynten to be hadde by vsage of large yeuynge of hym that hath yeuen it. And also yf al the money that is ouer all in all the worlde, were gathered towarde one man, it shoulde make al other men to be neadye as of that. And certes a voyce all hole, that is to sayne, without amenusyng, fulfylleth together the hearynge of moche folke. And whan they bene apassed, nedes they maken hem poore, that forgone tho rychesses.

O, strayte and nedye clepe I these rychesses, syns that many folke ne maye not haue it all, ne all ne it not comen to one man without pouertie of all other folke. And the shynynge of gemmes, that I call precyous stones, draweth it not the eyen of folke to hem warde, that is to sayne, for the beautye? But certes, yf there were beautie or bountie in shynynge of stones, thylke clerenesse is of the stones hem selfe, and not of men. For which I wonder greatly, that men maruaillen on suche thynges. For why, what thyng is it, that yf it wanteth mouynge and ioynture of soule and body, that by ryght might semen a fayre creature to hym that hathe a soule of reason? For all be it so, that gemmes drawen to hem selfe a lytle of the laste beautie of the worlde, thorowe the entente of her creatoure, and the distinction of hem selfe, yet for as mykel as they ben put vnder your excellencie, they ne haue not deserued by no way, that ye shulde maruelen on hem. And the beauty of feldes delyteth it nat mikell vnto you?

B. why shulde it not delyten vs, sith that it is a ryght fayre porcion of the right fayre werke, that is to sayne, of this world? And ryght so ben we gladed somtyme of the face of the see, whan it is clere: And also maruyellen we on the heauen and on the sterres, and on the sonne and on the moone. Phi. Aperteyneth (q̃ she) any of thylke thynges to the why darest thou glorifye the in the shynyng of any suche thynges? Art thou distyngued and embelysed by the spryngynge floures of the fyrst sommer season? Or swelleth thy plentye in frutes of sommer? why arte thou rauysshed with ydell ioyes? why embracest thou straunge goodes, as they were thyne? Fortune ne shall neuer make, that such thinges ben thyne, that nature of thynges hath maked forayne from the? Sothe it is, that

withouten doute the frutes of the erth owē to be to the norysshynge of beestes. And yf thou wylt fulfyll thy nede after that it suffiseth to nature, than is it no nede that thou seke after the superfluitye of fortune. For with full fewe thynges with full lytle thynges nature hathe her apayed. And yf thou wolt achoken the fulfyllyng of nature with superfluityes: Certes, thylke thynges that thou wolt thresten and pouren into nature, shullen be vnioyful vnto the, or els anoyous weneſt thou eke, that it be a fayre thynge to shyne with dyuers clothynges? Of whiche clothynge, yf the beautye be agreable to loken vpon, I woll maruaylen on the nature of the mater of thylke clothes, or els on the workeman that wrought hem. Doth also a longe route of meynye make the a blysfull man? the which seruauntes yf they ben vycious of condicions, it is a great charge and distruction to the house, and a great enemye to the lorde hym selfe. And yf they ben good men, how shall straunge and forayne goodnesse be put in the nombre of thy rychesses? So that by all these forsayde thynges, it is clerely shewed, that neuer one of thylke thinges that thou accomptedst for thy goodes, nas not thy good. In which thynges if ther be no beautye to be desyred, why shouldeste thou be fory to lose them? or why shouldeste thou reioyse the to holden hem? For yf they ben fayre of theyr owne kynde, what appertayneth that to the? for also well shoulden they haue been fayre by hem selfe, thoughe they were departed from all thy rychesses. For why? fayre ne precyous were they not, for that they comen amonge thy rychesses. But for they semed fayr and precyous, therfore thou haddest leuer reken hem amōgest thy rychesses. But what desyrest thou of fortune with so greate afare? I trowe thou sekest to dryue away nede with abundaunce of thynges: but certes it tourneth you all in to the contrarye. For why, certes it neadeth of full many helpynges to kepen the dyuersities of precious hostilementes. And sothe it is, that of many thynges they haue nede, that many thynges haue. And ayenwarde, of lytle thynge nedeth hym that measureth his fyll, after the nede of kynde, and not after thoutrage of couetise. It is so than, that ye men haue no propre good sette in you, for suche ye moten seke outwarde in forayne, and subiect thynges. So is than the condicion of thynges turned vp so downe, that a man that is a deuyne beest, by meryte of his reason, thynketh that hym selfe nys neither fayre ne noble, but yf it be through possessiō of hostilimētes, that ne han no soules: And certes, all other thynges ben apayed of her owne beauties: But ye men that be semblable to god by your reasonable thought desyren to apparaylen your excellent kynde of ȳ lowesse thynges. Ne ye vnderstonden not how greate a wronge is done to your creatoure: For he wolde that mankynde were most worthy and noble of any erthly thyng: and ye thresten downe youre dignityes benethen the lowest thynges.

For yf that all the good of euerye thynge be more precyous, than is thylke thynge, whose that the good is, syth ye demen that the foulest thynges ben youre goodes: than submytten ye, and put your seluē vnder the foulest thynges by your estimation: and certes this betydeth not without youre deserte For certes, suche is the condition of all mankynde, that onelye whan it hath knowynge of it selfe, than passeth it in noblesse all other thynges. And whan it forletteth the knowinge of it selfe, than it is broughte benethen all beestes. For why, all other lyuynge beestes han of kynde to knowen nat hem selfe, but whan that men letten the knowynge of hem selfe, it commeth hem of vyce. But how brode sheweth the errour and the foilye of you men, that wenen that any thynge maye ben apparayled with straunge apparelmentes? but forsoth that maye not be done. For yf a wyght shyneth with thynges that ben put to hym: As thus. Yf thylke thynges shyneth with whiche a man is apparelled: Certes thylke thynges been commended, and prayſed, with whiche he is apparelled, but natheleſſe, thynge that is couered and wrapped vnder that, dwelleth in his fylth. And I denye that thylke thyng be good, that anoyeth hym that hath it. Gab I of this? Thou wolt saye naye. Certes, rychesse haue anoyed full oft hem that han had tho rychesse: sythe that euerye wycked shrewe is for his wyckednesse the more gredye after other folkes rychesses, wherefoeuer it be in any place, be it golde or precious stones, and weneth him

only

onlye most worthy that hath hem. Thou thã that so besy redrest now the swerde and the speare, yf thou haddest entred in the pathe of this lyke auoyde waykaryng man, than woldest thou syng before the theke, as who saith a poore man that beareth no rychesse on him by the waye, may boldly syng before theues for he hath nat wherof to be robbed. O precyous and ryght clere is the blyssfulnesse of mortall richesses, that whan thou hast goten it, than hast thou lorne thy sekernesse.

Felix nimium prior etas, Contenta fidelib⁹ aruis, Nec inerti perdita luxu Facili que sera solebat Ieiunia soluere glande, Nec bacchia munera norat Liquido confundere melle, Nec lucida vellera serum. ꝛc.

SLyssfull was the fyrste age of men, they helden hem apayde wyth the metes that ꝑ trewe feldes broughten forth, they ne distroyed nor disceyued nat hem selfe wyth outrage, they weren wonte lyghtlye to slaken her hunger at euyn wyth akehornes of okes, they ne coude nat medel ꝑ yefte of Bacchus to the clere hony, that is to sayne, they coulde make no piement or clarre: Ne they coude nat medell the bryght fleeces of the countre of Seryens wyth the venym of Tiry, thys is to sayn, they coude nat dyen whyte fleces of Syrien coũtre with the blode of a maner shelfyssh, that men fynden in Tyrie, wyth which blode men dyen purple, they slepten holsome slepes vpon the grasse, and dronken of the rennyng waters, and lyen vnder the shadowes of the hye Pyne trees. Ne no geste or straunger ne carke yet the hye see wyth oores or wyth shyppes, ne they ne hadden seyn yet no newe strondes to leden marchaundyse in to dyuers countrees. Tho weren the cruel claryons full hust and full styl. Ne blode yshad by egre hate, ne had deyed yet armures. For where to, or whiche woodnesse of enemyes wolde fyrst mouen armes, whan they sawen cruell woundes, ne none meedes be of blode yshad: I wolde that oure tymes shulde turne ayen to tholde maners. But the anguishous loue of hauyng in folke burneth more cruellye than the mountayn of Ethna, that ay brẽneth. Alas, what was he that first dalke vp the gobbettes or the weyghtes of golde, couered vnder erthe, and the precious stones that wolden haue be hydde: He dalke vp precious peryls, that is to sayne, that he that hem fyrst vp dalke, he dalke vp a precious peryll, for why, for the preciousnesse of suche thyng hath many man ben in peryll.

Quid autem de dignitatibus, potentiaq; disseram, quas vos, vere dignitatis, ac potestatis inscii, celo exequatis: Que si in improbissimum quemq; ceciderint. ꝛc.

Ut what shall I saye of dignytees & powers, the whiche ye men that neyther knowen very dignyte ne very power, areysen hem as hyghe as the heuen: the whyche dignytes and powers, yf they comen to any wycked mã, they done as great domages and distructions, as dothe the flambe of the mountayne Ethna, whã the flambe waloweth vp, ne no deluuy ne dothe so cruell harmes. Certes ye remembre wel (as I trow) that thylke dignyte that men cleape the imperye of counsaylours, the whyche whylom was begynnyng of fredom, your elders coueyted to haue done away that dignyte for the pryde of the counsaylours. And ryght for that same youre elders before that tyme had done awaye out of the cyte of Rome the kynges name, that is to sayne, they nolde haue no lenger no kynge. But nowe, yf so be that dignytees & powers ben yeuen to good men, the whyche thyng is full selde, what agreable thynges is there in tho dignytees & powers, but onely the goodnesse of folke that vsen hem: And therfore is it thus, that honour cometh not to vertue bycause of dignyte: and ayenwarde, honoure cometh to dygnyte for cause of vertue. But whiche is thylke your dereworth power that is so clere and so requyrable: O ye erthlye beestes, consyder ye not ouer whyche thynge that it semeth that ye haue power: Nowe yf thou sawe a mouse amonge other myce, that chalenged to hym selfwarde right and power ouer all other myce, howe greate

scorne woldest thou haue of it. Glosa. So fareth it by men, the bodye hathe power ouer the body: for yf thou loke well vpon the body of a wight, what thyng shalt thou fynd more freel than is mankynde: the whyche men ful ofte be slayne by bytyng of flyes, or els wyth entryng or crepyng wormes in to the priuytees of mannes bodye. But where shall men fynden any man that may exercisen or haunten any ryght vpon an other man, but onely on hys bodye, or els vpon thynges that ben lower than the body, the whiche I clepe fortunes possessyons.

Wayste thou haue euer any commaundemēt ouer a free corage. Wayste thou remeue fro the estate of hys propre reste, a thought that is cleuynge togyder in hym selfe by stedfast reson.

As whylom a tyraūt wened to confounde a free man of corage, & he wende to constrayn hym by tourmentes, to maken hym discoueren and accusen folke, that wysten of a coniuracyon, whyche I cleape a confederacye that was caste ayenst thys tyraunt: but thys freman bote of hys owne tonge, and caste it in the vysage of thylke woode tyraunt. So that the turmentes that this wood tyraūt wende to haue made mater of cruelte, thys wyse mā made it mater of vertue. But what thynge is it that a man maye do to an other man, that he ne maye receyuen the same thyng of other folke in hym selfe. Or thus: what maye a man don to folke, that folke ne maye doone to hym the same. I haue herde tolde of Busirides that was wonte to sleen hys gestes, that herbroden in hys house: and he was slayne hym selfe by Hercules that was hys geste. Regulus had taken in batayle manye men of Affryke, and caste hem into fetters: but sone after he muste yeuen hys handes to be bounde wyth the cheynes of hem that he had whylom ouercomen. Wenest thou than, that he be myghty that hath power to doone a thyng, that other ne maye done in hym that he hathe in other. And yet more ouer, yf so were that these dignytes or powers hadden any propre or naturel goodnes in hem, neuer nolde they comen to shrewes. For contraryous thynges ne ben wont to ben yfelouschypped togythers. Nature refuseth that contraryous thynges ben ioyned. And so as I am in certayne that wicked folke haue dignytees ofte tyme, thā sheweth it wel that dignytees & powers ne ben not good of her own kynde, sens that they suffren hem selfe to cleauen or ioynen hem self to shrewes. And certayne the same thyng may I moste dignely iugen and sayne of all the yeftes of fortune, that moste plenteously comen to shrewes, of whiche yeftes I trow it ought be consydred that no mā douteth that he is stronge, in whome he seeth strength: and in whom swyftnesse is, sothe it is that he is swifte. Also musyke maketh musyciens, and physike maketh physiciens, and rethorykе eke rethoriciens. For why, the nature of euery thynge maketh hys propertye, ne it is not entremedled wyth theffecte of cōtraryous thynges. But certes rychesses may not restrayne auarice vnstanched. Ne power ne maketh nat a man mighty ouer hym selfe, which that vicious lustes holden distrayned wyth chaynes that ne mowē not be vnbounden. And dignitees, that be yeuen to shreude folke, not only ne maketh hem not digne, but sheweth rather all openly, that they ben vnworthy & indigne. And it is thus. For certes ye haue ioye to cleape thynges with false names, that bearen hem in al the countraye, the which names ben ful ofte reproued by the effecte of the same thynges. So that these ylke rychesses ne oughtē not by right to be cleped rychesses, ne suche power ne ought not to be cleped power, ne suche dignyte ne ought not to be cleaped dignyte. And at laste I may cōclude the same thynge of all the yeftes of fortune: In whyche there nys nothyng to be desyred, ne that hath in hym selfe naturel bountye, as it is well ysene, for neyther they ioynē hem not alwaye to good men, ne maken hem alwaye good, to whom they ben ioyned.

Nouimus, quantas dederit ruinas
Urbe flammata, patribusq; cesis,
Fratre qui quondā ferus interempto,
Matris effuso maduit cruore.
Corpus & visu gelidum pererrans,
Ora non tinxit lachrymis: sed esse,
Censor extincti potuit decoris. &c.

We haue wel knowen, howe many great harmes and distructions were doone by themperour Nero. He lete brennen the cyte of Rome, and made slee the senatours, and he

and he cruell whylō slough his brother. And he was made moyste wyth the bloode of hys mother, that is to saye, he let sleen and slytten the wombe of hys mother, to sene where he was conceyued, and he loked on euery halue of her deed colde body, ne no teere wette hys face, but he was so herd herted that he might be domes man or iuge of her deed beautye. And natheleſſe yet gouerned thys Nero by sceptre all the people that Phebus maye sene comnyng fro his vttrest arysyng, tyl he hyde hys beames vnder ẏ wawes, that is to sayne he gouerned all the peoples by sceptre imperyall, that the sonne gothe aboute fro Eest to west. And eke thys Nero gouerned by sceptre all the peoples that be vnder the colde sterris that hyghten the Septentrions: that is to sayne, he gouerned al the peoples that be vnder the partye of the Northe. And eke Nero gouerned all ẏ peoples that ẏ violent wynde Nothus scorelyth and baketh the brennyng sandes by hys drie heate, that is to saye, all the peoples in the Southe. But yet ne might not all hys power tourne the woodnesse of thys wycked Nero. Alas it is a greuous fortune, as ofte as a wycked swerde is ioyned to cruel venim, that is to say, venemous cruelte to lordshyppe.

Tum ego. Scis (inq̃) ipsa, minimũ nobis ambicionem mortalium rerum fuisse dominatam. Sed materiam gerendis rebus optauimus, quo ne virtus tacita consenescceret. P. Et ilia. Atqui hoc vnum est. ꝛc.

Hã sayd I thus. Thou wotest wel thy selfe, that the couetyse of mortall thynges ne hadden neuer lordshype in me. But I haue wel desyred mater of thiges to doone, as who sayth, I desyre to haue mater of gouernaunces ouer comynaltees, for vertue styll shulde not elden: that is to sayn, that leste er that he wext olde, hys vertue that laye now styll, ne shuld not perysshe vnexercysed in gouernaunce of commune: for whyche men myght speken or writen of hys good gouernement. P.

Forsothe (q̃ she) and that is a thynge that may drawen to gouernaunce suche hertes as ben worthy and noble of her nature: But natheleſſe it maye not drawen or tellen suche hertes as ben ybrought to the full perfection of vertue, that is to sayne coueytyse of glorye and renome, to haue wel administred the cõmune thynges, or doone good desertes to profyte of the cõmune. For se nowe and consyder, howe lytell and howe voyde of all pryce is thylke glorye, certayne thynge is as thou haste lerned by the demonstracion of Astronomye, that all the enuyronnyng of the erth aboute, ne halte but the reason of a pricke, at the regarde of the greatnesse of the heuẽ, that is to sayn, that ẏf here were maked comparison of the erth to the greetnesse of heuen, men wolde iudgen in all that ne helde no space. Of the whyche lytell regyon of this worlde, the fourthe parte of the erthe is inhabyted wyth lyuynge beestes that we knowen, as thou haste thy self ylerned by Ptholome that prouyeth it. And ẏf thou haddest wythdrawen and abated in thy thought for thylke fourthe partye, as moche space as the see and the mareys conteynen and ouergone: as moch space as the regyon of drought ouerstretcheth, that is to sayne sandes and desertes, well vnneth shulde there dwellen a ryght strayte place to the habitacion of men. And ye that be enuyronned and closed wyth the leste prycke of thylke prycke, thynken ye manifesten or publyshen your renome and doone youre name for to ben borne forthe. But your glorie that is so narowe and so strayte throngen in to so lytell boundes, howe mykell conteyneth it in larges and in great doynge. And also sette therto, that manye a nacyon diuers of tonge and of maners, and eke of reason of her lyuyng, ben inhabyted in the close of thylke habytacle, the whyche nacyons what for diffyculte of wayes, and what for diuersyte of langage, and what for defaulte of vnusage, and entrecomunyng of marchaundyse: not onely the names of synguler men ne may not stretchen, but eke the fame of cyties may not stretchen. At the laste, certes in the tyme of Marcus Tullius as hym selfe writte in hys boke that the renome of the commune of Rome ne had not yet passed ne clomben ouer the mountayne that hyght Caucasus, a yet was Rome wel waxen and redoubted of the Parthes,

and eke of other folke enhabytynge aboute. Seest thou not than howe strayte and howe compressed is thylke glorie that ye trauaylen aboute to shewen and to multeplye? Haye than the glorye of a synguler romayne stretche thyder as the fame of the name of Rome maye not clymben ne passen? And eke seest thou not that the maners of diuers folke and her lawes ben dyscordante amonges hem selfe, so that thylke thynge that some men iuge worthy of prayslng, other folke iugē that, that is worthy of tourment? And herof cometh it that though a man delyteth hym in praysynge of hys renome, he maye not in no wyse bryngen forth ne spreden hys name to manye maner peoples, and therfore euerye man ought to be apayde of hys glorye that is publyshed among hys owne neyghbours, and thylke noble renome shall be restayned wythin the boundes of tho maner folke. But howe many a man that was ful noble in his tyme, hath the wretches and nedy forzetyng of wryters put out of mynde and done away all be it so that certes thylke thynges profyten lytell, the whyche thynges and writyngs longe and derke elde do away bothe hem and eke her auctours. But ye men semen to getten you a pardurabylite whan ye thynkē in tyme comynge fyoure ame shall lasten. But natheleſſe, yf thou wylte make comparyson to the endlesse spaces of eternyte, what thyng haste thou, by whyche thou mayst reioysen the of longe lastinge of thy name? For yf there were made comparyson of the abydyng of a moment to ten thousande wynter, forzas moche as bothe tho spaces ben ended, for yet hathe the momente some porcion of it all though it be lytell? But natheleſſe thylke selfe nombre of yeres, and eke as many yeres as therto may be multyplyed, ne may not certes be cōparysoned to the perdurabylite that is endelesse. For of thynges which that haue ende may be made comparyson, but of thynges whiche that ben withouten ende, to thinges that haue ende may be maked no comparyson. And for thy is it ẏ all though renome as of longe tyme as euer the lyste to thynkē, were thought, to the regarde of the eternyte that is vnstauncheable and infynite, it ne shulde not only seme lytell, but playnly ryght nought. But ye semen certes ye can do nothyng a ryght but yf it be for the audyence of the people, and for ydle rumours. And ye forsaken the great worthynesse of conscience & of vertue, and ye seken your guerdones of the small wordes of straunge folke. Haue nowe here and vnderstand in the lyghtnesse of such pryde and veyne glorie, howe a man skorned festynally and meryly suche vanyte. Whylome there was a man that had assayed with stryuynge wordes an other man, the whiche not for vsage of verye vertue, but for proude vayne glorie, had taken vpon hym falsely the name of a philosopher. This rather mā that I spake of, thought he wolde assaye, wheder he thylke were a phylosophre or no, that is to saye, yf that he wolde haue suffred lightly in pacience, the wrōges that were done to him. Thys fayned philosophre toke pacience a lytell whyle: and whan he had receyued wordes of outrage, he as in stryuynge ayen and reioysynge of hym selfe, sayde at laste thus. Understandest thou not, that I am a philosophre? That other man answerd agayne bytyngly and sayd: I had well vnderstande it, yf thou haddest holden thy tonge styll. But what is to these noble worthy men, for certes of suche folke speke I that seken glorye wyth vertue. What is it (ẏ sye) what atteyneth fame to suche folke, whan the body is resolued by the dethe at the last? for yf so be that men dyen in all, that is to say body and soule, the whyche thynge oure reason defendeth vs to byleue: than is there no glorie in no wyse. For what shulde thylke glorye be, whan he, of whome thylke glorye is sayde to be, nys ryght naught in no wyse. And yf the soule whyche that hathe in it selfe science of good werkes, vnbounden frome the pryson of therthe, wendeth frely to the heuen, dispyseth it not than all erthlye occupacyon, and beynge in heuen reioyseth that it is exempt from all erthly thynges? as who sayth, than recketh the soul neuer of no glorie of renome of thys worlde.

Quicunqz solam mente precipiti petit,
Summumqz credit gloriam,
Late patentes etheris cernat plagas,
Artumqz terrarum situm, Breuem
replere non valentis ambitum. ꝛc.

Who

Who so that with ouerthrowing thought onely seketh glorye of fame, and weneth that it be souerain good, let him loken vpō the brode shewynge countreys of ý heuē, & vpō the strayt seete of this erthe, and he shal be ashamed of then-crease of hys name, that maye not fulfyll the lytell compas of the erthe. O what coueyten proude folke to lyften vp her neckes in ydle in the deedly yoke of thys worlde? For all though that renome yspread passyng to forne peoples, goth by diuers tonges, & all though great houses of kynredes shynen by clere ty-tles of honours, yet natheleſſe deth dispyseth all hygh glorie of fame, and dethe wrappeth togythers the hygh heedes and the lowe, and maketh egall and euen the hyeste wyth the lowest.

Where wonnē nowe the bones of trewe Fabricius? what is nowe Brutus, or sterne Caton? The thynne fame yet lastyng of her ydle names, is marked wyth a fewe letters. But all though that we haue knowen the fayre wordes of the fame of hem, it is not ye-uen to knowe hem that ben deed & consumpt. Lyggeth than styll all vtterly vnknowable, ne fame ne maketh you not knowe. And if ye wene to lyue the lenger for wynde of youre mortall name, whan one cruell daye shall ra-uyshe you: than is the seconde dwellynge to you close. The fyrste dethe he clepeth here the departyng of the body, and the seconde dethe here the styntynge of the renome of fame.

Sed ne me inexorabile contra fortunam gerere bellum putes, est aliquando, cum de hominibus fallax illa non nihil bene mereatur: tum scilicet cum se aperit. &c.

But for as moch as thou shalt not wenē (q̃ she) that I beare an vntretable batayle ayenst fortune, yet somtyme it befal-leth that she (deceyuable) de-serueth to haue rycht good thanke of men: and that is whan she her selfe openeth, and whan she discouereth her frōte, and sheweth her maners. Perauenture yet vnderstandest thou not that I shall saye. It is a wondre that I desyre to tel, and therfore vnneth maye I vnplyten my sentence wyth wordes. For I deme that contraryous for-tune profyteth more to men than fortune de-bonayre. For alwaye whan fortune semeth debonayre, than she lyeth falsly, byhetyng the hope of welfulnesse. But forsothe contrary-ous fortune is alway sothfaste, whā she she-weth her selfe vnstable through her chaun-gyng. The amiable fortune disceyueth folke: the contrarye fortune teacheth. Thamyable fortune blyndeth with ý beautie of her false goodes, the hertes of folkes that vsen hem. The contrary fortune vnbyndeth hem, with the knowynge of freele welefulnesse. Tha-myable fortune mayst thou sene alway wyn-dy and flowynge, and euer mysknowynge of her selfe. The contrary fortune is attempre and restrayned and wyse, thorowe exercise of her aduersyte. At the laste amyable fortune wyth her flatterynges, draweth mys wan-dryngе men fro the souerayne good: the con-traryous fortune leadeth ofte folke ayen to sothefaste goodes, and haleth hem ayen as wyth an hoke. Wenest thou than that thou oughtest to leten this a lytell thyng, that this aspre and horryble fortune hathe dyscouered to the, the thoughtes of thy trewe frendes? For why, thys ylke fortune hathe departed and vncouered to the bothe the certayne vy-sages, and eke the doutous visages of thy fe-lowes. Whan she departed away fro the, she toke away her frendes and laft the thy fren-des. Now whan thou were ryche and wele-ful, as the semed, wyth howe mykel woldest thou haue bought the full knowynge of this that is to sayne, the knowynge of thy verye frendes? Nowe playne the not than of ry-chesse lorne, syth thou haste founde the moste precyous kynde of rychesse, that is to sayne, thy very frendes.

Quod mundus stabili fide, Concordes variat vices, Quod pugnācia semina, Fedus perpetuum tenent. &c.

That the world with stable fayth varyeth accordable chaungyn-ges, that the contraryous quali-tees of elementes holdē amonge hem selfe alyaunce perdurable,

that Phebus the sonne wyth hys golden
charyot bryngeth forth the rosy day, that the
moone hath commaundement ouer the nygh
tes: whych nyghtes Esperus the euen sterre
hath, that ý see gredy to flowen constrayneth
wyth a certayne ende hys floodes, so that it
is not lefull to stretche hys brode termes or
boundes vpon the erthe: All this ordynaunce
of thynges is bounden wyth loue, that go-
uerneth erthe and see, and also hath cõmaun-
dement to the heuen. And yf thys loue slaked
the bridels, all thinges that nowe louen hem
togythers wolden make batayle cõtinuelly,
& stryuen to fordone the facion of this world,
the whyche they nowe leden in accordable
faith, by fayre mouynges. This loue holdeth
togyder people ioyned wyth an holye bonde,
and knytteth sacrament of mariage of chaste
loues. And loue endeth lawes to true fela-
wes. O welefull were mankynde yf thylke
loue that gouerneth the heuẽ, gouerned your
corages.

Here endeth the seconde boke, and foloweth the thyrde.

Cum cantum illa finierat, cum me audiendi auidum, stupẽtemq; arrectis adhuc auribus carminis mulcedo defixerat. Itaq; paulo post O inquam summum lassorum solamẽ animorum, quantum me. &c.

By thys she had ended her
songe: whã the swetnesse
of her dyte had through
perced me, that was desy-
rous of herkening. And I
astonyed had yet streyght
myne eeres, ý is to sayne
to herken the bette what she shulde saye, so
that a lytell here after I sayde thus. O thou
that arte souerayne comforte of corages an-
guishous, so thou hast remounted and noris-
shed me with the weight of thy sentences, &
wyth delyte of syngyng, so that I trowe not
that I be vnperegal to the strokes of fortune
as who saythe, I dare well nowe suffren all
thassautes of fortune, and well defende me
from her. And tho remedies, which thatthou
saydest here beforn, that weren ryght sharpe,
not only that I am not agrysen of hem now,
but I desyrous of herynge, aske greatly to
heren the remedyes. Than sayde she thus.
That feled I well (q̃ she) whan that thou en
tentyke and styl, rauyshedest my wordes: and
I abode tyl thou haddest suche habyte of thy
thought, as thou haste nowe, or els tyll that
I my selfe had maked it to the same habyte,
whiche that is a more very thynge. And cer-
tes the remenante of thynges that ben yet to
say ben suche, that fyrst whan men taste hem
they ben bytynge: But whan they ben recey-
ued wythin a wyght, than ben they swete.
But for thou sayest that thou art so desyrous
to herken hem, wyth howe great brennynge
woldest thou glowen, yf thou wystes why-
der I wolde leden the. B. whyder is that (q̃
I) P. To thylke very blysfulnesse (q̃ she) of
which thyne herte dremeth. But for as moch
as thy syght is occupyed and distourbed of
erthly thinges, thou maist not yet sene thylke
selfe welefulnesse. B. Do (q̃ I) and shewe me
what thylke very welfulnesse is, I praye the
without taryeng. P. That wol I gladly don
(q̃ she) for cause of the. But I wol fyrste mar
ken by wordes, and I wyl enforcen me to en
forme the thylke false cause of blysfulnesse,
whych that thou more knowest: so that whã
thou haste beholden thylke false goodes, and
turned thyne eyen so to that other syde, thou
maye knowen the clerenesse of very blysful-
nesse.

Qui serere ingenuum volet agrũ,
Liberat arua prius fruticibus. Falce
rubos, filicemq; resecat. &c.

Who so wol sowe a felde plente-
ous, let hym fyrste delyueren it
of thornes, and kerue a sonder
wyth hys hoke the bushes and
the ferne, so that the corne may
comẽ heuy of eres & of greynes
Hony is ý more swete yf mouthes haue first
tasted sauours that be wycke. The sterres
shinen more agreably, whan the wynde No-
thus leteth hys plungye blastes. And after
that Lucyfer the daye sterre hathe chased a-
waye the darke nyght, the daye the fayrer
leadeth the rosen horse of the sonne. And
ryght

ryght so thou, beholdynge fyrste the false goodes begyn to wythdrawe thy necke fro the earthly affections, & afterwardes the verye goodes shullen entren into thy corage.

Tum defixo paululum visu, et velut in angustam sue mentis sedem recepta, sic cepit. P. Omnis mortalium cura quã multiplicium studiorum labor exercet. &c.

Ho fastened she a lytell the syght of her eyen, & she wyth drewe her syght, as it were in to the strayte seete of her thought: and began to speke ryght thus. All the cures (q̃ she) of mortall folke, whych ẏ trauaylen hem in many maner studyes, gone certes by dyuers wayes: but natheleſſe they enforcẽ hem all to comen onely to thende of blyſſulneſſe. And blyſſulneſſe is ſuche a good, that who so hath goten it, he ne maye ouer that thynge more deſyre. And thys thinge forſoth is ſo ſo uerayne good, that it conteyneth in hym ſelfe all maner of goodes, to the whyche good yf there fayled any thynge, it myght not ben ſouerayne good, for then were ſome good oute of thys ſouerayne good, that myght be deſyred. Nowe is it clere and certayne, that blyſſulneſſe is a parfyte ſtate, by the congregacion of all goodes, the which blyſſulneſſe (as I haue ſayd) all mortall folke enforcen hem to get by dyuers wayes. For why, the couetyſe of euery good is naturelly planted in the hertes of men: but the myſwandrynge erroure, miſledeth hem into falſe goodes Of ẏ which men, ſome of hem wenẽ that ſouerayne good be to lyuen without nede of any thynge. And other men demen, ẏ ſouerayne good be ryght dygne of reuerence, and enforcen hem to be reuerenced amõge her neyghbours by the honours that they haue gotten. And ſome folke there ben that holden that ryghte hye power be ſouerayne good, & enforcen hem for to reignen, or els to ioynen hem to hem that reygnẽ And it ſemeth to other folke, that nobleſſe of renome be the ſouerayne good, & haſten hem to getten hem glorious name by the artes of werre or of peace. And many folke meſuren and geſſen, that ſouerayne good be ioye and gladneſſe, and wenen that it be ryght blyſſul thyng to plũgen in voluptuous delytes. And there ben ſome folke, that entrechaungen the cauſes and ẏ endes of theſe forſayd goodes: As they that deſyren rycheſſes to haue power & delites, or els they deſyre power for to haue money, or for cauſe of renõme. In theſe thynges and ſuche other is tourned al the entencion of deſyrynges and werkes of mẽ, as thus: Nobleſſe and fauoure of people, which that yeueth to al men, as it ſemeth hem, a maner clereneſſe of renomme: and wyfe & chyldren, that mẽ deſyren, for cauſe of delyte and merineſſe. But forſoth frendes ne ſhullen not be rekened amõge the goodes of fortune, but of vertue, for it is a full holy maner thynge. All theſe other thynges forſoth be taken for cauſe of power, or els for cauſe of delyte. Certes nowe am I ready to referren the goodes of the body, to theſe forſayd thynges abouen For it ſemeth that ſtrength and greatneſſe of bodye yeuen power and worthyneſſe, & that beaute and ſwyftneſſe yeuen glorye and renomme: and helth of bodye ſemeth to yeuen delyte. In all theſe thynges it ſemeth onely that blyſſulneſſe is deſyred: for why, thylke thynge that euerye man deſyreth moſte ouer all thynges, he demeth that it be ſouerayne good. But I haue dyffyned, that blyſſulneſſe is ſouerayne good, for whyche euery wyght demeth that thylke eſtate ẏ he deſyreth ouer all thynges, that it be blyſſulneſſe. Now haſt thou thẽ before thyne eyen almoſt al the purpoſed forme of the welefulneſſe of mankinde that is to ſayne, rycheſſe, honours, power, glorye and delytes, the whych delyte only cõſydered he Epicurus, and iuged and eſtablyſſched that delyte is the ſouerayne good: for as moche as all other thynges, as hym thought bryefte awaye ioye and myth from the herte But I returne agayne to the ſtudyes of men of whyche men the corage alwaye reherſeth and ſeketh ẏ ſouerayne good, all be it ſo that it be wyth a dyrked memorye, but he note by whych pathe, ryghte as a dronken man note nought by whych path he may returne home to hys houſe. Demeth it then that folke forleyen and erren to enforcen hem to haue nede of nothing: Certes there is none other thing that maye ſo moche performen blyſſulneſſe, as an eſtate plenteous of all goodes, that ne hath nede of none other thynge, but that is

suffysaunt of hym selfe vnto hym selfe. And folyen suche folke then that wenen, ý thylke thyng that is ryght good, that it is eke ryght worthy of honour & of reuerence: certes nay. For that thynge nys neyther foule ne worthy to be despysed, that well nygh all the entencion of mortall folke trauaylen to get it. And power eke ought not to be rekened amõges goodes. What els? For it nys not to wene, that thylke thynge that is moste worthy of all thynges be feble & wythout strẽgth And clerenesse of renome, ought that to bene dyspysed? Certes there may no man forsake, that all thynge that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth be ryght clere renomed. For certes it nedeth not to saye, that blyssfulnesse be anguyshous ne drery, ne subiet to greuaunces ne sorowes, sens that in ryght lytell thynges folke seken to haue and to vsen that maye delyten hem. Certes these ben the thynges that men wyllen and desyren to geten: & for thys cause desyren they rychesses, dygnytees, regnes, glorye, and delytes. For therby wenen they to haue suffysaunce, honour, power, renome, and gladnesse. Then is it good that men seken thus by so many dyuers studyes, in whych desyre it maye not lyghtly be shewed, howe great is the strength of nature For howe so men haue diuers sentences and dyscordynges, algates men accorden al in louynge the ende of good.

Quantas rerum flectit habenas
Natura potens, quibus immensum
Legibus orbẽ prouida seruet, Stringatqz ligans irresoluto, Singula nexu, placet arguto, Fidelibus lentis promere cantu. &c.

IT lyketh me to shewe by subtyl songe with slacke and delytable sowne of strynges, how that nature myghtely enclyneth & flytteth the gouernemẽt of thinges & by suche lawes she purueyable kepeth the great world, & how she byndyng restrayneth al thynges by a bonde ý may not be vnbounden. Al be it so ý the lyons of the countrey of Pene beren the fayre chaynes, and takẽ meates of the handes of folke, that yeuen it hem, and dreden her sturdye maysters, of whyche they be wonte to suffre beatinges, yf that her horrible mouthes ben bledde, that is to saine of beestes deuoured: her corage of tyme passed that hath bene ydle and rested repayreth ayen, and they rorren greuously, and remembren on her nature, and slaken her neckes frõ her chaynes vnbounde, and her maistre fyrst to torne wyth blody tethe, assayeth the wood wrathes of hem, that is to sayne, they frettẽ her mayster. And the ianglynge byrde that syngeth on the hye braũches, that is to sayne in the wodde, and after is enclosed in a strayt cage, all though the plyenge besynesse of mẽ yeue hem honyed drynkes, and large meates wyth swete studye: yet nathelesse yf thylke byrde skyppynge out of her strayte cage, seeth the agreable shadowes of the woddes, she defouleth wyth her fete her meate yshadde, and seketh on mornyng only the wodde, and twytereth desyrynge the wodde wyth her swete wyse. The yerde of a tre that is haled adown by myghty strẽgth boweth redyly the croppe adowne: but yf that the hande that is bente let it gone agayne, anone the croppe loketh bryght to the heauen. The sonne Phebus that falleth at euen in the westren wawes, returneth ayen eftsones hys carte by a priue pathe there as it is wonte arysse. All thynges seken ayen to her propre course, and all thynges reioysen on her retournynge agayne to her nature: ne none ordinaunce is betakẽ to thynges, but that hath ioyned the ende to the begynnyng, and hath made the course it selfe stable, ý it chaunge not fro hys propre kynde.

Vos quoqz a terrena animalia, tenui licet imagine, vestrum tamẽ principium somniatis. Verumqz illum beatitudinis finem, licet minime perspicaci. &c.

CErtes also ye men that bene earthly beestes dreamẽ alway your begynnynge, althoughe it be wyth a thyne ymaginacyon, and by a maner thought all be it not clerely ne perfytly ye loken from a ferre to thylke verye fyne of blyssfulnesse. And therfore naturell entencyon leadeth you to thylke verye good, but many maner errours mystourneth you therfro. Cõsyder nowe yf that be thylke thynges, by which a mã weneth to get hym blissfulnes yf

yf that he maye comen to thylke ende, that he weneth to come to by nature. For yf that money, honours, or these other forsayd thynges bryngen to men suche a thynge that no good ne fayle them ne semeth to fayle: Certes thē woll I graunt that they be maked blyssful by thynges that they haue gotten. But yf so be that thylke thynges ne mowen not performe that they byheten, and that there be defaut of many goodes, sheweth it not then clerelye ý false beute of blyssfulnesse is knowen and atteynt in thylke thynges. Fyrst and forwarde thou thy selfe, that haddest haboundaunce of rychesse not longe agone, I aske the that in thabundaunce of all thylke rychesse, yf thou were neuer anguyshous or sorye in thy corage of any wronge or greuaūce, that betyde the in any syde B. Certes (q I) it ne remembreth me not, that euer I was so free of my thought, that I ne was alwaye in anguyshe of somwhat. P. And was that not (q she) for that the lacked somwhat that thou noldeste not haue lacked. or els thou haddest ý thou noldest haue had. B. Ryght so it is (q I) P. Then desyredest thou the presence of ý one, & thabsence of that other. B. I graunt well (q I) P. Forsoth (q she) then nedeth there somwhat that euery man desyreth. B. Yea there nedeth (q I) P. Certes (q she) and he ý hath lacke or nede of ought, nys not in euery way suffysaunt to hym selfe. B. No (q I) P. And thou (q she) in al the plēte of thy rychesse haddest thylke lacke of suffysaunce. B. What els (q I) P. Then maye not ryches maken that a man nys nedy, ne that he be sufficiēt to him selfe: and yet that was it that they beheté as it semed. And eke certes I trowe that this be greatly to consyder, that money hathe not in hys owne kynde, that it ne maye bene bynomed of hem that haue it maugre hem. B. I knowe it well (q I) P. Why shuldest thou not beknowen it (q she) when euery day the strenger folke bynomen it frō the febler maugre hem. Fro whence come els all these forayne complayntes, quarels, or pleadynges, but for that men asken her money that hath ben benomed hem by strength or by gile, and alway maugre hem. B. Ryght so it is (q I) P. Then hath a mā nede (q she) to seken him forayn helpe, by whych he maye defende his money. B. Who maye saye nay (q I) P. Certes (q she) and hym neded none help, yf he ne had no money that he myght lese. B. That is douteles (q I) P. Then is thys thynge turned in to the contrary (q she) for ryches, that men wenen shulde maken suffysaunce, they maken a man rather haue nede of forayne helpe. Whych is the maner or ý gyse (q she) that rychesse may dryuen away nede. Ryche folke may they neither haue hōger ne thurst. These ryche men maye they fele no colde on theyr limmes in wynter. but ý wilt answere that riche men haue ynough, wherwith they may stauchen her honger, & slaken her thurst and done awaye colde. In thys wyse maye nede ben cōforted by rychesse, but certes nede ne maye not al vtterly be done awaye. For yf thys nede that alwaye is gappynge and gredy be fulfylled wyth the rychesse and any other thyng, yet dwelleth then a nede that mote be fulfylled. I holde me styll, and tell not howe that lytell thynge suffyseth to nature: but certes to auarice suffiseth notynough of nothing For synne that rychesse ne maye not all done awaye nede, and they makē theyr owne nede what maye it then be, that ye wenen that rychesses mowen yeuen you suffysaunce.

Quamuis fluente diues auri gurgite
Non expleturas cogat auarus opes. &c.

AL were it so, that a noble couetous man had a ryuer or a gutter fletynge al of gold, yet shuld it neuer staunche hys couetyse: and all though he had his necke charged wyth precious stones of the reed see and though he do eere hys feldes plenteous wyth an hundred oxen, neuer ne shal hys bytynge besynes forleten hym whyle he lyueth, ne the lyght rychesses ne shal not bearen him company when he is deed.

Sed dignitas honorabilem, reuerendūq; cui prouenerint, reddunt Nū vis ea est magistratibus, vt vtētium mentibus virtutes inserant, vicia depellant. &c.

But

But dygnitees to whome they be comen, maken they hym honourable and reuerente? haue they not so great strengthe that they maye putten vertue in hertes of folkes, that vsen the lordshyp of hem, or elles may they done away the vyces? Certes they be not wonte to done away wyckednesse, but they be wonte rather to shewe wyckednesse. And therof cometh it ý I haue ryght greate dyldayne, that dygnitees ben yeuen to wycked men. For whych thynge Catullus cleped a counsell of Rome (that hyght Nonius) postome of boche, as who sayeth, he cleped hym a congregacion of vyces in hys brest, as a postome is full of corrupcion: al were Nonius set in a chayre of dygnitee. Seest thou not then, howe great vylonies dignitees done to wycked men? certes vnworthynesse of wycked men shulde be the lasse sene, yf they nere renomed of none honoure. Certes thou thy selfe ne myghtest not be brought wyth as many perylls as thou myghtest suffre, that thou woldest beare the magystrate wyth decorate that is to sayne, that for peryl that myght be fall the by offence of the kynge Theodryke, thou noldest not be felowe in gouernaunce with Decorate, when thou sawe that he had wicked corage of a licorous shrew and of an accusour. Ne I maye not for suche honours iugen hem worthy of reuerence, that I deme and holde vnworthy to haue thylke same honours. Nowe yf thou sawe a man that were fulfylde of wysedome, certes thou ne myghtest not deme that he were vnworthy to the honoure, or els to the wysdome of whych he is fulfylled. B. No (qꝯ I) P. Certes (qꝯ she) dygnytees aperteynen properly to vertue, & vertue transporteth dygnite anone to thylke man, to which she her selfe is conioyned. And for as moche as honours of people ne maye not make folke dygne of honoure, it is well sene clerly, that they ne haue no propre beautye of dygnitee. And yet men oughten take more hede in thys: for yf a wyghte be in so moche the more outcaste, that he is dyspysed of moste folke, so as dygnytee ne may not maken shrewes worthy of no reuerēce, then maketh dygnite shrewes rather dispised thē praised, the whyche shrewes dygnite sheweth to moche folke. And forsoth not vnpunyshed, ý is to sayne, that shrewes reuengen hem ayen warde vpon dignitees. For they yelden ayen to dygnytees as great guerdons, when they dyspotten & defoulen dygnitees wyth her vylonye. And for asmoch as thou now knowest that thylke very reuerence ne may not comen by these shadowy transytorye dygnitees, understande now thus: that yf a man had vsed and had many maner dygnitees of consuls, and were peraueniture comen amōge straūge nacions, shulde thylke honoure maken hym worshypfull and redouted of straunge folke? Certes yf that honour of people were a naturell yefte to dygnitees, it ne myghte neuer cessen no where amonge no maner folke to done hys offyce. Ryght as a fyre in euery contrey ne stynteth not to enchauffen and maken hote. But for as moche as for to bene honourable or reuerēt, ne cometh not to folke of her propre strength of nature, but only of ý false opinion of folke, that is to sayne, that wenen that dygnitees makē folke dygne of honours anone therfore when they comen there as folke ne knowen not thylke dygnytes, her honours vanyshen awaye and that anone. But that is amonge straunge folke mayest thou sayne. Ne amonges hem there they were borne, ne dured not thylke dygnitees alwaye Certes the dygnite of the prouostry of Rome was whylom a great power: nowe is it nothynge but an ydle name, and the rent of the senatorie a great charge. And yf a wyght whylom had thoffyce to taken hede to the vytayles of the people, as of corne and of other thinges, he was holden amonges hem great But what thinge is more nowe outcast then thylke prouostry. As I haue sayd a lytle here before, that thylke thynge that hath no propre beaute of it selfe, receiueth somtyme price and shynynge, and somtyme leseth it by thopinion of vsaunces. Nowe yf that dygnytees then ne mowe not make folke dygne of reuerence, and yf that dygnites were foule of her wyll, by the fylthe of shrewes, and yf dygnytees lesen her shynynge by chaūgynge of tymes, and yf they weren foule by estimacyon of people, what is it ý they han in hem selfe of beaute, that ought to be desyred? as who sayeth, none: then ne mowen they yeuen no beaute of dygnite to none other.

Quamuis se tyrio superbus ostro
Comeret et niueis lapillis. ꝛc.

AL be it so, that the proude Nero wyth all his wode luxure, kembe hym & apparelled hym wyth fayre purpure of Tyre, and wyth whyte peerles. Algates yet therof he hatefull to all folke, thys is to saye that all was he behated of all folkes, yet thys wycked Nero had great lordshyppe. And yaf whylom to the reuerent Senatours the vnworshypful seates of dygnitees. Unworshypfull seates he cleapeth here, for that Nero that was so wycked yaue the dygnitees.

Who wolde then reasonably wenen, that blysfulnesse were in suche honours, as bene yeuen by vycious shrewes.

An vero regna, regumqz familiaritas efficere potentem valent. Quid ni. &c.

BUt reygnes & familiaritees of kynges, maye they maken a mã to bene myghty. Howe els. When hys blysfulnesse dureth perpetually. But certes the olde age oftymes passed, and eke of present tyme nowe, is full of ensamples, howe ý kynges haue chaunged into wretchednesse, out of her welfulnesse. O, a noble thing & a clere thyng is power, that nys not founden myghtye to kepe it selfe. And yf that power of realmes be authour and maker of blysfulnesse, yf thylke power lacketh on any syde, amenuseth it not thylke blysfulnes, and bryngeth in wretchednesse. But yet al be it so, that the realmes of mankynde stretchen brode, yet mote there nede ben moche folke, ouer whych that euerye kynge ne hath no lordshyp ne cõmaundement. And certes vpon thylke syde that power falleth, whych that maketh folke blysful Ryghte on that same syde no power entreth vnderneth that maketh hem wretches. In thys maner then moten kynges haue more porcion of wretchednes then of welefulnesse

A tyraunt that was kynge of Cecyle, that had assayed ý peryll of hys estate, shewed by similitude the dredes of realmes by gastnesse of a swearde, that honge ouer the heed of his familyer. What thynge is then thys power that maye not done awaye the bytynges of besynesse, ne eschewe the pryckes of drede.

And certes yet wolden they lyuen in sykernesse, but they maye not. And yet they glorifyen hem in her power. Holdest thou then that thylke man be myghtye, that thou seest that he wolde done that he may not done. And holdest thou then hym a myghtye man, that hath enuyronned hys sydes wyth mẽ of armes or sergeaũtes, and dreddeth more hem that he maketh agast, then they dreden hym, and that is put in the handes of hys seruauntes, for he shulde seme myghtye. But of familyers or seruauntes of kynges, why shulde I tell the any thynge, syth that I my selfe haue shewed the, that realmes hem selfe bene full of great feblesse. The whych famylyers certes the royal power of kynges in hole estate and in estate abated, full ofte throweth adowne.

Nero constrayned Senecke hys famylyer and hys mayster, to chesen on what death he wolde dye. Antonius commaunded ý knyghtes slowen wyth her swordes Papinian his familyer, whych Papinyan had ben lõgtyme full myghty amonges hem of the courte, and yet certes they wolden both haue renounced her power. Of whych two Seneck enforced hym to yeuen to Nero hys rychesse, and also to haue gone into solytarye exyle. But when the great weyght, that is to sayne, of lordes power or of Fortune, draweth hem that shullen fall, neyther of hem ne myght do that he wolde. what thynge is then thylke power, that though men haue it, yet they ben agaste and when thou woldest haue it, thou art not syker. And yf thou woldest forleten it, thou mayest not eschewen it. But whether suche men ben frendes at nede, as bene counsayled by fortune, and not by vertue. Certes suche folke as welefull fortune maketh frendes, cõtrarious fortune maketh hym enemyes. And what pestilence is more myghtye for to anoy a wyght, then a famylyer enemye.

Qui se volet esse potentem, Animos domet ille feroces: Nec victa libidine colla. &c.

WHo so woll be myghtye, he mote daũten hys cruel corages, ne put not hys necke ouercomen, vnder the foule raynes of lechery

therye. For all be it so, that ý lordshyp stretch so ferre, that the countreye of Inde quaketh at thy cõmaundemẽtes, or at thy lawes. And that the last yle in the see, that hight Tyle, be thrale to the: yet yf thou mayst not putten awaye thy foule derke desyres, and dryuẽ oute fro the, wretched cõplayntes: Certes it nys no power that thou haste.

Gloria vero ꝗ fallax sepe, ꝗ turpis est. Unde non iniuria tragicus exclamat. O gloria gloria millibus mortalium nihil aliud facta, nisi auri um inflatio magna. ꝛc.

But glorye, howe dysceyuable & howe foule is it oft. For whych thynge, not skylfully a tragedye that is to sayne, a maker of dytees ý hyghten tragedies, cryed & sayd: O glorye glorye (q he) thou narte no thyng els to thousands of folkes, but a sweller of eares. For many haue ful great renome by the false opinion of the people.

And what thynge may be thought fouler then suche praysynge. For thylke folke that ben prayſed falsely, they mooten nedes haue shame of her praysynges. And yf that folke haue getten hem thanke or praysynge by her desertes: What thynge hath thylke pryse eched or encreased to the conscyence of wyse folke, that measuren her good, not by the rumoure of the people, but by the sothfastnesse of conscience. And yf it seme a fayre thynge, a man to haue encreased and spread hys name, then foloweth it, that it is demed to bene a foule thynge, yf it ne be yspread and encreased But as I sayd a lytell here before, that sythe there mote nedes ben many folkes, to whych folke the renome of a man ne may not comen it befalleth, that he that thou wenest be glorious and renomed, semeth in the next parte of therthes, to ben wythout glory and wythout renome. And certes amonges these thynges I ne trowe not that the pryse and the grace of the people, nys neyther worthy to bene remembred, ne cometh of wyse iugement, ne is ferme perdurably. But nowe of thys name of gentylesse: What man is it that ne maye well sene howe vayne and howe flyttynge it is. For yf the name of gyntylesse be referred to renome and clerenesse of lynage, then is gentell name but a forayne thynge, that is to say, to hem that glorifyen hem of her lynage. For it semeth that gentyles be a maner praysynge, that cometh of the desertes of auncesters. And yf praysyng maketh gentylles, thẽ moten they nedes ben gentyll, that ben prayſed. For whych thynge it foloweth, that yf thou ne haue no gentylnesse of thy felfe, that is to sayne pryse, that cometh of thy deserte, forayne gentyllesse ne maketh the not gentyll. But certes yf there be any good in gentyllesse, I trowe it be all onely thys: that it semeth as that a maner neresite be imposed to gentylmen, for that they ne shulde not outragen or forleauen fro the vertues of her noble kynred.

Omne hominũ genus in terris simili surgit ab ortu. Unus enim rerum pater est. Unus cuncta ministrat. ꝛc.

All the lynage of men, that ben in erthe ben of semblable byrth. One alone is father of thinges: one alone ministreth all thynges: He yafe to ý sun hys beames: He yafe to the moone her hornes: he yafe to men the earth: he yafe the sterres to the heuen: he enclosed wyth membres the soules that comen frome hys hye seate. Then comen all mortall folke of noble seed. Why noysen ye or bosten of your elders. For yf ye loke your begynnyng and god your father authour & your maker, then nys there no forelyued wyght or vngẽtyll, but yf he nourysche hys corage vnto vyces, and forlete hys proper byrth.

Quid autem de corporis voluptatibus loquar, quarum appetentia quidem plena est anxietatis. ꝛc.

But what shall I sayne of delyces of body, of whych delyces the desyrynges ben ful of anguysches, and the fulfyllynges of hem ben ful of penaũce. How gret sicknesses & how gret sorowes vnsuffrable, ryght as a maner fruyte of

of wyckednesse ben thylke delyces wonte to bryngen to the bodyes of folkes that vsen hem: of which delyces I not what ioy may ben had of her mouing. But this wot I wel that whosoeuer woll remēbren hym of his luxures, he shall well vnderstand, that the issues of delyces ben sorowfull and sorye.

And yf thylke delyces nowe maken folke blysful, thā by ý same cause motē these beestes ben cleped blysfull, of which beestes all the entention hasteth to fulfyl her bodily iolitie. And the gladnesse of wyfe and chyldrē were an honest thynge, but it hath ben sayd that it is ouer mokel ayenst kynde, that children hane ben founden tourmenters to her fathers, I not how many. Of whiche chyldren how bytyng is euery condicion, it neadeth not to tellē it the, that hast or this time assayed it, and art yet now anguishous. In this tyme approue I the sentence of my disciple Euripidis that sayd, that he that hath no chyldren, is welefull by infortune.

Habet hoc voluptas omnis stimulis agit fruentes: A pium q̃ par volātium vbi gratia mella fuit: Fugit et nimis teuaci ferit icta corda morsu ꝛc

Euery delyte hath this, that it anguysheth hem with pryckes ý vsen it. It resembleth to these flynge flyes that we clepen bees, that after that he hath shed hys agreable honyes, he flyeth awaye, and styngeth the hertes of hem that bene smytten with bytyng ouerlonge holden.

Nihil igitur dubium est, quin he ad beatitudiuem vie deuia quedam sint: nec perducere eo quem q̃ valeant. ꝛc.

Now is it no dout than, that these wayes ne be a maner misleadynges to blysfulnesse: ne that they ne mowen not leaden folke thider as they beheten to leeden hem. But with howe greate harmes these forsayde wayes ben enlaced, I shall shewe you shortly.

For why, yf thou enforcest the to assemble moneye, thou must bryeuen hym his money that hath it. And yf thou wolte shyuen with dignities, thou must besechen and supplyen hem, that yeuen tho dygnities. And yf thou coueytest by honour to goone before other folkes, thou shalte defoule thy selfe thorowe humblesse of asknyng. Yf thou desyrest power, thou shalt by awaytes of thy subiectes anoyusly be cast vnder by many paryls. Askest thou glorye: thou shalte ben so distracte by aspre thynges that thou shalt forgone sikernesse. And yf thou woldest leden thy lyfe in delytes, euery wight shall despisen the, ꝛ forleē the as thou ý art thrall to thyng, ý is ryght foule ꝛ bryttel, ý is to sayne, seruaunt to thy bodye. Nowe is it than well ysene, how lytle and howe bryttel possessyon they coueyten, that putten the goodes of the bodye aboue her owne reason. For mayst thou surmounteu these olyfauntes in greatnesse or in weyght of body: or mayst thou be strēger than the bull? Mayest thou be swyfter than the tygre? Beholde the spaces and the stablenesse and ý swyfte course of heauen, ꝛ stynt somtime to wondren on foule thinges The which heauen certes nis not rather for these thynges to be wondred vpon, than for the reason by which it is gouerned. But the shynyng of thy fourme, that is to sayne, the beautye of thy bodye, howe swyftly passing is it, and howe transitorie: certes it is more flyttynge than the mutabylitie of floures of the sommer season. For so as Aristotel telleth, that yf that men hadde eyen of a beaste that hyght lynx, so that the lokynge of folke myght peercen thorowe tho thynges that withstonden it. who so loked than in thentrayles of the body of Alcibiades, that was full fabre in the superfycie without, it shuld seme ryght foule.

And for thy, yf thou semest fayre, thy nature ne maketh not that, but the disceiuaūce of feblenesse of the eyen that looken. But prayse the goodes of the body as moche as euer ý lyst, so ý thou knowe algates ý what so it be, that is to sayne, of the goodes of the bodye, whyche that thou wondreste vpon maye bene destroyed or els dissolued by the heate of a feuer of thre dayes. Of which for sayd thinges I may reducen this shortly in a summe, that these wordly goodes, which ý ne mowen yeuen ý they behighten, ne ben

not parfyte by the congregation of all goodes, that they ne be not wayes ne pathes ỳ bryngen men to blyssfulnesse, ne maken men to be blyssfull.

Heu heu q̃ miseros tramite deuios abducit ignorantia: Non aurum in viridi queritis arbore. ꝛc.

ALas, which follye, and whiche ignorauncе mysleadeth wandryng wretches from the path of very good. Certes, ye seken no gold in grene trees, ne ye gadren not precyous stones in vynes, ne ye ne hyden not your gynnes in hye mountaynes to catchen fysh: of the which ye maye maken ryche feestes.

And yf ye lyke to hunt to Roes, ye ne go not to the foordes of the water that hyght Thyrene. And ouer this, men know wel the crekes and the cauernes of the see yhid in ỳ floudes, & knowen eke which water is most plenteous of white perles, & knowen which water aboundeth most of red purpure that is to sayne, of a maner shelfysh, with which men dyen purpure: and knowen which strōdes abounden moost of tendre fysshes, or of sharpe fysshes, that hyght Echynes. But folke suffren hem selfe to ben so blynde, that hem ne retchen not to knowe where thylke goodes ben yhid, whiche that they coueten, but plungen hem in earth, and seken there thylke good that surmounteth the heauen, that beareth the sterres. what prayer maye I maken that be digne to the nyce thoughtes of men? But I praye that they coueyten rychesse and honoures, so that whan they haue gotten tho false goodes, wyth greate trauayle, that therby they mowen knowen the very goodes.

Hactenus mendacis formam felicitatis ostendisse sufficerit, q̃ si perspicaciter intuearis, ordo est deinceps, ꝛc

IT suffyseth that I haue sayde hytherto, the fourme of false welefulnesse, so ỳ yf thou loke now clerely: the orde of myne entention requyreth from hēce forth to shewen the very welfulnesse. B. For sothe (q̃ I) I se well now, that suffysaunce maye not cōmen by riches, ne power by realmes, ne reuerence by dignities, ne gentlesse by glory, ne ioye by delyces. Phi. And haste thou well knowen the causes (q̃ she) why it is? Boece. Certes me semeth (q̃ I) that I se hem, ryght as though it were through a lytle clyfte: But me were leauer knowen hem more openly of the. P. Certes (q̃ she) the reason is alreadye. For thylke thyng that symply is one thynge without anye deuysyon, the errour and folly of mankynde deuydeth and departeth it & mysleadeth it, and transporteth from very and parfyte good to goodes that be false and vnparfyte. But say me this: wenest thou, that he that hath nede of power, that hym ne lacketh nothynge? B. Nay (q̃ I) P. Certes (q̃ she) ỳ sayst aryght for yf so be that there is a thing that in any parte be febler of power, certes as in that it mote nedes be nedy of forayne helpe. Boece Ryght so it is (q̃ I) Phi. Suffisaunce and power ben of one kynde. B. So semeth, q̃ I Philoso. And demest thou (quod she) that a thynge that is of this maner, that is to say suffysaunt and myghtye, ought been dispysed, or els that it be ryght digne of reuerence aboue all thynges? B. Certes (q̃ I) it is no dout that it is ryght worthye to be reuerenced. P. Let vs adden (q̃ she) reuerence to suffysaunce and to power, so that we demen ỳ these thre thynges be all one thynge. B. Certes quod I, let vs adden it yf we wyl graūt the soth. P. what demest thou (q̃ she) than is that a darke thyng and not noble, that is suffysaūt, reuerent, and myghty? or els that it is ryght noble and ryght clere by celebrat of renoume? Cōsydre thā, q̃ she, as we haue graunted here before, that he that ne hath no nede of nothyng, and is moost myghtye and most digne of honour, yf hym nedeth any clerenesse of renoume, which clerenesse he myght not graunten of hym selfe: so forlack of thylke clearenesse he myght semen the febler on any syde, or the more outcaste.

Glose. That is to saye, naye: For who so that is suffysaunt myghtye, and reuerente, clearenesse of renoume foloweth of the forsayde thynges: he hath it all readye of hys suffysaunce.

B. I may not quod I, denye it, but I mot graunten

graunten as it is, that this thynge is ryght celebrable by clerenesse of renoume and noblesse. Phil. Than foloweth (quod she) that we adden clerenesse of renoume to the forsayde thynges, so that there be amonges hem no dysferencee. Boece. This is a consequence (q̃ I) Philoso. This thinge than (q̃ she) that ne hath nede of no forayne thynge, and that maye doo all thynge by hys strengthes, and that is noble and honourable, is it not a mery thyng and ioyfull? Boece. But whence (quod I) that anye sorowe myghte come to this thynge that is suche: certes, I maye not thynke. Philosop. Than mote we graunten (q̃ she) that this thynge be full of gladnesse, yf the forsayde thynges be sothe. And certes, also mote we graunten, that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reuerēce and gladnesse be onelye dyuers by names, but her substaunce hath no diuersitie.

Boece. It mote nedelye be so (quod I) Philosophia. Thylke thynge than (quod she) that is one, aud symple in hys nature, the wyckednesse of men departeth and deuydeth it. And whan they enforcen hem to getten partye of a thynge, that ne hath no part they ne getten hem neyther thylke partye, that nys none, ne the thynge all the whole that they desyre. Boece. In whiche manere quod I. Philosphia. Thilke man, quod she, that secheth rychesse to flyen pouertie: he ne trauayleth hym not for to get power, for he hath leauer be darke and vyle, and eke with draweth from hym selfe manye naturell delytes, for he nolde leese the moneye that he hath assebled. But certes, in this maner, he ne getteth hym no suffysaunce, ẏ power forletteth, and that molestie prycketh, and that fylthe maketh outcaste, and that darkenesse hydeth. And certes, he that desyreth onelye power, wasteth and scattreth rychesse, and despyseth delyces and eke honour that is wout power, ne he ne prayseth glory nothyng. Certes, thus seest thou wel, that many thinges faylen to hym: For he hath somtyme default of many necessities, and many anguisshes byten hym. And whan he may not don tho defautes away, he forleteth to be mightye, and that is the thyng that he most desyreth. And ryght thus maye I make semblable reasons of honour, of glory, and of delyces. For so euerye of these forsayde thynges is the same that these other thynges bene, that is to sayne all one thynge. whosoeuer seketh to getten that one of these, and not ẏ other, he ne getteth not that he desyreth. B. what sayest thou, than yf that a man couete to getten all these thynges togyther. P. Certes (q̃ she) I wolde saye that he wolde get hym souerayne blysfulnesse, but that shal he fynde in tho thynges that I haue shewed, that mowe not yeuen that they beheten. B. Certes, no (q̃ I) Philo. Than (quod she) ne shullen men not by no way seken blysfulnes in suche thynges as men wenen, that they ne mowe gyuen but one thynge syngulerly of all that men seken. Boece. I graunt well (q̃ I) ne none sother thyng may be sayd. P. Now hast thou than (q̃ she) the fourme and the cause of false welefulnesse: Nowe turne and flyt agayn to thy thought, for ther shalt thou sene anon thylke very blysfulnesse, that I haue behyght the. B. Certes (quod I) it is clere and open, though it were to a blinde man: And that shewedst thou me a litle here before, whan thou enforcedest the to shewe me the causes of the false welefulnesse. For (but yf I be begyled) than is thylk very blisfulnesse and parfyte, that perfytely maketh a man suffysaunt, myghty, honourable, noble and full of gladnesse. And for thou shalt well knowe, that I haue wel vnderstanden these thynges within my hert: I know wel that thylke blysfulnesse that men verelye yeuen one of the forsayde thynges, syns they bene all one: I knowe doutlesse, that thylke thynge is ful of blysfulnesse. P. O my norice (quod she) by this opynyon I say, that thou arte blysfull, yf thou put this therto that I shall sayne. B. what is that (quod I)? Phy. Trowest thou that there be anye thynge in this erthly mortall tomblyng thynges, that maye bryngen this estate? Bo. Certes (quod I) I trowe it not: and thou hast shewed me well that ouer thylke good ther nis nothing more to ben desyred. P. These thynges thā (quod she) that is to sayne, erthly suffysaūce and power, and suche thynges erthlye, they semen likenesse of very good, or els it semeth that they yeuen to mortall folke a maner of goodnesse, that ne be not parfyte: but thylke good that is very and parfyt, that may they not yeuen. B. I accorde me well (q̃ I). Phi. Than (q̃ she) for as moch as thou hast kno-

wen, which is thilke verye blysfulnesse, and eke which thylke thynges ben, that lyen fal slye blysfulnesse, that is to saye, that by disceyte semen very goodes: Nowe behoueth the to know whence and where thou mow seke thylke very blysfulnesse. B. Certes, q I that desyre I greatly, and haue abydē lōge tyme to herken it. P. But for as moch (quod she) as it lyketh to my disciple Plato in hys boke of Thimeo, that in ryght lytle thinges men shulden beseche the help of God: what iudgest thou that be nowe to doone, so that we may deserue to fynde the seate of thylke souerayne god. B. Certes (q I) I deme that we shullen clepe to the father of al goddes, for withouten hym nys there nothyng founded aryght. P. Thou sayest aryght (q she) and began anon to syngen ryght thus.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas. Terrarum celiq; sator, qui tempus ab euo, ire iubes, stablisq; manens das cuncta moueri. Quem non externe pepulerunt fingere cause. ꝛc.

O Thou father souerayne and creatour of heuen and of erthes that gouernest this worlde by perdurable reason, that commaundest the tymes to gone, syth that age had begynnynge. Thou that dwellest thy selfe aye sted fast and stable, and yeuest all other thynges to be meued, ne foreyne causes ne cesseden ꝑ neuer to compoun werke of flottring mater but only the forme of souerayne good yset within the withoute enuye, that meued the frely. Thou that art alderfayrest, bearynge the fayre worlde in thy thought: formedest this world to thy lykenesse semblable of the fayre worlde in thy thought. Thou drawest all thynge on thy souerayn enampler, and commaundest that this worlde perfetlyche ymaked, haue frely and absolute his perfyte partyes. Thou byndest the elementes by nōbres proporcionables, that the colde thynges mowen accorden wyth the hoote thynges, and the drye thynges with the moyste: That the fyre that is purest, ne fle not ouerhye, ne that the heuynesse ne drawe notte adowne ouerlow the erthes that be plonged in the waters. Thou knyttest togyther the meane soule of treble kynde mouyng al thinges, and deuidest it by membres according And whan it is thus deuyded, it hath assembledde amouynge into roundes, it goeth to turne agayne to hym selfe, and enuyroneth a full depe thought, and turneth the heauen by semblable ymage. Thou, by euen lyke causes enhaunceest the soules and the lesse lyues, and hablynge hem to heyght by lyght waynes or cartes. Thou sowest hem into heuen and into erth, and whan they be conuerted to the by thy benigne lawe, thou makest hem retourne ayen to the by ayen leding fyre. O father, yeue thou to the thought to styen vp into thy strayte sete, and graūt him to enuyronne the well of good. And ꝑ lyght ykounde graunt hym to fyxen the clere syghtes of his corage in the: and scatre thou, and to breake the weyghtes and the cloudes of erthly heuynesse, ꝛ shyne thou by thy brightnesse, for thou clerensse art thou arte pesyble rest to debonayre folke, thou thy selfe art be gynnynge, bearer, leader, path and terme to loke on the that is our ende.

Quoniam igitur, q̄ sit imperfecti que etiam perfecti boni forma vidisti nunc demonstrandum reor. ꝛc.

For as moche than, as thou hast sene which is the fourm of good, that nys not parfyt and the forme of good which that is parfyte, nowe trowe I that it were good to shewe in what this perfection of blysfulnesse is set And in this thynge I trowe that we shall fyrst enquyre for to weten, yf that any suche maner good as thylke good as thou hast dikynyshed a lytle here beforne, that is to sayn souerayne good, may be founden in the nature of thinges. For that vayne ymaginacion of thought ne disceiue vs not, and put vs out of the sothfastnesse of thilke thynge that is submytted to vs. But it maye not be denyed that thylke ne is, and that is ryght as a well of all goodes. For al thyng that is cleped imparfyte, is proued imparfyte, by the amenusynge of perfection of thynge that is parfyte. And herof cōmeth it, that in euerye thyng generall, yf that men sene any thyng that is vnparfyte: certes thilke thyng general

rall, there mote be some thynge that is perfyte. For yf so be that perfection is done awaye, menne maye not thynke ne saye from whence thylke thynge is, that is cleped imperfyte. For the nature ne toke nother begin nyng of thynges amenused and imperfyte, but it procedeth of thynges that ben al hole absolute, and discendeth so downe into the vttrest thynges, & in to thynges empty and without frute. But as I haue shewed a lytell here before, that yf there be a blysful nesse that be freyle and vayne, & imparfyte, there maye no man dout, that there nis som blysfulnesse, that there is sadde, stedfast and parfyte. B. This is concluded (q I) fermely and sothfastly. P. But consydre also (q she) in whome this blisfulnesse inhabyteth. The cõmune accorde and conceyte of the courage of men proueth and graunteth, ý god prince of all thynges is good. For so as nothynge may be thoust better than good, it may not be douted than, that he that nothing nis better thã he nis good. Certes, reason sheweth that god is so good, that it proueth by very force, that parfyte good is in hym. For yf God nis suche, he ne maye not ben prince of all thyng. For certes, somthyng possessynge in it selfe parfyte good, shulde be more worthy than God: and it shulde semen that thilk thynge were fyrst and older than God. For we haue shewed apertly, that all thynges ý bene parfyte, ben fyrst, or thinges that bene imparfyte. And for thy, for as moch as that my reason or my processe ne goo not awaye without an ende, we owẽ to graunten that the souerayne good is ryghtfull of souerayn parfyte good. And we haue establysshed, ý the souerayne good is very blysfulnesse, thã mote it nedes be, that verye blysfulnesse is set in souerayne good. B. This take I well (quod I) ne this ne maye not be withsayde in no maner. P. But I praye the (quod she) se now how thou mayest prouen holily, and without corruption, this that we haue said that the souerayne God is full of ryght souerayne good. B. In which maner (q I) P. wenest thou ought (q she) that the father of al thinges hath taken thilke souerayn good any where out of hym selfe? Of which souerayne good, men proueth that he is full. Ryght as thou mightest thinkẽ, that god ý hath blysfulnesse in hym selfe, and thilk blisfulnesse that is in hym were dyuers in substaunce. For yf thou wene, ý God hath receyued thylke good out of hym self, thou mayst wene, that he that yaue thilke good to God be more worthye than God. But I am beknowe and confesse, and that ryght dignly, that God is right worthy aboue al thinges And yf so be, ý this good be in him by nature but that is dyuers from hym by wenynge reason, syns we speken of God prynce of all thynges. Fayne who so fayne maye, who was he that conioyned these thynges togyther. And eke at the last se well, that a thing that is dyuers fro anye thynge, that thylke thynge nys not that same thyng, for which it is vnderstonden to ben dyuers. Than folo weth it wel, that thylke thynge ý by his nature is dyuers from souerayne good, that thynge is not souerayne good. But certes, it were a felonous cursednesse to thynken, ý of hym that nothynge nis more worth. For alwaye of all thynges the name of hem ne maye not ben better than her begynner. For which I maye concluden by ryght very reason, that thylke that is begynnyng of al thinges, thilke same thyng is souerayne God in his substaunce. B. Thou hast sayd ryghtfully (quod I) Philoso. But we haue graũted (quod she) that the souerayne good is blysfulnesse. Boece. That is soth (quod I) Philosophye. Than (quod she) we moten nedes graunten and confessen, that thilke same souerayne good be God. Boece. Certes (quod I) I ne maye not denye ne withstande the reasons purposed: and I se well that it foloweth by strength of the premisses. Phylo. Loke nowe (quod she) yf this be proued yet more fermely thus, that there ne mowẽ not ben to souerayne goodes that bene dyuers amonge hem selfe. For certes, the goodes that ben dyuers amonge hem selfe, that one is not that the other is. Than ne mowen neither of hem be parfyte, so as eyther of hem lacketh to other, but that that nys not parfyte, men maye sene apertly that it nys not souerayne. The thynges than that ben souerayn ly good, ne mowen by no waye be dyuers. But I haue well concluded, that blysfulnesse and God bene the souerayne good, for whyche it mote neades bene that souerayne blysfulnesse is souerayne dignitie. Boece. Nothynge (quod I) is more sothe-

fast than this, ne more ferme by reason, ne a more worthye thynge than god may not be coucluded. Philosophy. Upon these thinges than (quod she) ryght as these geometriciēs whan they haue shewed theyr propositions ben wonte to bryngen in thynges that they clepen porrismes or declaracions of forsaid thynges, ryght so woll I yeue the here as a corallarye, or a mede of crowne. For why, for as moche as by the gettynge of blysfulnesse, men bene maked blysfull: and blysfulnesse is dignitie. Than is it manifest and open, that by the gettynge of dignitie men bē maked blysfull, ryght as by the gettynge of iustyce. And by the gettyng of sapyence they be maked wyse, ryghte so nedes by the semblable reason, whan they haue gotten dyuinitie, they be made goddes. Than is euerye blysfull man a god. But certes, by nature there nys but one god, but by the participacion of the diuynitie, there ne letteth, ne dystourbeth nothynge, that there ne be manye goddes. Boece. This is (quod I) a fayre thynge and a precious, clepe it as thou wilt be it Corollarye, or Porrisme, or Wede of crowne, or declarynge. Philosophy. Certes (quod she) nothynge nys fayrer than is the thynge that by reason shoulde be added to these forsayde thynges. Boece. what thyng (quod I) Phylosoph. So (quod she) as it semeth, that blysfulnesse contayneth manye thynges, it were for to weten whether that all these thynges makeu or conioynen as a maner bodye of blysfulnesse, by the diuersite of partyes, of membres, or els yf anye of all these thynges be suche that it accomplysshe by hym selfe the substaunce of blysfulnesse. So all these other thinges ben referred and brought to blysfulnesse, that is to say, as to the chefe of hem. Boece. I wolde (quod I) that thou madest me clerely to vnderstande what thou sayest, and what thou recordeste me the forsayde thynge. Philosophye. Haue I not iudged (quod she) that blysfulnesse is good. Boece. Yes forsoth (quod I) and that soueraigne good. Philoso. Adde than (quod she) thylke good that is made blysfulnesse to all the forsayde thynges. For thylke same blysfulnesse, that is demed to be soueraygne suffysaunce, thylke selfe is soueraynne power soueraynne reuerence, soueraynne clerenesse or noblesse, and soueraynne delyte. what sayest thou than of al these thynges, that is to say suffysaunce, power, and these other thynges. Ben they than as membres of blysfulnesse, or ben they referred and brought to soueraynne good, ryght as al thynges that ben brought to the chefe of hem. Boece. I vnderstonde well (quod I) what thou purposeste to seke: but I desyre for to herken, that thou shewe it to me. Philoso. Take now thus the discretion of this question (quod she.) yf all these thynges (quod she) weren membres to felicitie, than weren they dyuers that one from that other: and suche is the nature of partyes or of membres, that dyuers membres compownen a bodye. Boece. Certes (q I) it hath well be shewed here before, that all these thynges ben all one thinge. Philo. Than ben they mo membres (quod she.) For els it shulde seme, that blisfulnesse were conioyned all of o membre aloone, but that is a thynge that maye not be done. Boece. This thyng (quod I than) nis not doutous but I abyde to heatken the remnaunt of thy questyon. Philo. This is open and clere (q she) that all other thynges ben referred and brought to good. For therfore is suffysaūce requyred, for it is demed to be good, and for thy is power requyred, for men trowen also that it be good. And this same thynge mowen we thynken and coniecten of reuerence, of noblesse and of delyte. Than is soueraynne good, the summe and the cause of all that ought to ben desyred. For why, thylke thyng that withholdeth no good in it self, ne semblaunce of good, it ne maye not well in no maner be desyred ne requyred. And contrarye: For though that thynges by her nature ne ben not good, algates yf men wenen that they ben good, yet ben they desyred as though they were verelye good. And therefore it is sayde, that men ought to wene by ryght, that bountie bene the soueraynne fyne and the cause of all the thynges that bene to requyren. But certes, thilke that is cause for which mē requiren any thing, it semeth that thilke same thyng be most desyred, as thus: yf that a wyghte wolde ryden for cause of heale, he ne desyreth not so moch ŷ mouinge to ryden as the effecte of his heale. Nowe than syns that al thynges ben requyred for the grace of good, they ben not desyred of al folke more than the same good.

But

But we haue graunted that blysfulnesse is that same thynge, for whyche that all these other thynges bene desyred. Than is it thus that certes only blysfulnesse is required and desyred. By whych thynge it sheweth clerelye, that of good and blysfulnesse is all one & the same substaunce. Boece. I se not (quod I) wherfore that men myghte discorden in thys. Philosoph. And we haue shewed, that God and very blysfulnesse is all one thynge. Boe. That is soth (q I). Phi. Than mowe we conclude sykerly, that the substaunce of God is set in thylke same good, and in none other place

Huc oēs pariter venite capti, Quos fallax ligat improbis catenis, Terrenas habitans libido mentes. Hic erit vobis requies laborum. &c.

Ome all togyther nowe ye that bene ycaughte, & bounde wyth wicked chaynes, by the deceyuable delyte of earthlye thynges inhabytinge in your thought. Here shall be the rest of youre laboure: here is the hauen stable in quyet pesyble. This alone is the open refute to wretches, that is to sayne, that ye that be combred and deceyued wyth worldly affecions, cometh nowe to thys souerayn good that is God: that is refute to hem that wyllen comen to hym. All the thynges that the ryuer Tagus yeueth you wyth hys golden grauels, or els all the thynges that the riuer Hermus yeueth wyth hys reed brynke: or ȳ Indus yeueth, that is nexte the hote partye of the worlde, that medleth the grene stones wyth the whyte: ne shulde not cleren the loking of your thought, but hyden rather your blynd corage within her derkenesse. All that lyketh you here & exceyteth and moueth your thoughtes, the earth hath norysched it within his lowe caues. But ȳ shynyng, by which the heuen is gouerned, and whence that his strength, that escheweth the derke ouerthrowyng of ȳ soule, & who so euer may knowen thylke lyghte of blysfulnesse, he wyll sayne, that the whyte beames of the sūne ne be not clere.

Assentior (inq̃) cūcta enim firmissimis nexa rationibus cōstant. Tū illa, quanti, inquit, tu estimabis, si bonum ipsum, quid sit, agnoueris? &c.

Oece. I assente me (quod I) for al thinges ben strōgly bounden wyth ryght ferme reasons. Philoso. Howe muche wylte thou prayseu it (q she) yf that thou knowe what thylke good is? Boece. I wol prayse it (quod I) by price wythout ende, yf it shall betyde me to knowe also togyther god that is good. Phi. Certes (q she) that shal I do the by very reason, if that those thinges, that I haue cōcluded a lytle here before, dwellē onelye in her graūtyng. B. They dwellen graūted to the (q I) ȳ is to sayne, as who sayth, I graunt to thy forsayd conclusyons. Philoso. I haue shewed the (q she) that the thinges that ben required of many folke ne bene not very goodes ne perfite. For they bene diuers that one frō ȳ other. And so as eche of hem is lacking to other, they ne haue no power to bryngе a good, that is full and absolute. But than at erste bene they very good, whā they bene gathered togyder all in to one forme, and in to one werkynge: so that thylke thynge that is suffysaunt, thylke same is power, and reuerence, noblesse, and myrth. And forsothe but yf all these thynges be all one same thynge, they ne haue not wherby that they mowe be put in the nombre of thynges that ought to be required and desired. Boece. It is shewed (q I) ne hereof maye there no man douten. Phi. The thynges than (q she) that ne bene no goodes, whan they bene diuers, & whan they begynnen to be al one thyng, than bene they goodes, ne cometh it not thā by the gettyng of bnyte, that they be maked goodes. Boece. So semeth it (quod I) Philo. But al thynge that is good (q she) graunteste thou that it be good by the participation of good or no? Boece. I graunt it (quod I) Philoso. Than must thou graūted (quod she) by semblable reasonthat one and good be one same thynge. For of thynges, of whyche the effecte nys not naturelly diuers, nedes her substaunce must be one same thyng. Boece. I ne

maye not denye it,(quod I)Philoso. Haste thou not knowen well (q I)that all thynge that is,hath so longe hys dwellyng and his substaunce, as longe as it is one, but whan it forletteth to bene one, it muste nedes dyen and corrumpen togyther. B. In which maner(q I) Philo. Ryght as in beestes(quod she) whan the soule and the bodye bene conioyned in one,and dwellen togyther,it is cleped a beest:and whan her vnite is distroyed by the dysceueraũce of that one from that other,than sheweth it wel ỳ it is a deed thing and it is no lenger no beast.And the body of a wight whyle it dwelleth in one fourme by coniunction of membres, it is well sene that it is a fygure of mankynde: And yf the partyes of the bydye be deuydedand disceuered that one from that other, that they distroye the vnite, ỳ body forleteth to be, that it was beforne.And who so wold renue in the same maner by all thynges, he shulde sene ỳ without dout euery thynge is in hys substaunce, as longe as it is one. And whan it forleteth to be one,it dyeth and perisheth.Boece.whã I consyder (quod I) manye thynges, I se none other.Philoso. Is there any thyng(q she)that in as muche as it lyueth naturelly, that forleteth the talent or the apetyte of his beynge, and desyreth to come to deathe and to corruption. Boece. If I consyder(quod I)the beastes that haue anye maner nature of wyllyng and nyllyng, I ne fynde no beest but yf it be constrayned fro wythout forthe, that forleteth or dyspyceth the entencion to lyuen and to duren, or that wyll hys thankes hasten hym to dyen. For euerye beaste trauayleth hym to defende and kepe the sauacion of hys lyke,and escheweth death and dystruction. But certes I doute me of herbes and trees, that ne haue no kelynge soules, ne no naturell workynges, seruynge to appetytes, as beastes haue: whether they haue appetyte to dwelle,and to duren. Philosoph. Certes (quod she) therof dare the not doute. Nowe loke vpon the herbes and trees,for they wexen fyrste in suche place as bene couenable to hem: in whyche places they mowe not dyen ne dryen, as longe as her nature maye defende hem. For some of hem wexen in feldes, & some wexen in moũtaignes, and other wexe in mareys, and other cleauen on rockes,and some wexen plẽteous in sondes. And yf any wyght enforce hym to beare hem in to other places, they wexen drye. For nature yeueth to euerye thynge that is conueniente to hym,and trauayleth that they ne dye, as longe as they haue power to dwellen and to lyuen. what wylte thou sayne of thys, that they drawen all her nourysshynges by her rootes, ryghte as they haddẽ her mouthes yploũged within the earthes, and sheaden by her maryes her wodde and her barke. And what wylte thou sayne of thys, that thylke thynge that is ryghte softe, as the marye is, that is alwaye hydde in the seate all within,and that is defended from wythoute by the stedfastnesse of wodde,and that the vttereste barkes is put ayenst the distemperaunce of the heauen, as a defendoure, myghtye to suffren harme. And thus certes mayste thou well sene,howe great is the dyligence of nature: For all thynges renouelen and publysched hem wyth seede ymultyplyed. Ne there nys no man,that ne wote well that they ne bene ryghte as a foundemente and edefyce, for to duren not onely for a tyme,but ryghte as for to dure perdurably by generatiõ. And ỳ thinges eke, that men wenẽ ne haue no soules, ne desyre they not by semblable reason to kepen that is hys,that is to sayne,that is accordynge to her nature in conseruation of her beyng and enduryng. For wherfore els beareth lyghtnesse the flambes vp, and the weyghte presseth the earth adowne, but for as muche as thylke places and thylke mouinges be couenable to euerych of hem.And forsothe euery thynge kepeth thylke, that is accordynge & propre to hym, ryght as thynges that bene contraryous and enemies corrumpen hem.And yet the harde thinges(as stones)cleauen and holden her parties togyther right fast & harde,and defenden hem in withstãdyng, that they ne departen lyghtly and yeuen place to hem, that breaken or deuydẽ hem:but nathlesse they retournen ayen soone in to the sam thynges from whence they be araced. But fyre fleeth and refuseth all deuysyon. Ne I ne treate not nowe here of wylful mouinges of the soule that is knowyng,but of naturell entention of thynges, as thus: Ryght as we swalowen the meate that we receyuen, and ne thynke not on it, and as we draw our breath in slepyng, that we

we weten whyle we slepen. For certes in the beestes the loue of her lyuynges ne of her be ynges, ne cometh not of the wylnynges of the soule, but of the begynnynges of nature For certes thorowghe constraynynge causes wyll desyreth & embraseth ful oft tymes the deth, that nature dredeth, that is to sayn as thus: that aman maye be constrayned so by some cause, that his wyl desyreth and taketh the deathe, whyche that nature hateth & dredeth full sore. And some tyme we sene the contrary, as thus: ý the wyll of a wyght disturbeth and constrayneth that, that nature alwaye desyreth and requyreth, that is to say ý werkes of generacion, by the which generacion onely dwelleth and is susteyned the longe durabylite of mortall thynges, as thus. Thys charite and this loue that euery thynge hathe to hym selfe, ne cometh not of the mouynge of the soule, but of the entencion of nature. For the purueyaunce of God hathe yeuen to thynges, that bene create of hym thys, that is a full great cause to lyuen and to duren, for whyche they desyren naturelly her lyfe, as longe as euer they mowen: for whych thou mayst not dreden by no maner, that all thynges that bene anye where, that they ne requirē naturelly the ferme stablenesse of perdurable dwellyng, and eke the eschewyng of distruction.

Boece. I cōfesse (q I) that I se wel now, and certaynly withouten dout, the thinges that a whyle ago semeden vncertaine to me Philoso. But (q she) thylke thynge that desyreth to be and dwell perdurablye, he desyreth to bene one: for yf that one were distroyed, certes beynge shulde there none dwellen to no wyght. Boece. That is sothe (quod I) Philo. Than (quod she) desyren all thynges one. Boece. I assent (q I) Phi. And I haue shewed (q she) that thilke same one is, thilke that is good. Boece. Yea forsoth (q I) Phi. All thynges than (quod she) requyren good, and thylke maist thou discriuen thus: Good is thylke thynge that euery wyght desyreth Boece. There ne maye be thoughte no more very thynge (quod I) for eyther all thynges be referred and brought to naught, and floteren wythout gouernoure dispoyled of one as of her propre heade, or els yf there be any thynge, to whyche that all thynges tenden and hyen to, that thynge muste be the souerayne good of all goodes. Philosoph. Than sayde she thus: O my norice (q she) I haue great gladnesse of the, for thou haste fixed in thy herte the myddell sothfastnesse, that is to sayne the prycke, but thys thynge hath be discouered to the, in that thou saydeste, that thou wystest not a lytel here before. Boece. what is that (quod I) Philo. That thou ne wystest not (quod she) whych was the ende of thynges, & certes that is the thynge that euery wyght desyreth. And for as muche as we haue gathered and comprehended, that good is thylke thynge that is desyred of all, than mote we nedes confessen, that good is the fyne of all thynges.

Quisquis profunda mēte vestigat verum, Cupitq; nullis esse deuius falli, In se reuoluat intimi lucem visus. &c.

Who so seketh sothe by a depe thought, and coueteth to bene disceyued by no mis wayes, let hym rollen and treaten wyth hym selfe, the lyght of hys inwarde syght: and let hym gatheren ayen enclynynge into a compase the longe mouynges of hys thoughtes. And let hym teachen hys corage, that he hath enclosed & hyde in hys treasours, all that he hath compassed or sought fro without: And than thylke thynge that the blacke cloudes of errour whylome had couered, shal lyght more clerely than Phebus hym selfe ne shyneth.

Glosa. who so wyl seke the depe groundes of sothe in hys thoughte, and woll not be disceyued by false propositions, that gone a mysse from the trouth, let hym wel examine and rolle wythin hym selfe, the nature & propietes of the thynge. And lette hym yet efte sones examyne and rollē hys thoughtes by good deliberacion, or that he déme. And let hym teachen hys soule, that it hath by naturel pryncyples kyndlyche phydde wythin it selfe, all the trouth, the which he ymagineth to bene in thynges wythout: and than al the darkenesse of hys myskuowynge, shall seme more euydently to the syght of hys vnderstādynge, than the sunne ne semeth to the sight without forth. For certes the body bringing the weyght of forgeting, ne hath not chaced

out

out of your thought all the clerenesse of your
knowynge, for certaynlye, the seede of sothe
holdeth and cleaueth wythin your corage, &
it is awaked and excited by the wyndes and
by the blastes of doctrine. For wherfore els
demen ye of your owne wyl ỳ ryghtes whā
ye be asked, but if so were that the norishing
of reason ne lyued, yplunged in the depe of
your herte, that is to sayne, howe shuld men
demen the sothe of any thynge that were as-
ked, and yf there nere a roote of sothfastnesse
that were yplunged and hyd in naturel prin
cyples, the whyche sothfastnesse lyued with-
in the depenesse of the thought. And yf so be,
that the muse and the doctrine of Plato syn-
geth sothe, all that euerye wyght lerneth, he
ne doth nothynge els than, but recorderh, as
men recorden thynges that bene forgyeten.

Tum ego, Platoni (inq̃) vehemen-
ter assentior. Nam me horum iam se-
cundo commemoras. Primum quod
memoriam corporea contagione. &c.

Than sayde I thus. I acorde
me gretly to Plato, for thou
recordest and remēbreste me
these thynges yet the second
tyme, that is to saye, fyrste
whan I left my memory by
the contrarious cōiunction of the body with
the soule: and eftsones afterwarde, whan I
loste it confounded, by thy charge and by the
burdone of my sorow, & than sayd she thus.
If thou loke (quod she) fyrste the thynges
that thou haste graunted, it ne shall not bene
ryghte ferre, that thou ne shalte remembren
the ylke thynge, that thou saydest that thou
nystest nat. Boece. what thynge (quod I) P.
By whyche gouermente (quod she) that this
worlde is gouerned. Boece. I remembre it
well (quod I) and I cconfesse well, that I
ne wyste it naughte. But all be it so, that I
se nowe from a ferre, what thou purposest,
algates I desyre yet to herken it of the more
playnlye. Philoso. Thou ne wendest not (q̃
she) a lytle here before, that men shuld dout
that thys worlde is gouerned by God. Boe.
Certes (quod I) ne yet ne doute I it nat ne
I nyll neuer wene that it were to doute, as
who sayeth, but I wote well that God go-
uerneth thys worlde. And I shall answeren
the by what reasons I am brought to thys
Thys worlde (quod I) of so many diuers &
contrarious partyes, ne myght neuer haue
bene assembled in o forme, but yf there were
one, that cōioyned so many diuers thynges.
And ỳ same diuersite of her natures that so
discorden, that one fro that other muste de-
parten, and vnioynen the thynges that bene
conioyned, yf there ne were one that conteyn-
ed, that he hath conioyned and ybounde.
Ne the certaine order of nature ne shuld nat
bryngе forth so ordeyne mouynges, by pla-
ces, by times, by doynges, by spaces, by qua
lytees, if ther ne were one that were aye sted
faste dwellinge, that ordeyned and disposed
these diuersytees of mouynges. And thylke
thynge what so euer it be, by whyche that
al thynges bene ymaked, and ladde, I clepe
hym God, that is a worde that is vsed to al
folkes. Philoso. Than sayd she: Syth thou
felyste thus these thynges, I trowe that I
haue lytle more to done, that thou myghtye
of welfulnesse, hole and sound, ne se eftsones
thy countrey. But let vs loken the thynges
that we haue purposed here before. Haue
I nat nombred & sayde (quod she) that suf-
fysaunce is in blysfulnesse? And we haue ac-
corded that God is thylke same blysfulnesse.
Boece. Yes forsoth (quod I). Philoso. And
that to gouerne thys worlde (q̃ she) ne shall
he neuer haue nede of none helpe fro wyth-
out. For els yf he had nede of any helpe, he
ne shulde not haue no full suffysaunce. Boe.
Yes thus it mote nedes be (quod I). Philo.
Then ordeined he by him selfe alone al thin-
ges (quod she). Boe. That may not be denie-
ed (quod I) Philoso. And haue shewed that
God is the same good. Boe. It remembreth
me well (quod I) Philoso. Than ordeyneth
he al thynges by thylke good (quod she) syth
he whyche we haue accorded to be good go-
uerneth all thynges by hym selfe. And he is
a key and a steyre, by whyche the edifyce of
thys worlde is kepte stable & wythoute cor-
rumpynge. Boece. I accorde me greatly (q̃
I) And I haue appercyued alytle before,
that ỳ woldest saye thus. All were it so, ỳ it
were by a thynne suspeccyon. Phi. I trowe
wel (quod she). For as I trowe, thou ledest
nowe more ententyfye thyne eye, to loken
the very goodes. But nathlesse, ỳ thing that
I shall

I shalll tell the, yet ne sheweth not lasse to lo ken. Boece. what is that (quod I). Philoso. So as men trowe (quod she) and that right fully, that God gouerneth al thinges by the key of his goodnesse. And al these same thin ges that I haue taughte the hasten hem by naturel entēcyon to come to good, ther may no man doubten that they ne bene gouerned voluntaryly. And that they ne cōuerten hem of her owne good wyll to her ordeynoure. As that they bene accordyng and inclinyng to her gouernour and to her kynge. Boece. It mote nedes be so (quod I) for the realme ne shulde not seme blysfull, yf there were a yoke of mysdrawynges in dyuers partyes, ne the sauing of obediente thynges, ne shuld not be then. Philo. Is there nothynge (quod she) ý kepeth hys nature, that enforceth hym to gone ayenst God. Boece. No, quod I. P. And yf ý any thinge enforced hym to wyth stande God, myghte it auaylen at laste ayen hym that we haue graunted to be almygh ty by the right of blisfulnesse. Boece. Certes quod I, all vtterlye it ne myghte not auayle hym. Philoso. Then is there nothyng, quod she, that eyther maye or wyll wythstande to hys souerayne God. Boece. I trowe not, q I. Philyso. Then, quod she, is thyke the so uerayne God, that all thynges gouernethe strongly, and ordeyneth hem softly. Boece. Then sayd I thus, I delyte me, quod I, not onely in thendes or in the summe of the rea sons that thou haste concluded and proued, but thylke wordes that thou vseste, delyten me much more, so that at laste fooles, ý som tyme renden greate thynges, oughten bene ashamed of hem selfe, that is to sayne, that we fooles that reprehēden wyckedly ý thin ges that touchen goddes gouernaunce, we oughten bene ashamed our selfe. As I, that sayd that God refuseth onely the werkes of men, and ne entermeteth not of it. Philoso. Thou haste well herde, quod she, the fables of the poetes, how the gyauntes assayleden heuen, w̄ the goddes: but forsothe the debo nayrefore of God dysposed hem as it was worthy, ý is to sayn, distroyed ý giaūtes as it was worthy. But wylt ý that we reyionē togither thylkesame reasons. For perauen tureof such cōiunction may sterten vp some fayre sparke of soth. B. Do, q I, as lyste. P. wenest thou, quod she, ý God ne be almygh ty. Boece. No man is in doute of it certes, q I. Philoso. No wyght ne douteth it, yf he be in hys mynde, q she. But he that is almygh ty, there nys nothynge that he ne may. Boe. That is soth, quod I. Philo. May God do yuel, quod she. Boece. Nay forsoth, quod I, Philo. Than is yuell nothynge (q she) syth that he ne maye done none yuell, that maye done all thynges. Boece. Scornest thou me (q I) or els playest thou, or deceyuest thou me, that haste so wonnen wyth thy reasons the house of Dedalus so entrelasyng that it is vnable to be vnlaced, ý thou otherwhyle entrest there thou issuest, and otherwhyle is suest there thou entrest. Ne foldest thou not togyther by replication of wordes a maner wonderfull cercle or enuyronnyng of ý sim plicite dyuine. For certes a lytle here beforn whan thou began at blysfulnesse, thou say dest that it is souerayne good, and that god is the blysfulnesse, for whyche thou yaue me as a couenable yefte, that is to saine, that no wyght nys blysful, but if he be god also ther wyth, and saydest eke, that ý forme of good is the substaunce of God and of blysfulnesse. And saydest that thylke one is thylke same good, that is requyred and desyred of al the kynde of thinges. And thou prouedest in dis putyng, that God gouerneth all the thinges of the worlde, by the gouernaunce of boun tye: And saydest that al thinges wold obey en to hym, & saydest that the nature of yuell is nothynge. And these thynges shewdest thou not wyth no reasons taken fro wyth out, but by proues in cercles and homlyche knowynge. The whyche proues drawen to hem selfe her fayth and her accorde euerichе of hem of other. Philo. Than sayde she thus I ne scorne not, ne playe, ne disceyue the: but I haue shewed the thynge that is greatestе ouer al thynges, by the yefte of god, that we whylom prayden. For thys is the fourme of dyuine substaunce, that is such, that it ne sly deth not into vtterest forayne thynges, ne re ceyueth not no straunge thynges in hym. But right as Permenides sayde in greke, of thylke diuine substaunce: He sayd thus, that thylke dyuine substaunce turneth the world & the mouable cercle of thynges, whyle the ylke dyuine substaunce kepeth it selfe wyth out mouynges, that is to sayne, that he mo ueth neuer mo, & yet it moueth al other thyn ges

ges. But nathlesse, yf I haue styred reasons that be not taken fro wythoute the compace of the thynge, of the whyche we treaten, but reasons that ben bestowed within compace there nys not why thou shuldest merualen syth thou hast lerned by the sentence of Plato, that nedes the wordes mote bene cosyns to the thynges, of whyche they speken.

Felix qui potuit boni, fontem visere lucidū. Felix qui potuit grauis. ꝛc.

Lysed is that man that may sene the clere welle of good: Blysfull is he that maye vnbynden hym from the boundes of heuy earth. The poete of Thrace Orpheus, ý whylom had ryght greate sorowe, for the death of hys wyfe. After that he had maked & constrayned by hys wepely songes, the wodes mouable to rēne, and had maked the ryuers to stonden styl, and had maked the hartes & hyndes to ioynen dredelesse her sydes to cruell lyons, to herken hys songe, and had maked that the hare was not agaste of ý houde whych was pleased by songe: So whan the moost ardaunt loue of hys wyfe, brende the entrayles of hys breste, ne the songes y had ouercomen all thynges, ne myghten not aswagen her lorde Orpheus, he playned hym of the heauen goddes, which that were cruell to hym, he went hym to the houses of the he: And he tempered hys blandyshyng songes, by resounynge of strynges, and spake & songe in weppynge, all that euer he had receyued and laued out of the noble welles of his mother Caliope the goddesse. And he sange wyth as muche as he myght of weppynge, & wyth as much as loue, that doubled his sorowe myght yeuen hym and teach hym, and cōmoued the hell, and requyred & besoughte by swete prayer, the lordes of soules in hell of releasynges, that is to saye, to yelden hym hys wyfe. Cerberus the porter of hell, wyth hys thre heades was caught, & all abashed of the new songe. And ý thre goddesses, Furyes and vengeresses of felonyes, that tourmenten & agastē the soules by anoye woren sorowfull and sorye, and teares wepten for pyte. Tho was not the heade of Irion tourmented, by the ouerthrowynge whele. And Tantalus, that was distroyed by the woodnesse of longe thurst, dispysed the floodes to drynke. The foule that hyght Vultur, that eateth the stomake or the gyserne of Tityus is so fulfylled of hys songe, that it nyll eaten ne tyren no more. At the laste the Lorde and iuge of soules was moued to mysericordies and cryed: we bene ouercomē (q̃ he) yeue we to Orpheus hys wyfe to beare hym company, he hath well ybought her by hys songes and hys dyties: but we wyll putten alaw in thys, and couenaunte in the yefte, that is to sayn, ý tyl he be out of hel, yf he loke behinde hym, that hys wyfe shall come agayne vnto vs. But what is he that maye yeue a law to louers? loue is a greater law and a stronger to him selfe than any lawe that mē may yeuen. Alas, whan Orpheus and hys wyfe were almost at the termes of the night, that is to sayne, at the laste boundes of hell, Orpheus loked backewarde on Eurydice hys wyfe, and loste her, and was deade. Thys table apertayneth to you all, who so euer desyreth or seketh to lede his thought in to the souerayne daye, that is to saye to clerenesse of souerayne good. For who so euer be so ouercomen that he fixe his eyen into the pytte of hell, that is to sayne: who so euer sette hys thoughtes in erthly thynges, all ý euer he hath drawē of ý noble good celestiall, he leseth it, whan he loketh to the helles, thys is to sayne into lowe thynges of the earth.

¶ Thus endeth the thyrde boke of Boece, and here after foloweth the fourth.

Hec cum philosophia dignitate vultus, et oris grauitate seruata, leniter, suauiterq; cecinisset, Tum ego non diu penitus insiti merozis oblitus. &c.

When Philosophie had songen softly & delectably the forsayd thynges keppyng ỳ dignite of her chere, & the weyghte of her wordes, I thē that ne had all vtterly forzeten the wepyng and the mournynge that was set in myne herte, forbrake the entencion of her, that entended yet to sayne some other thynges.

O(quod I)thou that arte gyderesse of verye lyght, the thinges that thou hast sayd me hytherto, ben to me so clere and shewynge by the dyuyne lokynge of hem, and by thy reasons, that they ne mowen ben ouercomen. And thylke thynges, that thou toldest me, all be it so that I had whylom forzeten hem, for the sorowe of the wronge that hath be done to me: yet neuertheleſſe they ne weren not vtterly vnknowen to me. But thys same is namely a ryght greate cause of my sorowe, so ỳ as the gouernour of thynges is good, yf that yuels mowē ben by any wayes: or els yf that yuels passen wythout punyshyng, the which thyng only, how worthy is it to ben wōdred vpon. Thou consydrest it well thy selfe certaynly. But yet to this thynge there is yet an other thynge ioyned more to be wondred vpon. For felonye is emperesse, and floureth ful of rychesse, and vertue nys not all only wyth out medes, but it is cast downe, and eke forztroden vnder the fete of felonous folke: and it abyeth the tourmentes in stede of wycked felons. Of all whyche thynges there is no wyght maye maruayllen ynough ne complaynen, that such thynges be done in the reygne of god, that al thynges wote, and al thynges maye, and ne wyl not only but good thinges Then sayd she thus: Certes(quod she)that were a great maruayle, & an abashyng wyth out ende, and well more horrible then al the monsters, yf it were as thou wenest, that is to sayne, that in the ryghte ordayne house of so mocb a father and an ordaynour of meyne that the vessels that ben foule and vyle, shuld ben honoured and heryed, and the precious vessels shuld ben defouled and vyle. But it is not so, for yf the thynges, that I haue concluded a lytel here beforne, ben kept hole and vnaraced, thou shalte well knowe by the authorite of god(of the whose reygne I speke) that certes the good folke be alwaye myghty and shrewes ben alwaye outcaste and feble. Ne the vyces be neuer more wythout payne ne the vertues ne be not wythout mede. And that blysfulnesse cometh alway to good folke and infortune cometh alway to wicked folke And thou shalt well knowen many thynges of thys kynde, that shuld ceasen thy playntes and strengthen the wyth stedfast sadnesse. And for thou hast sene the forme of very blysfulnesse by me that haue whylom shewed it the, and thou haste knowen in whome blysfulnesse is set: althynge treated, that I trow be necessary to put forth, I shall shewen the the waye, that shall bryngen the ayen vnto thyne house: and I shall fyxe fethers in thy thought, by which it maye arysen in heyght, so that all tribulation ydone awaye, thou by my gydynge and by my pathe, and by my stedes, shalte mowen retourne hole and sounde into thy countrey.

Sunt etenim penne volucres michi,
Que celsa conscendunt poli Quas sibi cū velox mens induit. &c.

When for thy swyfte fethers ỳ surmounten the heyght of the heuen, when the swyft thought hath cloched it in tho feathers, it dyspiseth the hatefull erthes, and surmounteth the roūdenesse of the great ayre, and it seeth the cloudes behynde hys backe, & passeth the heyghte of the regyon of the fyre, that enchauffeth by the swyfte mouynge of the fyrmament, tyll that he aryseth into the houses, that bearen the sterres, and ioyneth the waye wyth the sunne Phebus, and felowshyppeth the waye of the olde colde Saturnus, & he ymaked a knyght of the clere sterre, that is to sayē, whē the thought is made goddes knight, by the sekynge of clere trouthe to comen to the verye knowlege of god. And thilk soule rēneth by ỳ

clerke of sterres, in al the places there as the shynynge nyght is ypaynted, that is to sayne the nyght that is cloudlesse. For on nyghtes that be cloudlesse, it semeth that the heauen were paynted wyth dyuers ymages of sterres. And whē he hath done there ynough, he shall forleten the laste heuen, and he shall presen and wenden on the backe of the swyft firmament, and he shal be maked parfyte of the worshypfull lyght of god. There holdeth the lorde of thinges the sceptre of hys might, and attempreth the gouernementes of the worlde and the shynynge iuge of thynges, stable in hym selfe, gouerneth ȳ swyft carte or wayne that is to sayne, the cyrculer mouynge of the sunne. And yf thy waye ledeth ȳ ayen, so that thou be brought thyder, then wylt thou saye, that is the countrye that thou requyrest, of whych thou ne haddest no mynde: but nowe it remembreth me well, here was I borne, here wol I fastē my degre, here wol I dwel. But yf the lyketh then to loken on the darknesses of the earth, that thou haste forleten, then shalte thou sene, that these felonous tyrauntes, that the wretched people dredeth nowe, shullen ben exyled from thylke fayre countrey.

Tū ego pape inquā, vt magna promittis. Nec dubito, quī possis efficere tu modo quē exitaueris, ne moreris.

Then sayd I thus: O I wōder me that thou beheteſt me so great thinges. Ne I ne doute not that thou ne mayst well performe that thou beheteſt: but I praye the thys that thou ne tarye not, to tel me thylke thynges, that thou hast moued. Ph. Fyrst (q̄ she) thou muste nedes knowe, that good folke ben alway strōge and myghtye, and the shrewes ben feble and deserte, and naked of all strengthes. And of these thynges certes euerych of hem is declared and shewed by other. For as good & euell ben two contraries, yf so be that good be sted faste, then sheweth the feblesse all openly. And yf thou knowe clerely the frelnesse of yuel, the stedfastnesse of good is knowen. But for as moche as the fayth of my sentence shal be the more ferme and haboundaunt, I woll gone by that one way and by that other, and I woll conferme the thynges that ben purposed nowe on thys syde, and nowe on that syde. Two thynges there ben, in whyche the effecte of all the dedes of mankynde standeth that is to sayne, wyll and power: and yf that one of these two fayleth, there nys nothynge that maye be done. For yf that wyll lacketh, there nys no wyghte that vndertaketh to do that he wol not done: And yf power fayleth the wyll nys but ydle, and stante for naught. And therof cometh it, that yf thou se a wight that wolde getten that he maye not getten, thou mayst not doute that power ne fayleth hym to hauen that he wolde. Boece. Thys is open and clere (quod I) ne it ne maye not bene denyed in no maner. Philo. And yf thou se a wyght (quod she) that hath done that he wolde done, thou nylt not doute, that he ne hath had power to done it. Bo. No (quod I) P. And in that that euerye wyght maye, in that mē holden hem mighty to done a thinge In so moche as a man is myghtye to done a thynge, in so moche men holde hym myghty: and in that that he ne maye, in that men demen hem to be feble. Boece. I confesse it well (quod I) Phi. Remembre the (quod she) that I haue gathered and shewed by the forsayde reasons that all the entencion of the wyll of mankynde, whyche that is ladde by dyuers studyes, hasteth to comen to blysfulnesse. Boece. It remembreth me wel (quod I) that it hath bene shewed. Philoso. And recordeth the nought then (quod she) that blysfulnesse is thylke same good that men requyren, so that when blysfulnesse is requyred of all. Boece. It recordeth me not (quod I.) For I haue it alwaye in my memorie fyxed. Phi. All folke then (quod she) good and eke badde enforcen hem wythout dyfference of entencion to comen to good. Boece. Thys is very consequence (quod I). Philoso. And certayne is (quod she) that by gettynge of good be men maked good. Boece. That is certayne (quod I) Philo. Then getten good men that they desyren. Boece. So it semeth (quod I.) P. But wycked folke (quod she) yf they getten the good that they desyren, they ne mowen not be wycked. Boece. So it is (quod I) P. Then so as that one & that other (quod she) desyren the good, and the good folke getten the good, and not the wycked folke: Then it is no doute that the good folke ne be myghty

and

and wycked folke be feble. Boece. Who so that euer douteth of thys, he ne maye not cõsyder the nature of thynges ne the cõsequẽce of reasons. Philoso. And ouer thys, quod she, yf that there ben two thynges that haue one same purpose by kynde, and that one of hem pursueth and perfourmeth that same thynge by naturell offyce, and that other ne may not done thylke offyce naturell, but foloweth by other maner, thẽ is couenable to nature, him that accomplysheth hys purpose kyndly, and yet he ne accomplysheth not hys owne purpose: whether of these two demest thou for more meghtye. Boece. Yf that I coniecte quod I, that thou woldest saye, algates I desyre yet to herken it more playnlye of the. Philoso. Thou nylte not thẽ denye, quod she, that the mouement of goynge nys in men by kynde. Boece. No forsoth, quod I. Philo. Ne thou doutest not, quod she, that thylke naturell offyce of goynge, ne be the offyce of fete. Boece. I ne doute it not, quod I. Philoso. Then, quod she, yf that a wyghte be myghtye to moue and goeth vppon hys fete, and another, to whome thylke naturel offyce of fete lacketh, enforseth hym to go crepynge on hys hande, whyche of these two oughte to be holden the more myghtye by ryght. Boece. Knytte forth, quod I, the remnaunt. Philosophia. For no wyght ne douteth, that he that may gone by naturel offyce of fete, ne be more myghtye then he that ne maye not. But the souerayne good, quod she, that is euen lyke purposed to the good and to the badde. The good folke seken it by naturell offyce of vertues, and shrewes enforcen hem to getten it by dyuers couetyses of earthly thynges, whyche that nys no naturell offyce to getten thylke souerayne good. Trowest thou that it be any otherwyse. Boece. Naye, quod I. For the consequence is open and shewynge of thynges that I haue graũted, that nedes good folke moten ben myghtye, and shrewes moten bene feble and vnmyghtye. Philosophia. Thou rennest aryght before me, quod she, and thys is the iudgemente, that is to sayne, I iuge of ryghte, as these leches bene wonte to hopen of sycke folke, when they apperceyuen, that nature is redressed and wythstandeth to the maladye. But for I se the nowe all redy to the wythstandynge, I shal shewe the more thylke and continuell reasons. For loke howe greatlye sheweth the feblenesse and infyrmite of wycked folke, that ne mowen not comen to that her naturell entencion leadeth hem: And yet almoste thylke naturell entencion constrayneth hem. And what were to demen then of shrewes, yf thylke naturell helpe had forlettẽ hem, the whyche naturell helpe of entencion goeth alwaye before hem, and is so greate, that vnneth it maye be ouercomen. Consyder then howe great defaute of power, and howe greate feblesse there is in wycked felonous folke, as who sayeth, ý greater thynge that is coueyted, and the desyre not accomplyshed, of the lasse myght is he that coueyteth it, and maye not accomplyshe. And for thy philosophie sayeth thus by souerayne good: Ne shrewes ne requyren not lyght medes ne vayne games, whych they ne maye not folowen ne holdẽ, but they kaylen of thylke sũme of the heyght of thynges, that is to sayne, souerayne good. Ne these wretches ne comen not to the effecte of souerayne good, the which they enforcen hem onely to getten by nyghtes and by dayes, in gettynge of whych good the strẽgth of good folke is ful wel yseene. For ryght as thou myghtest demen hym myghty of goynge, ý goeth on hys fete tyll he myght comen to thylke place, fro the whyche place there nys nothynge to desyre. Of the whych power of good folke men maye cõclude, that we wycked men semen to be barayne and naked of all strength. For why forletten they vertues & folowen vyces, nys it not for that they ne knowen not the goodes. But what thynge is more feble and more caytyfe, then is the blyndnesse of ignorauncc. or els they knowẽ wel whych thynges they oughtẽ folowen, but lechery and couetyse ouerthroweth hem mysturned. And certes so dothe dystemperaunce to feble men, that mowe not wrastlen ayen these vices. Ne knowe they not wel that they forletten the good wylfullye, and tournen hem wylfully to vyces. And in thys wyse they ne forletẽ not onely to be myghty, but they forleten al vtterly in any wyse for to

ben. For they that forletē the comune fyne of all thynges that ben, they forleten also therwythall for to ben. And perauenture it shuld semen to some folke, that thys were a marvayle to sayne, that shrewes, whych that conteynen the more partes of men, ne bene not, ne haue no beynge. But natheles it is so, and thus stante thys thinge. For they that be shrewes, I denye not, but that they be shrewes, but I denye symply and playnly that they ne be not, ne haue no beynge. For ryght as thou myghtest sayne of the carayne of a man, that it were a deed man: so graunt I wel forsoth that vicious folke ben wycked, but I ne may not absoiutely and symplye graunt that they ben. For thylke thynge that with holdeth order and kepeth nature, thylke thynge is and hath beynge. But what thynge fayleth that, that is to saye, he that forleteth naturel order he forleteth thylke beynge that is set in hys nature. But thou wolt sayne, ꝑ shrewes mowen. Certes that ne denye I not: but certes her power ne dyscendeth not of strength, but of feblenesse, for they mowen done wyckednesse, the whyche they ne myght not, yf they myghten dwellen in the forme and in the doynge of good people. And thylke power sheweth euydently, ꝑ they mowē ryght naught For so as I haue gadred and proued a lytell here before, that euyll is not, and so as shrewes may only but shreudnesse. Thys conclusyon is al clere, that shrewes ne mowē ryght naught, ne haue no power. And for as moch as thou vnderstandest whych is the strength of this power, I haue defynyshed a lytel here before, that no thynge nys so myghty as souerayne good. Boece. That is soth (q I) Philo. And thylke souerayne good maye done none euell. Boece. Certes no (q I) Philo. Is there any wyght thē (q she) that weneth that men mowen done al thynges. Boe. No man (q I) but yf he be out of hys wyt. Phi. But certes shrewes mowen don yuels (quod she) Boece. Yea wolde god (quod I) that they ne myghten done none. Phi. Then (quod she) so as he that is myghty to done onely good thinges, he maye done all thynges, and they that bene myghtye to done yuell thynges, ne mowen not all thynges, then is it open thynge and manyfest, that they that mowen done yuell ben of lasse power. And yet to proue this cōclusyon there helpeth me thys, that I haue shewed here before, that all power is to be nombred amonge thinges that men oughten requyre. And I haue shewed that all thynges that oughten bene desyred be referred to god, ryghte as to a maner heyght of her nature: but for to mowen done yuell and felonye, ne maye not ben referred to god. Then is not yuell of the nombre of thynges that oughten to bene desyred and requyred. Then is it open and clere that the power ne the mouynge of shrewes nys no power. And of all these thynges it sheweth well that the good folke ben certaynly myghty, and the shrewes doutlesse vnmyghty. And it is clere and opē that thylke sentence of Plato is very ¶ soth, that sayeth that onely wysemen maye done that they desyren, and shrewes mowen haunten that hem lyketh, but that they desyren, that is to sayne to come to souerayne good, they ne haue no power to accomplyshe that. For shrewes done what hem lyste, when by tho thynges in whych they delyten, they wenen to attayne to thylke good that they desyren, but they ne getten ne attayne not therto for vyces ne comen not to blyssfulnesse.

Quos vides sedere celsos Solii culmine regis Purpura claros nitente. ꝛc.

Who so that the couertures of her vayne apparaylles myght strypen of these proude kynges, that thou seest sytten an hygh in her chayres glytterynge in shynynge purpure, enuyronned wyth sorowfull armures, manassynge wyth cruell mouth, blowynge by woodnesse of herte, he shulde seue that thylke lordes bearen wythin her corages full strayte chaynes: for lecherye tourmenteth hem on that one syde wyth gredye venymes and troublable yre, that arayseth in hem the floode of troublynges, tourmenteth on that other syde, her thoughte or sorowe halte hem wery and ycaught, or slydynge and dysceyuynge hope tourmenteth hem. And therfore sythe thou seest one heed, that is to sayne, one tyraunt bearen so many tyrannyes, then ne dothe thylke tyraunt not that he desyreth syth he is caste downe wyth so many wycked lordes, that is to sayne, so many vyces that haue so wyckedly

wyckedly lordshyps ouer hym.

Vides ne igitur quãdo in ceno pro bra voluantur, que probitas luce resplendeat, in quo perspicuum est nunq̃ bonis premia. &c.

SEest thou not thē in how greate fylthe these shrewes ben ywrapped, and wyth whyche clerenesse these good folke shynen: In this sheweth it well that to good folk ne lacked neuer mo her medes, ne shrewes lacken neuer more tourmentes. For of al thinges that be done, thylke thynge for whyche any thynge is done, it semeth as by ryghte, that thylke thynge be ẏ mede of that, as thus yf a man renneth in the stadye or in the forlonge for the crowne: then lyeth the mede in the crowne for whych he rēneth. And I haue shewed that blysfulnesse is thylke same good for whych that all thynges ben done. Thē is thylke same good purposed to the werkes of mankynde, ryght as a cōmune mede, whych mede ne maye not be dysceuered from good folke: For no wyght as by ryght, from thens forth that hym lacketh goodnesse, ne shall be cleped good: for whyche thynge folke of good maners her medes ne forsakē hem neuer mo For al be it so that shrewes waxen as woode as hem lyst ayenst good folke, yet neuertheless the crowne of wysemen, ne shall not fallen ne fadē fro forayne shreudnesse, ne benymmen not fro ẏ corage of good people her propre honour. But yf any wyght reioysed hym of goodnesse, that he had taken fro wythout, as who sayeth, yf a man had hys goodnesse of any other mā then of hym selfe: certes he ẏ yaue hym thylke goodnesse, or els some other wyght myghte bynome it hym. But for as moche as to euery wyght hys propre bounte yeueth hym hys mede, then at erst shal he fayle of mede when he forleteth to be good. And at the last, so as al medes ben requyred, for mē wenen ẏ they be good, who is he that nolde deme, that he that is ryght myghtye of good, were parteless of mede. And of what mede shal he be reguerdoned. Certes of right fayre mede & ryght great, abouen all medes. Remembre the of thilke noble corallarie ẏ I yaue the a lytell here before, & gather it together in thys maner. So as god hym selfe is blysfulnesse, then is it clere & certayne, that all good people ben maked blysfull, for they ben good, and thylke people that ben blysful, it accordeth and is couenable to be goddes. Then is ẏ mede of people suche, that no day ne shall enpayren it, ne no wyckednesse shall dyrken it, ne power of no wyght ne shall not amenuse it, that is to sayne, that bene maked goddes. And syth it is thus, that good mē ne faylen neuer more of her mede, certes no mā ne may doute of the vndepartable payne of shrewes, that is to sayne, ẏ the payne of shrewes departeth not from hem selfe neuer mo. For so as good and euell, and payne & medes be contrarye, it mote nedes be, that ryght as we se betyden in guerdone of good, that also mote the payne of the yuel answere by the cōtrarye partyes to shrewes. Nowe then so as bountye and prowes ben mede to good folke also is shreudnesse it selfe tourmēt to shrewes Then who so euer is entched and defouled wyth payne, he ne douteth not, that he is entched and defouled wyth euell. Yf shrewes then wollen praysen hem selfe, may it semen to hem that they ben wythoutē party of tourment, syth they ben suche that the vttrest wickednesse, ẏ is to saye, wycked thewes, whych is the vttrest & worst kynde of shreudnesse, ne defouleth ne entcheth not hem only, but enfecteth & enuenymeth greatly. And also loke on shrewes, that ben the contrarye partye of good men, howe great payne feloushyppeth and fouleth hem: for thou hast lerned a lytel here before, that all thynge that is and hath beynge, is one, and thylke same one is good: then is thys ẏ consequence, ẏ it semeth well, that all thynge ẏ is & hath beynge, is good, ẏ is to sayne, as who sayeth, that beyng, vnite & goodnesse is al one. And in thys maner it foloweth then, ẏ al thynge that fayleth to be good, it stynteth for to be & for to haue anye maner beyng: wherfore it is ẏ shrewes stynten for to be ẏ they weren. But thylke other forme of mākinde, that is to sayne, ẏ fourme of the body wythout, sheweth that these shrewes weren whylom men, wherfore when they bene peruerted and tourned into malyce, certes thē they haue forlorne the nature of mankynde: But so as only bountye & prowesse maye enhaūsen euery man, ouer men: then mote it nedes be that shrewes, whyche

that shreudenesse hath caste oute of the condycyon of mankynde, bene put vnder the meryte and deserte of men. Then betydeth it, that yf thou seest a wyghte whyche that is transfourmed into vyces, thou mayest not wene that he be a man: For yf he be ardaunt in auaryce, and that he be a rauenour by vyolence of forayne rychesse, thou shalte sayne that he is lyke a wolfe. And yf he be felonous and wythouten reste, and exercyse hys tonge to chydynges, thou shalte lyken hym to the hounde. And yf he be a prvy awaytour hydde, and reioyseth hym to rauysh by wyles, thou shalte sayne hym lyke to the fore whelpes. And yf he be distempred & quaketh for yre, men shall wenen that he beareth the corage of a lyon. And yf he be dredful and flyenge, and dredeth thynges whych that ne oughten not to be dredde, men shal hold hym lyke to the harte. And yf he be slowe and astonyed and lache, men shall holde hym lyke to an asse. And yf he be lyghte and vnstedfaste of corage, and chaungeth aye his studyes, mē shall holde hym lyke to the byrdes. And yf he be plonged in foule and vncleane luxuryes, he is wythholden in the foule delyces of the foule sowe. Then foloweth it, ý he that forleteth bounte and prowesse, he forleteth to be a man, syth he ne maye not passen in the condicion of god, he is turned into a beest.

Uela Maricii ducis, Et vagas pelago rates, Eurus appulit insule Pulchra qua residens dea, Solis edita semine. &c.

EUrus the wynde aryued the sayles of Ulixes duke of the coūtre of Marice and hys wrandrynge shyppes by the see into ý yle ther as Circes ý fayre goddes doughter of the sunne dwelleth, that medleth to her newe gestes, drynkes that ben touched and maked wyth enchaūtemētes. And after that hyr hande myghty ouer the herbes had chaūged hyr gestes into dyuers maners, that one of hem is couered hys face wyth forme of a Boor, that other is chaunged into a Lyon of the countre of Marmorike, and hys nayles & hys tethe weren. That other of hem is newlyche chaunged into a wolfe, and howleth when he wolde wepe, that other goeth debonayrly in the house as a Tygre of Inde. But all be it so that the godheed of Mercury that is cleped the byrde of Archady hath had mercy of the duke Ulixes beseged wyth dyuers yuelles, and hath vnbounden hem fro the pestilence of hys hostesse, algates the rowers & the maryners hadden by thys ydrawen into hyr mouthes, and dronken the wycked drynkes. They that weren woxen swyne, hadden by thys ychaunged hyr meate of bread, for to eaten akorne of Dokes. None of hir lymmes ne dwelleth wyth hem hoole, but they haue lost the voyce and the body, only her thought dwelleth wyth hem stable, that wepeth and bewayleth the monstruous chaungynge that they suffren. O ouer lyght hande, as who sayeth feble and lyght is the hande of Circes the enchaunteresse, that chaūgeth the bodyes of folke into beestes to regarde and to compary son of mutacyon that is maked by vyces, ne the herbes of Circes ne be not myghty, for al be it so that they may chaungen the lymmes of the body, algate yet they may not chaunge the hertes, for wythin is yhyd the strength & the vygoure of mē in the secretour of hyr hertes, that is to sayne, the strength of reason, but thylke venymes of vyces to drawē a mā to hem more myghtely then ý venym of Circes, for vyces bene so cruell that they persen and thorowe passen the courage wythin, and though they ne anoye not the body, yet vyces wooden to destroyen men by wounde of thought.

Tu ego fateor, inq̃, nec iniuria dici video viciosos, tam et si humani corporis speciem seruent. &c.

THen sayd I thus: I confesse & am aknowe it (q̃ I) ne I ne se not that men maye saye, as by ryght, that shrewes ben chaunged in to beestes, by the qualite of her soules, all be it so that they kepen yet the forme of the bodye of mankynde: but I wolde not of shrewes, of whych the thought cruell and woode, woodeth alwaye to the destruccion of good men, that it were lefull to hem to done that.

Certes (quod she) ne it is not lefull to hem as

as I shall wel shewe the in couenable place: but natheleſſe yf ſo were that thilke that men wene ben leful to shrewes, were bynommed hē, ſo that they ne myght not anoyen or done harme to good men, certes a great partye of the payne to shrewes shulde ben alleged and releued. For all be it ſo that it ne ſeme credyble thynge perauenture to ſome folke, that it mote nedes be ÿ the shrewes ben more wretches and ſely, whan they may full doone and parfourme that they coueyten, than yf they myght not accomplyſte that they coueyten: For yf ſo be that it be wretchydneſſe to wylnē to don yuel, than is it more wretchedneſſe to mowē done yuell, without which mowyng, the wretched wyl shulde languyſhe without effecte. Than ſythe euerye of theſe thynges hath his wretchydneſſe, that is to ſayne, wyl to done yuell, and mowyng to doone yuell, it mote nedes be that they shrewes be conſtrayned by her vnſelyneſſes, that wolen and mowen and parfourmen felonyes and shreudneſſes. Boece. I acorde me (q I) but I deſyre greatly, that shrewes loſten ſoone thylke vnſelyneſſe, that is to ſayn, that shrewes weren diſpoyled of mowyng to done yuel. Phi. So shullen they (q ſhe) ſoner perauenture than thou woldeſte, or ſoner than they hem ſelfe wene: for there nys nothing ſo late in ſo ſhort boundes of thys lyfe, that is longe to abyde, namely to a courage inmortell. Of whyche shrewes the great hope and the hye compaſſynges of shreudneſſe, is ofte deſtroyed by a ſodeyn ende or they be ware. And that thyng eſtablyſched to shrewes, the ende of her shreudneſſe, for if that shreudneſſe maketh wretches than muſt he nedes be moſt wretche that longeſt is a shrewe, the whyche weiked shrewes wolde I demyn aldermooſt caytyfes and vnſely, yf her shrewdneſſe ne were fynyſched at leeſt way by vtterest dethe, for yf I haue concluded ſothe of the vnſelyneſſe of shrewdnes, than ſheweth it plainly, that thilke wretchednes is wythouten ende, the whych is certayn to be perdurable. Boece. Certes (q I) thys conclusyon is harde & wonderfull to graūte. But I knowe well that it accordeth moche to thynges that I haue graunted here beforne. Philo. Thou haſte (q ſhe) ryght eſtymacyon of thys. But who ſo euer wene that it be a harde thynge to accorde hym to a conclusyon, it is ryght that he ſhewe that ſomme of ÿ premiſſes ben falſe, or els he mote ſhewe that the collacyon of propoſycyons nys not ſpedeful to a neceſſarye conclusyon. And yf it ne be not ſo, but ÿ the premyſſes ben ygraunted, there nys not why he shulde blame the argument. For thys thynge that I shall tell the nowe, ne shall not ſeme laſſe wonderfull, but of the thynges that ben taken. Also it is neceſſarye, as who ſaythe it foloweth of that which that is purpoſed beforne. Boe. What is that (q I) Phi. Certes (q ſhe) that is, ÿ theſe wycked shrewes be more blyſſfull or els laſſe wretches that abyen ÿ tourmentes that they haue deſerued, than yf no payne of Juſtyce ne chaſtyſed hem. Ne thys ne ſaye I not nowe, for that any mā might thynke that the maners of shrewes ben coryged & chaſtyſed by vengeaunce, and that they be brought to the ryght waye by the drede of tourment, ne for that they yeuen to other folkes enſample to flyen fro vyces. But I vnderſtande yet in another maner, that shrewes ben more vnſely whan they ne be not punyſched, all be it ſo that there ne be had no reaſon or law of correction ne none enſample of lokynge. Boece. And what maner shall that ben (q I) other than hathe be tolde here beforne. Phi. Haue we not graunted than (q ſhe) that good folke ben blyſſfull, and shrewes ben wretches. Boece. yes (q I) Philo. Than (q ſhe) yf that anye good were added to the wretchednesſe of any wyght, nys he not more weleful, than he that ne hathe no medlyng of good in hys ſolitarye wretchednes. Boece. So ſemyth it (q I.) Philo. And what ſayeſt thou than (q ſhe) of thylke wretche that lacketh al goodes, ſo that no good nys medled in his wretchednesſe, and yet ouer all hys wyckednesſe, for whyche he is a wretche, that there be yet another yuell anexed and knyt to hym, shall not men demen hym more vnſely, than thylke wretche, of whyche the vnſelyneſſe is releued by the participacyon of ſome good. Boece. Why ſholde he not (q I.) Phi. Than certes (q ſhe) han shrewes whan they ben punyſſhed ſomwhat of good anexed to hyr shrewdneſſe, that is to ſayne, the ſame payne that they ſuffrē, which that is good, by ÿ reaſon of Juſtice. And whā thilke ſame shrewes eſcapen without tourmēt, thā haue they ſomwhat more of yuel, yet ouer the wyckednesſe that they han done, that is to ſayn, defaute of

paynes, whiche defaute of payne thou haste graunted is yuell, for the deserte of felonye. Boece. I ne maye not denye it (q I) Phi. Moche more than (q she) ben shrewes vnselye whan they ben wrongfully delyuered fro payne, than whã they ben punished by rightfull vengeaunce. But thys is open thynge and clere, that it is ryght that shrewes ben punyshed, and it is wyckednesse and wronge that they escapen vnpunyshed. Boece. Who might denye it (q I) Philo. But (q she) may anye man denye that all that is ryght ne is good: and also the contrarye, that all that is wronge is wycked. Boece. Certes (q I) these thynges ben clere ynough, and that we haue concluded a lytell here before. But I pray the that thou tel me yf thou accordest to letten no tourment to the soules, after that the body is ended by the deth, that is to sayn vnderstandest thou aught, that soules haue anye tourment after the dethe of the bodye. Phi. Certes (q she) yea, and that ryght great of whyche soules (q she) I trowe that some ben tourmented by asprenesse of payne, and some soules I trowe ben exercysed by a pourgynge mekenesse, but my counsayle nys nat to determyne of thys paynes. But I haue trauayled and tolde yet hyderto, for thou shuldest knowe that the mowynge of shrewes, whyche mowynge the semeth to be vnworthy, nys no mowynge, and eke of shrewes, of whyche thou playnedest that they ne were nat punyshed that thou woldest se that they ne weren neuer mo withouten the tourmentes of her wyckednesse. And of the lycence of the mowynge to done yuell, that thou praydest that it myght sone be ended, & that thou woldest fayne lernen that it ne shulde nat longe endure. And that shrewes ben more vnsely yf they were of lenger durynge, and moost vnsely yf they weren perdurable. And after thys I haue shewed the, that more vnsely ben shrewes whan they escapen without her ryghtfull payne, than whan they bene punyshed by ryghtfull vengeaunce. And of thys sentence foloweth it, that than ben shrewes constrayned at the laste with moost greuous tourment, whã men wene that they ne be nat punyshed. Boece. Whan I consyder thy reasons (q I) I ne trowe nat that men sayn any thynge more verely. And yf I tourne ayen to the studyes of men, who is he to whom it shulde seme, that he ne shulde nat only leuen these thynges, but eke gladly herken hem. Philo. Certes (q she) so it is, but men maye nat, for they haue theyr eyen so wont to the derknesse of erthly thynges, that they ne maye nat lyfte hem vp to the lyght of clere sothfastnesse. But they bẽ lyke to bydes of whych the night lyghtneth her lokynges, and the day blyndeth hem. For whã men loken nat the ordre of thynges, but her lustes and talentes, they wene that eyther the leue or the mowynge to done wyckednesse, or els the scapynge wythout payne be weleful. But consyder the iugemẽt of the perdurable lawe for yf thou conferme thy courage to the best thynges, thou ne hast no nede of no Juge to yeuen the pryce or mede, for thou hast ioyned thy selfe to the moost excellent thynges. And yf thou haue enclined thy studies to the wycked thynges, ne seke no foreyne wrekery out of thy selfe, for thou thy selfe hast thrist thy selfe in no wycked thynges, ryght as thou mightest lokẽ by diuers tymes the foule erth and the heuen, & that all other thynges stynten fro without, so that thou were in neyther ne se nothynge more. Than sholde it semen to the, as by only reason of lokyng, that thou were nowe in the sterres & nowe in the erth, but the people loketh nat on these thynges. What than, shall we than aproche vs to hem that I haue shewed that ben lyke to beestes. And what woldest thou sayn of thys, yf that a man had al forlorne hys sight, and had forgyeten that he euer sawe, and wened that nothing fayled him of perfection of mankynde. Nowe we which mightẽ sene the same thynges, wold we nat sayne that he were blynde, ne also ne accordeth nat the people to that I shal sayn, the which thing is susteyned by as strounge foundementes of reason, that is to sayn, that more vnsely ben they that dõ wrõges to other folke, than they that the wronge suffren. Boe. I wolde heren thilke same reasons (q I) Philo. Denyest thou (q she) that all shrewes ne ben worthy to haue tourment. Nay (q I) Philo. But (q she) I am certayne by many reasons, that shrewes ben vnsely. Boece. It accordeth (quod I) Phil. Than ne doutest thou not (q she) that thylke folke that ben worthy of tourment, that they ne be wretches. Boece. It accordeth well (quod I) Philoso. If thou were

than

thā sette a iuge or a knower of thynges, whether trowest thou that men shulde tourmenten hem that hathe done wronge, or els hem that suffred the wronge. Boece. I doute not (q I) that I nolde do suffycient satisfaction, to hem that haue suffred wronge, by the sorowe of hem that hath doone wronge. Philo. Than semeth it (q she) that the doer of wronge is more wretche, than he that suffred wronge. Boece. That foloweth well (q I) Philo. Than (q she) by these causes and by other causes, that ben enforced by the same rote, that fylth or synne by the propre nature of it maketh men wretches, and it sheweth wel, that the wronges that men don nys nat the wretchednesse of hym that receyueth the wronge, but the wretchednesse of hym that dothe the wrong. But certes (q she) these orators or aduocates done all the contrary, for they enforcen hem to commoue the Juges to haue pyte of hem that done the greuaunces and the wronges, the which shrewes it were a more couenable thynge, that the accusours or aduocates, nat wroth, but pyteous and debonayre ledden tho shrewes that haue done wronge to the iugement, ryght as men leden syke folke to the leche, for that they shulden sekyn out the maladyes of synne by tourment. And by thys couenant eyther the entente of aduocates shulde cessen in all, or els yf the offyce of the aduocates wolde better profyten to men, it shuld be tourned in to the habyte of accusacyō, that is to sayn, they shulden accuse shrewes and nat excusen hem. And eke the shrewes hem selfe, yf it were lefull to hem to sene at any clyfte the vertue that they haue forletten, and sawen that they shuld putten adowne the fylthes of her vyces by the tourmentes of paynes, they ne oughten nat ryght for ÿ recompensacyon, for to getē hem bounte and prowesse, whiche that they haue loste, demen and holde that the ylke paynes weren tourmentes to hem, and eke they wolden refuse the attendaunce of her aduocates, and taken hem selfe to her Juges and to her accusours, for ÿ which it betydeth, that as to the wyse folkes, there nys no place yletten to hate, ÿ is to sayne, that hate ne hath no place amonge wyse men. For no wight nyl haten good men, but yf he were ouer moche a foole and for to haten shrewes, it nys no reason for ryght as languyssyhynge is maladye of body ryght so ben vyces and synne maladye of courage. And so as we ne deme nat that they whych that ben syke of her body, ben worthy to ben hated, but rather worthy of pyte. Wel more worthy nat to ben hated, but for to ben had in pyte ben they, of which the thoughtes ben constrayned by felonous wyckednesse, that is more cruell than any languyssyhynge of body.

Quid tātos iuuat excitare motus,
Et propria fatum sollicitate manu?
Si mortem petitis, propinquat ipsa,
Sponte sua, volucres nec remorantur equos. ꝛc.

What delyteth you to excyten so great mouynge of hatredes, and to hastē and busyen the fatal disposycyon of your deth with your propre handes, that is to sayn, by batayls or conteke? For yf ye axen the dethe, it hasteth hym of hys owne wyll, ne dethe ne taryeth nat hys swyfte horse. And the men that the serpentes, and the lyon, and the tygre, and the beere, and the bore, seken to sleen wyth theyr tethe, yet thylke same men seken to sleen euerych of hem other wyth swerde. Lo, for her maners ben dyuers and discordaunt, they mouen vnryghtful hostes ꝛ cruel batayles, and wylnen to perysshe by entrechaungynge of dartes, but the reason of cruelte nys nat ynough rightful, wylte thou thā yelden a couenable guerdon to the desertes of men? loue rightfully good folkes, and haue pyte on shrewes.

Hinc ego video inq̄, que sit vel felicitas vel miseria in ipsis proborum atq̄ improborum meritis constituta. Sed in hac ipsa fortuna populari. ꝛc.

Hys I se well (q I) eyther what blisfulnesse, or els what vnselynesse is establysshed in the desertes of good men and of shrewes. But in thys ylke fortune of the people I se somwhat of good, and somwhat of yuell. For no wyse

wyse man had not leuer be exiled poore and nedye, and nameleſſe, than for to dwellen in hys cyte, and flouren of rycheſſe, and be redoutable of honour, and ſtronge of power. For in thys wyſe more clerelye and wytneſfullye is the offyce of wyſe men treated, than the blyſſulneſſe of power, and gouernours, is as it were ſhadde amōges the people, that be neyghbours and ſubiectes, ſythe that namely pryſon, lawe, and theſe other tourmentes of laufull paynes, be rather owed to felonous cytezyns: for the whyche felonous cytezyns the paynes be eſtablyſched, more thā for good people. Boe. than I meruayle greatly (q I) why that the thynges be ſo myſſe entrechaunged, that tourmentes of felonyes preſſen and confounden good people, & ſhrewes rauyſchen medes of vertue, and ben in honours and great eſtates. And I deſyre eke for to weten of the, what ſemeth the to be the reaſon of thys ſo wrongful a conclusyon. For I wolde wonder well the laſſe, yf I trowed that all thynges were medled wyth fortunous hap. But nowe crepeth and encreaſeth myn aſtonyenges god gouernour of thynges that ſo as god yeueth oftymes to good men goodes and myrthes, and to ſhrewes yuels and aſpre thynges: and yeueth ayen to good folke hardeneſſe, and to ſhrewes he graūteth hem her wyll, and that they deſyren. What dyfference maye there be bytwene that that god dothe, & happe of fortune, yf men knowe not the cauſe why it is. Philo. Ne it is no meruayle (q ſhe) though that men wenen, that there be ſomwhat folyſſhe and confuſe, whan the reaſon of the ordre is vnknowen: but although that thou ne knowe not the cauſe of ſo great a dyſpoſycion, natheleſſe, for as moche as god the good gouernour attempreth and gouerneth the world, ne doute the not but all thynges ben don aryght.

Si quis Arcturi ſidera neſcit, Mergatq; ſeras equore flammas, Propinqua ſummo cardine labi, Cum nimis ſeleris explicet ortus, Cur legat tardus plauſtra Bootes. &c.

Who ſo that knowe not the ſterres of Arcture, turned to ꝑ ſouerayn centre or poynte, that is to ſayne, tourned nyghe to the ſouerayne pole of the fymament, and wote not why the ſterre Bootes paſſeth or gathereth hys waynes, & drencheth hys late flambes in ꝑ ſee, and why that Bootes the ſterre vnfoldeth hys ouerſwyfte aryſynges, than ſhall he wondrē of the lawe of the hygh ayre. And eke, yf that he ne know not why that the hornes of the full moone waren pale and infecte, by the boundes of the derke nyght, and howe the moone derke and confuſe, diſcouereth the ſterres that ſhe had couered by her clere byſage. The comune erroure moueth folkes and maketh wery her baſyns of braſſe by thylke ſtrokes, that is to ſaye, that there is a maner people that hyght Corybantes, that wenen that whā the moone is in the eclypſe that it be enchaunted, and therfore for to reſcue the moone, they beaten her bazyns wyth thylke ſtrokes. Ne no man ne wondreth whā the blaſtes of the wynde Chorus, beten the ſtrondes of the ſee, by quakyng flodes. Ne no man ne wondreth whan the weyght of the ſnowe, harded by the colde, is reſolued by the brennynge heate of Phebus the ſonne, for here ſene men redily the cauſes. But the cauſes yhydde, that is to ſayne in heuen, troublē the breſtes of men. The mouable people is aſtonyed of all thynges that comen ſelde and ſodaynly in oure age, but the troubly erroure of oure ignorauncе departeth fro vs, ſo that yf they wyſten the cauſe why that ſuche thynges betyden, certes they ſhuldē ceaſe to ſeme wonders.

Ita eſt inq̄. Sed cum tui muneris ſit latentium rerum cauſas euoluere, velataſq; caligine explicare rationes queſo vti hinc decernas. &c.

Thus it is (q I) but ſo as thou haſte yeuen or beheyght me to vnwrap the hydde cauſes of thynges, and to diſcouer me ꝑ reaſons couered wō derkneſſe, I praye the, that thou deuyſe and iuge me of thys mater, and that thou do me to

me to vnderstande it, for this myracle of this wondre troubleth me right greatly. And thā she a lytell whatsmylynge sayde. Thou cleapest me (q̃ she) to tell that is greatest of all thynges, that mowen ben asked, and to the which questiō vnneth is there aught ynough to lauen it, as who saith, vnneth is there any thyng to answere perfetely to thy questyon, for the mater of it is such, that whan o doute is determyned and cutte awaye, there waxen other doutes wythout nombre, ryght as the heedes of Idre the serpent waxen, the which serpent Hercules slough: ne there ne were no manere ne none ende, but yf a wight cōstrayned the doutes, by a ryght lyuely and quycke fyre of thought, that is to sayne, by vygoure and strength of wytte. For in this mater men weren wonte to makeu questyōs of the symplicite of the purueyaunce of god, and of the ordre of destyne, and of sodeyne hap, & of knowynge of predestynacyon diuyne. And of the lyberte of frewyll, the whiche thynges thou thy self apperceyuedest wel, of what weight they ben. But for as moch as the knowynges of these thynges is a maner porcyon or medycine to ȳ, all be it so that I haue lytel tyme to doone it, yet neuerthelesse I wolde enforcen me to shewē somwhat of it: but al though the norysshynges of dyte of musyke delyteth the, thou muste suffren and forbearen a lytell of thylke delyte, whyle that I weue to the resons knytte by ordre. Boe. As it lyketh to the (q̃ I) so do. Philo. Tho spake she ryght as by another begynnyng, and sayd right thus. The engendryng of all thynges (q̃ she) and all the progressyons of mouable nature, and al that moueth in any maner, taketh his causes, hys ordre and hys fourmes, of the stablenesse of diuyne thought: And thylke diuyne thought that is set and put in the toure, that is to sayne, in the heyght of the symplicyte of god, stablysheth manye maner gises to the thynges that ben to done, the whyche maner wyan that men loken it, in the pure clennesse of the dyuyne intellygence, is cleaped purueyaunce. But whan thylke maner is referred by men, to thynges that it moueth or dysponeth, than of olde men it was cleaped destenye, the whyche thynges, yf that anye wight loketh wel in hys thoutt, the strength of that one and of that other, he shall lyghtly mowe sene, that these two thynges ben diuers. For pourueyaunce is thylke dyuyne reason, that is establysched in the souerayne prynce of thynges, the whych pourueyaunce dysponeth all thynges. But certes destynye is the disposycyon and the ordynaunce cleuynge to mouable thynges, by the whyche disposycyon the pourueyaunce knytteth all thynges in her ordre: For pourueyaunce embraseth all thynges to heape, all though they be dyuers, and all though they be infynite, but destenye certayne departeth and ordayneth all thinges syngulerly, and deuydeth in mouyng, in places, in formes, and in tymes, as thus: Let the vnfoldynge of temporall ordynaunce assembled and oned in the lokynge of the diuyne thought be cleaped purueyaūce and thylke same assemblynge and onynge deuyded and vnfolden, lette that be called destenye. And al be it so that these thynges ben diuers, yet neuerthelesse hanged that one on that other, for why, the ordre destynable procedeth of the symplycyte of pourueyaunce. For ryght as a werkeman perceyueth in hys thought, the forme of a thynge that he woll make, and moueth the effecte of the werke, and leadeth that he had loked before in his thought symply and presently by corporal ordynaunce: certes ryght so god in his purueyaunce dysponeth syngulerlye and stably, the thynges that be to done, but he admynistreth in maners and in dyuers tymes by destenye, thylke same thynges that he hath disponed, than whether destenye be exercised eyther by some diuyne spirytes, seruauntes to the dyuyne pourueyaunce, or els by some soule, or els by all nature seruyng to god, or els by the celestyall mouynges of sterres, or els by the vertue of aungels, or els by dyuers subtyltie of dyuels, or els by any of hem, or els by hem all, the destynable ordynaunce is wouen and accomplysched. Certes it is open thyng that the pourueyaunce is an vnmouable and symple fourme of thynges to doone, and the mouable bonde and the temporall ordynaunce of thynges, whych that the diuyne symplicite of pourueyaunce hath ordayned to done, that is destenye. For whiche it is that all thynges that ben put vnder destenye, ben certes subiectes vnto pourueyaunce, to whiche pourueyaunce destenye it selfe is subiecte and vnder, but some thinges ben put vnder purueyaūce, that surmounten the ordynaunce of desteny:

And tho

And tho ben thylke that stablye ben fyxed nyghe to the fyrst godheed, they surmounten the ordre of destinable mouablyte. For ryght as cercles turnen aboute a same centre or aboute a poynte, thylke cercle that is innerest or moste within, he ioyneth to ꝑ symplesse of ꝑ myddle, & is as it were a centre or a poynte to that other cercles, that tournē about him: and thilke that is vtterest, compassed by a larger enuyronnynge, is vnfolde by larger spaces, in somoche as it is fertherest fro the myddelest symplycite of the poynte. And yf there be any thing that knytteth and felouschippeth him selfe to thylke myddle poynte, it is constrayned in to symplycite, that is to saye, in to vnmouablite, and it ceaseth to ben shadde & flytte dyuersly. Right so by semblable reason thylke thynge that departeth furtherest fro the fyrste thought of god, it is vnfolden and also submytted to greater bondes of destyne, and in so moche is the thynge more free and loce fro dignyte, as it asketh & holdeth nerre to thylke centre of thynges, that is to sayne, to god. And yf the thyng cleaueth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of god, and be wythout mouynge, certes it surmounteth the necessyte of destenye. Than suche comparyson as is skyllynge to vnderstandynge, and of thynge that was engendred to thyng that is of tyme to eternyte, and of the cercle to the cēntre, ryght so is the ordre of mouable destyne, to the stable symplycite of pourueyaunce.

Thylke ordynaunce moueth the heuen and the sterres, and attempreth the elementes togyder amonge hem selfe, and transformeth hem by entrechaungeable mutacyon. And thylke same ordre neweth ayen all thynges growyng and fallyng adowne, by semblable progressyons of sedes and of sexus, that is to sayne, male and female: and thys ylke ordre constrayneth the fortunes and the dedes of men by a bonde of causes, not able to be vnbounden: the whiche destinable causes whan they passen out fro the begynnynges of vnmouable purueyaunce, it mote nedes be that they ne be not mutable, as thus: Be the thynges wel gouerned, yf that ꝑ symplicite dwelling in the diuyne thought, sheweth forth the ordre of causes vnable to be bowed. And this ordre constrayneth by the propre stabylite the mouable thynges, or els they shulden flete fo lily. For whiche it is, that thynges semen confuse and troublye to vs men, for we ne mowen not consyder thylke ordynaunce. Neuertheles, the propre maner of euery thing, dressyng him to good disponeth hem all, for there nys nothyng done for yuell, for thylke thyng that is done by wycked folke, nys not don for yuel. The which shrewes, as I haue shewed ful plenteously seke good, but wycked errour misturneth hem, ne the ordre comyng fro the poynte of souerayne good, ne enclynteh not fro hys begynnynge. But thou maylte saye, what vnrest may ben a worse confusyon, thā that good men haue somtyme aduersyte, and somtyme prosperyte: and shrewes haue now also thynges that they desyren, and nowe thynges that they haten. Whether men lyue nowe in suche holynesse of thought, as who sayth, be men nowe so wyse, that suche folke as they demen to be good folke or shrewes, that it mote nedes be, that folke be suche as they wenen. But in this maner domes of mē discorden, that thilke men that some folke demen worthy of mede, other folke deme hem worthy of tourment, but let vs graunt: I suppose that some man may well deme or knowe the good people and the badde, maye he than knowe and se thylke innerest attemperaunce of corage, as it hath be wonte to be sayde of bodyes, as who saythe: may a man speken of complexions and attempraunce of bodies, ne it ne is not, as who sayth, but it is lyke a merauyle or a myracle to hem that ne knowen it not, why that swete thynges be couenable to some bodyes that ben hole, and to some people bytter thynges be couenable: & also why some people ben holpen w̄ light medicynes, and some people ben holpen with bytter medicines: but natheleſſe tho that knowen the maner & the attempraunce of heale & of maladie, ne meruayleth it nothyng. But what other thing semeth helth of corages but boūte: & what other thyng semeth maladi of corage but vices. Who is els keper of good & driuer a way of yuel, but god the gouernour & leder of thoughtes: the whiche god, whan he hath beholden from the hygh toure of his purueyaunce, he knoweth what is couenable to any wight, & leaneth hem that he wote wel that is couenable to hē. Lo, herof cometh & herof is doone this myracle of the ordre destynable whan god that all knoweth doth such thyng, of whych thyng vnknowynge folke ben astonyed,

nyed, but for to constrayne, as who sayeth, but for to comprehende and tel a fewe thynges of the dyuine depenesse, the whych that mannes reason maye vnderstande. Thylke man that thou wenest to bene rygh iuste & rygh keppyng of equite, the contrary of that semeth to the dyuine purueyaunce that all wote. And Lucan my familyer telleth, that the victorious cause lyked to the gods, & the causes ouercome lyketh to Caton. Thanne what so euer thou maist sene that is done in this worlde vnhoped or els vnknowen, certes it is the right orde of thinges, but as to thywicked opinion, it is a confusion. But I suppose ý some man be so wel thewed, that the dyuine iugement & the iugemēt of mankynde accorden hem togyther of him: but he is so vnstedfast of corage, that if any aduersite come to him, he wol forleten perauēture to contynue innocencie, by the whyche he ne may not withholden fortune: than the wyse dispensacion of god spareth hym, the which man aduersite myghte enpayren, for ý God wyl not hym to trauayle, to whō ý trauayle nys not couenable. An other man is perfyte in al vertues, and is an holy man & nygh to God, so that the purueyaunce of God wold deme, that it were a felony that he were touched with anye aduersytees, so that he woll suffre, that suche a man be wyth any bodyly malady moued. But so (as sayd the philosophre) ý more excellent is by me said in great that vertues haue edifyed the body of the holy man, & ofte tyme it betydeth, that ý sūme of thynges that bene to done is taken to gouerne to good folke, for ý the malice haboūdaunt of shrewes shulde bene abated. And god yeueth and departeth to other folke prosperitees and aduersitees medled to heape, after the qualyte of her corages, and remordethe some folke by aduersitees, for they ne shulde not waxen proude by longe welefulnes. And other folke he suffreth to be trauayled wyth harde thinges, for that they shulde confermeu the vertues of corage, by the exercitaciō of vsage of pacience. And other folke dreden more than they oughten, the whyche they myghten wel bearen, and some dispyse that they mowe not beare, and thylke folke God leadeth in to experience of hem selfe by aspre and sorowfull thynges. And manye other folke haue bought honourable renome of this worlde, by the price of gloriouse deth And some men that ne mowe not bene ouercomen by tourment haue yeuen ensample to other folke, that vertue maye not bene ouercomen by aduersitees. And of all these thynges there nys no dout, that they ne ben done rightfully and ordaynly, to the parfite good of hem, to whom we sene these thynges betyde. For certes that aduersities cometh sōtyme to shrewes, and somtyme that they desyren, it cometh of these forsayd causes. And of sorowful thinges that betiden to shrewes certes no mā ne wondreth, for all men wene that they haue deserued it, & that they bene of wicked merite. Of which shrewes the turmente agasteth somtyme other to done felonyes: and somtyme it amendethe hem that suffreth the tourmentes. And the prosperyte that is yeuēto shrewes, sheweth a great argumente to good peple, what thynge they shulde demen of thylke welfulnesse, whyche prosperite mē sene ofte serue to shrewes: In whyche thinge I trow that God dispenseth for parauenture the nature of some mā is so ouerthrowyng to yuell and so vncouenable, ý the nedy pouerte, of hys houcholde myght rather agreue hym to done felonyes, and to the maladye of hym God putteth remedy to yeuen hym richesse. And some other man beholdeth hys cōscience defouled wyth synnes and maketh cōparyson of thys fortune and of hym selfe, and dredethe parauenture that the blysfulnesse, of whyche the vsage is ioyfull to hym, that the lesynge of thylke blysfulnesse ne be not sorowfull to hym, & therfore he wolde chaunge hys maners: and for he dredeth to lese hys fortune, he forletethe hys wyckednesse. To other folkes welfulnesse is yeuen vnworthylye, the whyche ouerthroweth hem in to destructiō that they han deserued, and to some other folke is yeuē power to punishē, for that it shal be cause of contynuacyon, and exercysynge to good folkes, and cause of turmēt to shrewes. For so as there nys none aliaunce bitwene good folkes and shrewes, ne shrewes ne mowen not accorden amonge hem selfe: & why not? For ý shrewes discorden of hem selfe by her vices the which vices al to renden her cōsciences, and done oft tyme the thinges, which thynges whan they haue doone hem, they deme that tho thynges ne shuld not haue be

done, for whyche thynge the souerayne purueyaunce hath maked ofte tyme myracle: so that shrewes haue maked shrewes to bene good men. For whã that some shrewes sene that they suffre wrõgfully felonyes of other shrewes, they waxen eschauffed in to hate of hem that annoyed hem, and retournẽ to the fruite of vertue. Than they studyen to be vnlike to hem that they haue hated. Certes onely is thys the dyuyne myght, to the whyche myght yuels bene than good, whan it vseth the yuels couenably, and draweth out the effecte of any good, as who sayeth, that yuell is good onely to the myghte of God, for the might of god ordeyneth thylke yuel to good For one ordre enbraceth all thynges, so that what wyghte departeth from the reason of thylke ordre that is assygned to hym, algates yet he slydeth in to another ordre, so that nothyng is lefull to foly in the realme of dyuyne purueyaunce, as who sayeth, nothyng is wythout ordynaunce in the realme of dyuyne pourueaunce, syth that the ryght strõg God gouerneth all thynges in thys worlde for it is not leful for men to comprehende by wyt ne vnfolden by worde all the subtyl ordynaunce and the dyspoſycyou of the diuine entent, for only it ought to suffyse to haue loked that God hym selfe, maker of al natures ordayneth all thynges to good, whyle that he hasteth to wythholde the thinges that he hath maked in to his semblaunce, that is to say, for to wythholden ꝑ thinges in to good for he him selfe is good. He chaseth out al yuels fro the bounde of hys comynaltyes, by ꝑ ordre of the necessyte destynable: for which it foloweth, ꝑ yf thou loke the purueyaunce ordeynynge the thinges that men wenen be outragyous or aboundaunt in erthes, thou shalte not sene in no place nothynge of yuell. But I se nowe that thou art charged wyth the weyght of the questyon, and wery with length of my reason, and that thou abydeste some swetenes of song, take thã this drauzt and whan thou art wel refreshed and refect thou shalt be more stedfast to stye in to higher questyous or thynges.

Si vis celsi iura tonantis, Plura solers cernere mẽte, Aspice summi culmina celi.

If thou wyse wolte demen in thy pure thought, ꝑ rightes or the lawes of the hye thonder, that is to sayne of God, loke thou & beholde the heyghtes of the souerayne heuen: There kepen the sterres by rightful alyaũce of thinges her olde peace: The sũne ymoued by his roody fyre, ne dystourbeth not the colde circle of the mone ne the sterre ycleped the Beer that enclyneth his rauyshing courses, abouten the souerayne heyght of thys worlde. Ne the same sterre Vrsa, nys neuer mo wasshen in the depe westren see, ne coueiteth not to dyen his flambes in the see of the Occian although it se other sterres yploũged in the see: And Hesperus the sterre boodeth & telleth alway the late nightes: and Lucifer the sterre bryngeth agayne the clere daye. And thus maketh loue enterchaũgeable, ꝑ perdurable courses, & thus is discordable batayle yput out of the coũtrey of the sterres. This accordaunce atempreth by euynlike maners the elementes, that the moyst thynges stryuyng wyth the drye thinges, yeuen place by stoundes: and that the colde thinges ioynen hem by fayth to the hote thynges, and that the lyght fyre aryseth in to heyghte, and the heuy erthes aualen by her weyghtes: by the same causes the flourye yere yeldeth swete smelles in the fyrste somer season warming and the hote somer dryeth the cornes, & Autumpne cometh ayen heuye of apples, & the fletyng rayne bedeweth the wynter, this attemperaunce nourisheth and bringeth forth al thynges that bereth lyfe in thys worlde, and thylke same attemperaunce rauyshyng hydeth, benymeth, and drencheth vnder the laste deathe all thynges yborne. Amonges these thynges sytteth the hyghe maker, king and lorde, wele and begynnyng, law & wyse iuge, to done equyte, and gouerneth and enclyneth the brydles of thinges: And tho thinges that he stereth to gone by mouynge, he wythdraweth and arresteth, and affermeth the mouable or wandrynge thynges. For yf that he ne called not ayen the ryght goynge of thinges. And if that he ne cõstreyned hem nat eftsones in to roundnesses enclyned, the thynges ꝑ bene nowe cõtynued by stable ordynaunce, they shulde departen frõ her wele that is to sayne from her begynnynge & fallen, that is to sayne, tournen into naught.

Thys

This is the cõmune loue to al thynges: & all thynges asken to bene holden by the fyne of good, for els ne myghten they not lasten, yf they ne come not eftesones ayen by loue retourned to the cause that hath yeue hem beyng, that is to sayne God.

Jã ne igitur vides quid hec omnia q̃ diximus cõsequantur? Quid nam inquit? Omnem inquit. &c.

SEest thou not than, what thing foloweth al the thinges that J haue sayd? Boece. what thynge (quod J)? P. Certes (quod she) all vtterly, that fortune is good Boe. And howe maye that be (q̃ J)? Nowe vnderstande (q̃ she). So as al fortune, whether so it be ioyful fortune or aspre fortune, is yeuẽ eyther bycause of guerdonyng, or els of exercisyng of good folkes, or els bycause to punyshen, or els chastisen shrewes: Than is all fortune good, the whyche fortune is certayn, that it be eyther ryghtful, or els profytable. Boe. Forsoth this is a ful very reason (q̃ J). And yf J consyder the pourueyaunce & the destyne that thou taughteste me alytle here before, thys sentence is sustayned by stedfaste reasons. But yf it lyke vnto the, let vs nombren hem among thylke thynges, of which thou saydest a litle here before, that they ne were not able to bene wened to the people. P. why so (q̃ she)? B. For that the cõmune worde of men (q̃ J) misuseth this maner speach of fortune, and sayne ofte tymes, that the fortune of some wyght is wicked. Philoso. wylte thou than (quod she) that J approche a lytle to the wordes of the people so that it seme not to hem that J be not ouer much departed, as fro the vsage of mãkinde Boece. As thou wolte (quod J). Philo. wenest thou not (quod she) that all thynge that profiteth is good? Boece Yes (quod J) Phi. Certes all thynge that exerceth or corrigeth it profyteth. Boece. J confesse wel (quod J) Philoso. Than it is good (quod she). Boece. why not (quod J). Philoso. But thys is the fortune (quod she) of hem that eyther be put in vertue, & batayleu ayenst aspre thynges, or els of hem that enclynen and declinen fro vyces, and taken the waye of vertue. Boece. Thys ne may J not denye (quod J). Philo. But what sayest thou of the merye fortune that is yeuen to good people in guerdon, demeth ought the people that it be wycked? B Naye forsoth (quod J) but they demen as it is sothe, that it is ryght good. Philo. what sayest thou of the other fortune (q̃ she) that all thoughe that it be aspre and restrayneth the shrewes by ryghtfull tourment, weneth aught the people that it be good? Boe. Nay (q̃ J) but the people demeth that is mooste wretched of all thynges ý maye be thought Philoso. ware now and loke wel (quod she) leste we in folowyng the opinion of the people, haue confessed and cõcluded thing which that is vnable to bene wened to the people. Boece. what is that (quod J). Philoso. Certes (quod she) it foloweth or cometh of thinges that bene graũted, that al fortune what so euer it be, of hem that bene eyther in possession of vertue, or in the encrease of vertue, or elles in the purchasynge of vertue, that the ylke fortune is good, and that all fortune is right wicked to hem that dwellen in shrewednesse, as who sayeth, and thus weneth not the people. Boece. That is sothe (q̃ J) Al be it so that no man dare confesse it, ne knowe it. Philoso. why so (quod she). For ryght as the stronge man ne semeth not to a bathen or disdaynẽ, as oftime as he heareth the noyse of baytayle: Ne also it semeth not to the wyse man to bearen it greuouslye, as oft as he is ledde in to stryke of fortune. For bothe to that one man and eke to that other, thylke dyffyculte is the matter to that one manne of encrease of his glorryouse renome, and to that other man to conserue hys sapyence, that is to saye, to the asprenesse of hys estate, for therfore is it called vertue for that it sustayneth & enforceth by hys strengthes, so that it nys not ouercomen by aduersyties Ne certes thou that art put in encrease or in the heyghte of vertue, ne haste not comen to fleten wyth delyces, and for to walken in bodyly luste. Thou sowest or plantest a full eygre batayle in thy corage ayenst euerye fortune: For that the sorouful fortune cõfound the not, ne that the mery fortune ne corrũpe the not, occupye the meane by stedfast strẽgthes. For all that euer is vnder the meane or al that ouerpasseth the meane, dyspyceth

welefulnesse, as who sayeth, it is vicious, & ne hath no mede of hys trauayle, for it is set in your hande, as who sayth, it lyeth in your power what fortune you is leuest, that is to saye good or yuel, for al fortune that semeth sharpe or aspre, if it ne be exercise not ȳ good folke, ne chastyse the wycked folke, it punysheth.

Bella bis binis operatus annis,
Ultor atrides phrigierumis. &c.

He werker atrides, that is to sayne Agamemnon, ȳ wrort and contynued the batayle by ten yeare, recouerd & purged in wrekynge, by the distruction of Troye, the lost chābres of maryage in hys brother, that is to saye, that Agamemnon wan ayen Heleyne, that was Menelaus wyfe, hys brother. In the meane whyle that thilke Agamemnon desired to yeuen sayles to the grekes nauy, and broughte ayen the wyndes by bloude: He vnclothed hym of pyte of father, and the sorye preest yeueth in sacrifyeng, the wretched cuttynge of the throte of the doughter, that is to say that Agamēnon let cutte the throte of hys doughter by the preest, to maken aliaunce wyth his goddes, & for to haue wynd wyth whiche he mygh wenden to Troye. Itacus, that is to saye vlixes, bewepte hys felowes yloyne, the which felowes the feirs Poliphemus lyggynge in hys greate caue, had fretten and dreynt in his empty wombe But nathlesse Poliphemus woode for hys blynde vysage yelde to Ulixes ioye, by hys sorouful teeres, that is to saye, that Ulixes smote out the eye of Poilphemus that stode in the forheed, for whyche Ulixes had ioye, whan he sawe Poliphemus wepynge and blynde. Hercules is celebrable for hys harde traueyle, he daunted the proude Ceutaurus halfe horse halfe man, & berafte the dyspoylyng fro the cruel lyon, ȳ is to say, he slough ȳ lyon, & berafte hym hys skynne. He smote the byrdes ȳ hgiht Arpyes with certaine arowes. He rauysched apples fro the wakyng dragon: and his hande was the more heauy for the golden metal. He drough Cerberus the hounde of hell by the triple chaynes. He ouercomer, as it is said, hath put an vnmeke lorde fodder to his cruel horse, that is to say Hercules slough Dyomedes, and made hys horse to freten him: & he Hercules slough Idra the serpente, and brente the venym. And Achileus the floud defouled in his forheed, dreynt his shamfast vysage in his strondes that is to say, that Achileus coulde transfigure hym selfe into dyuers lykenesse, & as he faught with Hercules, at last he turned him into a bull, & Hercules brake one of his hornes: and he for shame hyd him in his riuer. And ouer that he Hercules cast adowne Antheus the gyaunte in the strondes of Lybie. And Cacus appeysed the wrathes of Euander, that is to say that Hercules sloughe the monstre Cacus, & appeysed with that death the wrath of Euander. And the bristled bore marked with vomes the shulders of Hercules, the which sholders the hye cercle of heuē shulde thrist. And ȳ last of his labours was ȳ he sustenyed the heauen vpon his necke vnbowed, & he deserued eftsones the heuē to be the last ende of trauayle. Goth nowe then ye stronge men there as the great ensample ledeth you. O nyce mē why make ye your backes, as who saith: o ye slowe & delicate men why se ye aduersities, & ne fyght not ayenst hem by vertue, to wynnē ȳ mede of heuē: for the mede ouercomē, yeueth ȳ sterres, ȳ is to sayne, that whan that erthly lust is ouercomen, a man is maked worthye to the heuen.

Here endeth the fourth boke of Boece, & foloweth the fyfth.

Dixerat, orationisq; cursum ad alia quedam tractanda atq; expediendа vertebat. B. Tum ego, recta quidem inq̄. &c.

He had sayd & turned the course of her reason to some other thinges to be treated & to be sped. B. Thā sayd I, certes rightfull is thine amonesting & ful digne by auctorite. But that thou saidest whylō, that the question of the diuyne purueyaūce, is enlaced wyth manye other questions, I vnderstande well and proue it, by the same thyng But I aske, yf that thou wenest that hap be any thynge in anye wayes, & yf thou wenest that

that hap be any thyng, what is it? P. Than (q̃ she) I haste me to yelden and assoylen to the det of my behest, and to shewē and open the way, by which way thou mayst come ayen to thy countrey: but al be it so ý the thinges whych that thou askest, bene ryght profytable to knowe, yet bene they dyuers, som what fro the path of my purpose and it is to dout, that thou ne be maked werye by mysse wayes, so that thou ne mayste not suffyse to measure the ryght way. B. Ne dout the ther of nothyng (quod I). For to knowen thylke thynges togyther, in the whiche thynges I delyte me greatly, ý shall bene to me in stede of rest, syth it nys not to douten of the thynges folowynge, whan euerye thynge of thy disputacyon shall haue bene stedfaste to me, by vndoutous fayth. Phi. Than (sayde she) that maner wol I done to the, and began to speaken ryght thus. Certes (q̃ she) yf anye wyght definysche hap in thys maner, that is to sayn, that hap is betiding ybrought forth by folysh mouynge, & by no knyttyng of causes, I conferme that hap nys ryght naught in no wyse, and I deme all vtterly, that hap nys, ne dwelleth but a voyce, as who sayeth but an ydell worde, wythout any signification of thynge cōmytted to that voyce. For what place myght bene lefte or dwellyng in folye & to disordinaunce, syth that God leadeth and constrayneth al thynges by ordre, for this sentence is very soth, that nothynge hath his beyng of naught, to the which sentence, none of these olde folke ne wythsayde neuer, al be it so that they ne vnderstande it not, by God, prince & begynner of workynge but they casten, as a maner foundemente of subiecte material, that is to sayne, of the nature of all reason. And yf that any thynge is waxen or comē of no causes thā shal it seme ý thylke thing is comen or woxen of naught But yf thys ne maye not be done, than is it nat possible that hap be any such thing, as I haue definysched a lytle here before. Boece. How shal it than be (q̃ I) nys there than no thyng that by ryght may bene cleped eyther hap or els aduenture or fortune? or is there ought, albeit so that it is hyd fro the people to which thinge these wordes bene couenable? Phi. Mynne Aristotle (q̃ she) in the boke of hys phisyke, definysheth thys thynge by short reason, & nigh to the soth. B. In which maner (q̃ I) P. As ofte (q̃ she) as men done any thynge for grace of any other thynge, & another thynge than thylke thyng that men entenden to done betideth by some causes, it is ycleped hap, right as a man dalfe the erth bycause of tyllynge of the felde, and founde there a gobet of golde bedoluen, than wenē folke that it is befal by fortunous betydyng. But forsoth it nys not of nought, for it hath his propre causes, of whych causes ý course vnforeseen and vnware, semeth to haue maken hap. For if the tyller of the felde ne dolue not in the erth, and yf the hyder of the golde ne had hyd the golde in that place, the golde ne had not bene founde. These bene than the causes of the abredgynge of fortuit hap, the whiche abredgyng of fortuit hap cometh, of causes of encountrynge and flowyng togyther to hem selfe, and not by the entencion of the doer. For neyther the hyder of the golde, ne the deluer of the felde, ne vnderstoden not that the golde shulde haue bene founde. But as I sayd, it betyde and rāne togyther, that he dalfe there as ý other had hydde the gold Nowe may I thus definish hap. Hap is an vnware betydynge of causes, assembled in thynges that ben done for some other thing But thilke order procedinge by vneschuable betiding togider, which ý descendeth frō the wel of purueyaunce, ý ordeyneth al thinges in her places and in her tymes maketh, that the causes rennen and assemblen togither.

Rupis Achemenee scopulis vbi versa sequentum, Pectoribus fugit spicula. ꝛc,

Tigris & Eufrates resoluē and springē of o well, in ý cragges of the roch of the coūtrey of Achemenee, there as the fleynge batayls fixen her dartes returning, in ý brestes of hem ý folowē him. And sone after the same ryuers Tigris & Eufrates, vnioynē and departen her waters, and yf they comen togyther, & ben assembled and cleped togyther into o course, thā motē thilk thinges fleten togyther, which that ý water of the entrechaungyng flood bryngeth. The shippes & the stockes araced with the floud motē assēblen, & the waters ymedled, wrappethe or implyeth manye fortunell happes

or maners, the whyche wandrynge happes natheleſſe, thylke declinynge lowneſſe of the earth and the flowynge ordre of the flydyng water gouerneth. Ryght ſo fortune that ſemeth, as it fleteth wyth flaked or vngouerned brydels, it ſuffreth brydles, ẏ is to ſayne to bene gouerned, and paſſeth by thylke law that is to ſayne, by the dyuine ordinaunce.

Animaduerto inq̃, idq̃ vti tu dicis ita eſſe, conſencio. Sed in hac hereuti-um. ꝛc.

Thys vnderſtãde I wel (quod I) and I accorde me that it is ryghte as ẏ ſayſt. But I aſke yf ther be any lyberte of fre wyl in thys ordre of cauſes, that cleuen thus togyther in hem ſelfe, or els I wolde wyten, yf that the deſtinal cheyne cõſtrayneth the mouynge of the courages of men. Philo. Yes (q̃ ſhe) there is lyberte of frewyll, ne there was neuer no nature of reaſon, that it ne had lyberte or frewyll. For euery thinge that may naturally vſẽ reaſon, it hath dome by which it decerneth and demeth euery thyng. Than knoweth it by it ſelfe thinges that ben to flyen, and thynges that bene to deſiren, ꝛ thilke thynge that any wyght demeth to bene deſyred, that aſkethe or deſyreth he, and flyeth the ylke thyngethat he troweth be to flyen. Wherfore in all thynges that reaſon is, in hym alſo is lyberte of wyllynge ꝛ of nylling but I ne ordeyne nat, as who ſayeth, I ne graunt nat, the this liberte be euen lyke in al thynges. For why in the ſoueraynes deuynes ſubſtaunces, that is to ſayne, in ſpirites iugement is more clere ꝛ wyll not corrumpe and myghtye redye to ſpeden thynges that bene deſyred. But the ſoules of men moten nedes ben more fre, whan they loken hem in the ſpeculacyon or lokynge of the dyuyne thought, and laſſe fre whan they flyden in to the bodyes, and yet laſſe fre whan they bene gathered togyther and cõprehended in erthly membres, but the laſte ſeruage, is whan that they bene yeuen to vices, and haue yfal from the poſſeſſion of her proper reaſon. For after that they haue caſt awaye her eyen fro the lyghte of the ſoueraynes ſothfaſtneſſe, to lowe thinges and darke, anone they darken by the cloude of ignoraunce, and be troubled by felonous talentes, to the which talentes whan they approchen and aſſenten, they heapen and encreaſen, the ſeruage whyche they haue ioyned to hem ſelfe. And in this maner they ben caytiues fro her proper lyberte, the whych thyng nathleſſe the lokyng of the diuyne pourueyaũce ſeeth, that al thynges beholdeth and ſeeth fro eterne, and ordeyneth hem euerych in her merytes, as they ben predeſtinate, and it is ſayd in greke, that al thinges he ſeeth, and al thynges he heareth.

Puro clarum lumine phebum Hyl liſtui canit oris Homerus. ꝛc.

Homer wyth the honye mouthe, ẏ is to ſayn, Homer with the ſwete ditties ſyngeth, that the ſunne is clere by pure lyght. Natheles yet ne maye it not by ẏ infirme lyght of hys beames, breken or percen the inward entrayles of the earth, or els of the ſee. So ne ſeeth not God maker of the great worlde to him that loketh al thynges from an high ne vnderſtandeth nothinges by heuynneſſe of erth, ne ẏ nyght ne withſtandeth nat to him by the blacke cloudes, thylke God ſeeth in o ſtroke of thought all thynges that bene, weren, or ſhul come: ꝛ thylke God, for he loketh and ſeeth al thinges alone, thou mayſt ſaine that he is the very ſunne.

Tum ego: en inq̃ difficilior rurſus ambiguitate confundor. ꝛc.

Than ſayde I thus, nowe am I cõfounded by a more harde doute than I was. Philoſo. what doute is that (quod ſhe) for certes I coniecte by ſuche thinges thou art troubled. B. It ſemeth (quod I) to repugnen and to contrarye greatlye, that God knoweth before all thynges, and that there is any fredom or lyberte, for yf ſo be that God loketh al thynges before, ne God ne may not bene deceyued in no maner. Thã mote it nedes be, ẏ all thynges the which that the purueyaunce of God hath ſene before to come, for whych if that God knoweth tofore, not onely ẏ werkes of men but alſo her counſayles and her wylles

wylles, than ne shall ther be no libertie of arbytre, ne certes, there ne maye be none other dede, ne no wyll, but thylke whiche that the diuyne purueyaunce that ne may not be disceyued, hath leased before, for yf that they myghten wrythen away in other maner thā they ben purueyed, than ne shoulde there be no stedfaste prescience of thynge to comen, but rather an vncertaine opinion: the which thyng to trowen of god, I deme it felonye & vnlefull. Ne I ne proue nat thylke same reason, as who sayeth, I ne alowe not, or I ne prayse not thylke same reason, by whiche ỳ some men wenen that they mowe assoylen and vnknytten the knotte of this questyon.

For certes they seyn, that thyng nis not to comen, for that the purueyaūce of god hath seen before that it is to comen, but rather ỳ contrary, and that is this, that for that the thynges is to comen, that therfore ne maye it not ben hyd from the purueyaunce of god And in this maner this necessitie slideth ayē into the contrarye partye, ne it ne behoueth not nedes, that thinges betyden that bene ypurueyed, but it behoueth nedes, that thynges that bene to comen ben ypurueyed, but as it were ytrauayled, as who sayth ỳ thilk answer procedeth ryght as though men trauayleden or weren busye to enquyren, the which thyng is cause of the which thinges. As whether the prescience is cause of the necessitie of thynges to comen, or els that ỳ necessitie of thynges to comen, is cause of the purueyaunce. But I ne enforce me not now to shewen it ỳ the betyding of thinges ywist before is necessary, how so or in what maner, that the ordre of causes hath it selfe, although that it ne seme not that the presciēce bryng in necessitie of betydynge, to thynges to comen. For certes yf that any wyght sytteth, it behoueth by necessitie that the opiniō be soth of him that coniecteth that he sytteth and ayenwarde also is it of the cōtrary, for yf the opynyō be soth of any wyght for that he sytteth, it behoueth by necessitie that he syt. Than is here necessitie in that one and in that other: for in that one is necessitie of sytynge, and certes in that other is necessitye of soth. But therfore ne sytteth not a wyght for that the opynyon of the syttynge is soth but the opynion is rather sothe, for that a wyght sytteth before. And thus although that the cause of the sothe cōmeth of that other syde, as who sayeth, that although the cause of soth commeth of the syttynge, and not of the true opynion, algates yet is there a commune necessitie in that one and in that other. Thus seweth it, that I may make sēblable skylles of the purueyaunce of God, & of thynges to comen. For although that for that thynges bene to comen, therfore bene they purueyed, and not certes, for they bene purueyed, therfore ne betyde they not, nathelesse it behoueth by necessitie, that eyther the thynges to comen bene ypurueyed of god or els that the thynges that bene purueyed of god betyden. And this thynges onely suffyseth ynough to destroien the fredome of our arbytre, that is to saye, of our fre wyll. But certes nowe sheweth it well howe ferre fro the soth, and how vp sodowne is this thing that we sene that the betydyng of temporal thynges is cause of the eterne prescience.

But for to wenen that God purueyeth the thynges to comen: what other thynge is it but for to wene, that thylke thynges that betyde whylom, ben causes of thylke souerain purueyaunce ỳ is in God. And hereto adde I yet this thynges, that ryght as whan ỳ I wote that a thyng is, behoueth by necessitie that thylke selfe thyng be, and eke whan I haue knowen that any thyng shal betydē so behoueth it by necessitie that thylke same thynges betyde. So foloweth it than, that the betydyng of the thynges wyst before, ne may not be eschued, and at the last, if that any wyght wene a thyng to ben otherwyse than it is, it nys not only vnscience, but it is disceyuable opynyon, full dyuers aud farre fro the soth of science. wherfore yf any thing be so to comen, that the betydyng of it ne be not certayne ne necessarye, who may weten before that thylke thynge is to comen. For ryght as science ne may not be medled with falsenesse, as who sayeth, that yf I wote a thyng, it ne may not be false that I ne wote it, ryght so thylke thynge that is conceyued by scyence, ne maye not be none otherwyse than as it is conceyued, for that is the cause why that science wanteth lesynge, as who sayth, why that wetyng ne receyueth not lesynge of that it wote, for it behoueth by necessitie, that euery thyng be ryght, as science comprehendeth it to be.

what shall I than sayne, in whiche maner knoweth god before al ý thynges to comē yf they ne be not certayne, for yf ý he deame that they ben to comen vneschuably, and so maye be that it is possyble, ý they ne shullen not comen, god is disceyued, but not only to trowen ý god is disceyued, but for to speake it with mouth, it is a felonous synne. But if that god wot, that ryght so as thynges ben to comen, so shullē they comē: so that he wot egally, as who sayth indifferently, that thiges maye be done, or els not ydone. what is thylke prescience that ne comprehendeth no certayne thyng ne stable, or els what dyfference is there betwene the prescicē of thylk iape worthy deuyning of Tiresie deuynour that sayd: All that I saye (quod he) eyther it shalbe, or els it ne shall not be, or elles howe moche is worthe the deuyne presciene more than the oppynion of mankynde, yf so be that it demeth the thynges vncertayne, as men done. Of the which domes of men, the betydiug nis not certayne. But yf so be, that non vncertayne thynges ne may ben in him that is ryght certayne well of all thynges, than is the betydyng certayne of thylke thynges which that he hath wyst be forne fyrmely to comen, for whiche it foloweth that the fredome of the counsayles, and of the werkes of mankynde nys none, syth that the thourt of God that seeth althinges without errour of falsenesse, byndeth and constrayneth hem to a betydyng by necessitie. And yf this thig be ones ygraunted and receyued, this is to sayne, ý there nys no fre wyl: than sheweth it well how great destructiō and how great domages there folowen of thynges of man kynde, for in ydle ben there than purposed & behyght, meedes to good folke, and paynes to bad folke, syth that no mouyng of free corage voluntarye, ne hath not deserued hem, that is to sayne, neither mede ne payne. And it shulde seme than that thylke thynge is alderworst, whiche that is now demed for aldermoost iust and most rightful. That is to sayn, that shrewes ben punyshed, or els that good folke be yguerdoned, the which folkes sene that her propre wyl ne sent hem to that one, ne to that other. That is to sayne, neyther to good ne harme: but cōstreyneth hem certayne necessitie of thynges to comen, thā ne shullen there neuer bene, ne neuer weren vyce ne vertue, but it shullen rather be confusyon of all desertes medled without discretion. And yet there foloweth an other inconuenience, of the whyche there ne maye be thought nomore felonous, ne more wycked and that is thus, that so as the orde of thinges is ydle, and cōmeth of ýpurueyaunce of god, ne that nothyng nys lefull to the counsayles of mankynde, as who sayth, that mē haue no power to don nothyng ne wyll nothynge, than foloweth it that our vyces ben referred to the maker of all good, as who sayth: than foloweth it, that God ought to haue the blame of our vyces, syth he cōstrayneth vs by necessitie to done vyces: thā nys ther no reason to hopen in god ne to prayen to god, for what shulde any wight hopen to god, or why shuld he prayē to god, sith that the ordynaunce of desteny, which ý ne maye not ben enclyned, knytteth and streyneth all thynges that men may desyren. Thā shulde there be done away thylke onelye alyaunce bytwene God and man, that is to sayne, to hopen and to prayen. But by the pryce of ryghtousnesse & of very mekenesse, we deserueu the guerdon of diuyne grace, whiche ý is inestimable, that is to say, that is so gret that it ne may not ben ful prayled, & this is only the maner, that is to saye, hope & prayers. For which it semeth that mē woll speke with god, and by reason of supplication bē conioyned to thylke clerenesse, that nys not approchen no rather or that men sekē it and impetren it. And yf men ne wene not ý hope ne prayers ne haue no strengthes by the necessitie of thynges to comen receyued, what thing is there than by which we mowen bē conioyned and cleauen to thylke souerayne prince of thynges. For which it behoueth by necessitie that the lignage of mankynde, as thou songe a litle here before, be departed, and vnioyned from hys well, and faylen of his begynnynge, that is to sayne, God.

Que nam discors federa rerum
Causa resoluit: quis tanta deus-

What dyscordable cause hathe to rent and vnioyned the byndyng or the alyaunce of thinges, that is to sayne, the coniunctions of God and of man-

which

which god hath establyshed so great batayl betwene these two sothfast or very thynges that is to sayne, betwene the purueyaunce of god and free wyl, that they ben syngular and deuyded, ne that they ne wollen not ben medled ne coupled togyther. But there nys no discorde to the very thynges, but they cleuen away certayn to hem self. But ȳ thouȝt of man confounded and ouerthrowē by the darke membres of the body, ne maye not by fyre of his darked lokynge, that is to sayne, by the vigour of his insyght, whyle ȳ soule is in the bodye, knowen the thyn subtel knyt tynges of thinges. But wherfore eschaufeth it so by so great loue to fynden thylke notes of soth ycouered, that is to sayne, wherfore eschaufeth the thought of man by so greate desyre, to knowe thylke notifications that ben yhid vnder the couertures of soth. wote it ought thylke thynhes that it anguyshous desyreth to knowe. As who sayth, naye. For noman ne trauayleth for to weten thynges that he wot: and therfore ȳ text sayth thus. But who trauayleth to weten thynges yknowe. and yf that he ne knoweth hem not, what seketh thylke blynde thought. what is he that desyreth any thynges, of whyche he wot ryght nought. As who sayeth, who so desyrech any thinges, nedes somwhat he knoweth of it, or els he ne coude not desyren it: or who maye foloweth thynges ȳ ne bene not ywyste, & though ȳ he seke the thynges where shal he fynde hem. what wyght that is all vncomyng and ignorauunt may know the forme that is yfounde.

But whan the soule beholdeth & seeth the hye thought, ȳ is to sayn god, thā knoweth it togyther the sum and singuralities, that is to sayne, the principles, & euerych of hem by him selfe. But now while the soule is hid in the cloude, and in the darkenesse of the mē bres of the bodye, it ne hath not all forgyeten it selfe, but it wholdeth the sum of thynges and leseth the singularities. Than who so ȳ seketh sothenesse, he nys in neyther nother habyte, for he wote not all, ne he ne hath nat all forgyeten, but yet hym remembreth ȳ sum of thinges that he withholdeth, and asketh counsayle, and retreateth deplyche thynges ysene before, that is to sayne, the greate summe in his mynde, so that he mowe adoē the partes that he hathe forgyeten, to thylke partyes that he hath withholden.

Tum illa: Vetus inquit, hec est de prouidētia q̄rela: Marcoq̄ Tullio. &c

Than sayd she, this is (q̄ she) the olde question of the purueyaūce of God. And Marcus Tullius whan he deuyded the deuynacyons, that is to sayne in hys bokes that he wrote of deuynacions, he moued greatly this questyon, and thou thy self hast ysought it moche, and vtterly and lōge but yet ne hath it not bene determyned ne espyed fermely and diligently of any of you, and the cause of this darkenesse and of thys difficultie is, for that the mouyng of the reason of mankynde ne may not mouen to, that is to sayne, applien or ioynen the simplicitie of the deuyne prescience, the which simplicitie of the deuyne prescience, yf that mē mighten thynkē it in any maner. That is to sayn that yf men myghten thynke and comprehēden the thynges ȳ god seeth hym selfe, than there dwelled vtterly no dout, the which reson and cause of difficulties, I shal assay at last to shewe and to speden, whan I haue fyrst yspenden and answered to thy reasons by whiche thou art moued, for I aske why thou weneſt that thylk reasons of hem that assoylen this question ne be nat spedefull ynough ne sufficiēt, the which solucyō or the which reasō, for ȳ it demeth, that the prescience is not of necessitie of thynges to come, as who sayth, any other way thā thus, but that thylke thynges that the prescience wot before, ne maye not vnbetyden, that is to sayne, that they moten betyde. But than yf that prescience ne putteth no necessitie to thīges to comen, as thou thy selfe haste confessed it, and beknowe a lytle here before what cause or what is it, as who sayth, ther may no cause be, by which that the endes bolunta ry of thynges myghten be constrayned to certayne betydyng. For by grace of position so that thou may the better vnderstāde this that foloweth, I suppose that there ne be no prescience: Than aske I (q̄ she) in as moche as apperteyneth to that, shulden than thynges that comen of free wyll be constrayned to betyding by necessitie. Boece. Nay (q̄ I)

Phi.

Phi. Than ayenwarde(q̃ she) I suppose ỳ there be prescience, but that it ne putteth no necessitie to thinges, than trow I that thilk same fredome of wyll shall dwellen all hole and absolute and vnbounde. But thou wilt sayne, that al be it so, that prescience nis not cause of the necessitie of betyding to thinges to comen, algates yet it is a signe, that the thynges bene to betyden by necessitie. By this maner than, althoughe the prescience had neuer be, yet algates or at lestway, it is certayne thyng that endes of betydynges of thynges to comen shulden be necessarye. For euery thynge sheweth and signifyeth onely what the thinge is, but it ne maketh not the thyng that it signifyeth. For which it behoueth fyrste to shewe that nothynge ne betydeth, that it ne betydeth by necessitie: so that it maye appere, that the prescience is sygne of necessitie, or els yf there nere no necessitye, certes, thylke prescyence ne myght not be signe of thynge that nys not. But certes, it is now certayne, that the proue of this ysusteyned by stedfast reason, ne shall not bene lad ne proued by sygnes ne by argumentes, taken fro without, but by causes couenable and necessarye. But thou mayst sayne, how maye it be that the thynges ne betyden not, that bene purueyed to comen? But certes, ryght as we trowē that the thynges which that the purueyaunce wot before, to comē ne be not to betydeu. But that ne shulde we not demen, but rather although they shal be tyden, yet ne haue they no necessitye of her kynde to betiden: and this mayst thou light ly apperceiuen by this that I shal sayn. For we sene manye thynges whan they ben before our eyen, ryght as men sene the carter workynge in the tournyng and in the attempryng or adressing of his cartes or chariots and by this maner, as who sayeth, mayest thou vnderstande of al other workemen. Is there thā any necessitie, or who sayth in our lokynge, that constrayneth or compelleth any of thylke thynges to be done so? Boece. Nay (quod I) for in ydle and in bayne were all the effect of crafte, yf that al thynges weren moued by constraynynge of our eyen, or of our syght. Philosoph. The thynges than (quod she) that whan that men done hem, ne haue no necessitie that men done hem, eke tho same thynges fyrst or they be done, they ben to comen withoute necessitye: for why, there be some thynges to betyden, of which the endes and the betydinges of hem ben absolute and quyte of all necessitie. For certes, I ne trowe not that anye man wolde sayne this, that the thynges that men done nowe that they ne were to betyden fyrste, yet they were doone. And thylke same thynges, although men hadden wyst hem before, yet they haue free betydynges. For ryght as science of thinges present ne bryngeth in no necessitie to thynges that men done, ryght so to the prescience of thynges to commen, ne bryngeth in no necessitie to thynges betiden But thou mayest sayne, that of thylke same it is douted, as whether that of thylke thinges that ne haue non issues and betydinges necessaryes, if therof may ben any presciēce.

For certes, they semen to discorden, for thou wenest that yf that thynges bene sene before that necessitie foloweth hem, and yf necessitie fayleth hem, they ne myght not bē wyst before, and that nothyng maye be comprehended by science but certayne. And yf tho thynges ne haue no certayne betydynges, be purueyed as certayne it shoulde be darkenesse of opynyon, not sothfastnesse of scyence. And thou wenest that it be dyuers for the holenesse of science, that any manne shulde deme a thynge to be otherwyse than it is it selfe, and the cause of this erroure is, that of all the thynges that euerye wyghte hath knowe, they wene that tho thynges bē knowe onlye by the strength and by the nature of the thynges that ben wyst or knowe and it is all the contrarye: for all that euer is knowe, it is rather cōprehended & knowe not after his strengthe and his nature, but after the facultye, that is to sayne, the power and the nature of hem that knowen. And for that this thyng shulde nowe shewe by a short ensample of roundnesse of a body otherwyse than the syght of the eye knoweth it, and otherwyse than the touchynge.

The lokynge, by castynge of his beames, wayteth and seeth from a ferre al the bodye togyther, withoute mouynge of it selfe, but the touchynge cleueth to the rounde bodye, and moueth aboute the enuyronnynge, and comprehendeth the partyes by roundenesse, and the man him selfe otherwyse beholdeth hym, and otherwayes ymagynacyon, and otherwyse

otherwyse reason, and otherwise inteligēce for the wyt comprehendeth without forthe the fygure of the body of man, that is vnstablyshed in the matter subiect. But the ymaginacion comprehendeth onely the figure without the mater. Reason surmounteth ymaginacion, and comprehendeth by vniuersal lokyng the cōmune speche, but the eye of intelligence is hygher, for it surmounteth the enuyronyng of the vniuersite, and loketh ouer that, by pure subtiltie of thought. Thylke same symple fourme of man, that is perdurable in the diuine thought, in whiche thys ought greatly to be considered, that the hyest strength for to comprehenden thynges embraceth and contayneth the lower strength, but ỳ lower strēgth ne aryseth not in no maner to the hyer strength. For wyt ne may cōprehende nothyng out of mater, ne that imaginacyon ne loketh not the vniuersal speces ne reason ne taketh not the symple fourme, so as intelligence taketh it. But intelligence that loketh all abouen, whan it hath comprehended the fourme, it knoweth & demeth all the thynges that ben vnder the fourme, but she knoweth hem in thylke maner, in which it comprehendeth thylk same simple forme ỳ ne may neuer ben knowē of none of ỳ other, that is to say, to non of the thre forsayd strengthes of the soule, for it knoweth the vniuersitie of reason, and the fygure of ymaginacion, and the sensyble material cōceyued by wyt, ne it vseth not ne of reason, ne of ymaginacion ne of wyt without forth but it beholdeth al thynges, so as I shal say by a stroke of thought fermely without discours of collacion. Certes reason whan it loketh any thyng vniuersall, it ne vseth not of ymaginacyon ne wyt, and algates yet it cōprehendeth the thynges ymaginable and sēsyble, for reason is she that diffinyssheth the vniuersall of her conceyte ryght thus. Man is a reasonable two foted beest, and how so that this knowing is vniuersal, yet nis ther no wyght that ne wot well that a man is a thynge ymaginable and sensyble, and thys same consydreth well reason, but that nys not by ymaginacion, nor by wytte, but it loketh it by reasonable conception. Also ymaginacyon, all be it so, that it taketh of wytte the begynnyng, to sene and fourmen the fygures algates, although that wyt ne were not present, yet it enuyroneth and comprehēdeth all thynges sensyble, not by reason sensyble of demyng, but by reason ymaginatike Seest thou not than, that al the thynges in knowyng vsen more of her facultie, or other power, than they done of the facultie or power of thynges that ben to knowen, ne that is no wronge, for so as euery iudgement is the dede or doing of hym that demeth, it behoueth that euerye wyght perfourme hys werke and hys intention not of forayne power, but of his propre power.

Quondam porticus attulit, Obscuros minium senes. &c.

Than the porche, that is to saye a gate of the towne of Athnes there as philosophers hadden congregacion to dispute thilk porche brought somtyme olde men full darke in her sentences, that is to say, philosophers that hyghten stoiciens, ỳ wende that ymages and sensibylities, that is to say, sensyble ymaginacions or elsymagynacyons of sensible thynges, wer emprinted into soules fro bodyes without forth, as who sayth thylke stoiciens wenden that the soule had be naked of hym selfe, as a myrrour or a clene perchemyne, so that al fygures musten fyrst comen fro thynges fro wout into soules, and ben emprinted into soules, ryght as we ben wonte sometyme by a swyft poyntell to fyxen letters emprinted in the smothnesse or in the playnesse of the table of waxe, or in the parchemyne that hath no fygure ne note in it. Glose. But nowe argueth Boece agaynst that opynion, & sayth thus. But yf the thryuynge soule ne implyeth nothyng: that is to sayne, ne doth thyng by his propre mouynge, but suffreth & lyeth subiecte to the fygures & to the notes of bodyes without forth, and yeldeth ymages ydel, euyl & bayne in the maner of a myrrour, whence thryueth than or whence commeth thilke knowynge in our soule, ỳ discerneth & beholdeth all thynges, and whēce is thilke strēgth that beholdeth the synguler thinges or els whēce is the strength that dyuydeth thynges yknowe, & thylke strength that gathered togyther thynges deuyded, & strēgth that choseth the entrechaunged waye.

For somtyme it heaueth the heed, that is to say, that it heaueth vp the ententiō to ryght hyghe thynges, and somtyme it descendeth into ryght lowe thynges: and whan it returneth into hym selfe, it reproueth and destroyeth the false thynges by the true thynges. Certes, this strength is cause more efficient and moche more myghty, to sene and to knowen thynges, than thylke cause that suffreth and receyueth the notes and fygures impressed in maner mater. Algates the passyon, that is to saye, the suffraunce or the wyt in the quycke body goth before exciting and mouyng the strengthes of the thought, ryghte so as whan that clearenesse smyteth the eyen, and moueth hem to sene, or ryghte so as voyce or sowne hourleth to the eares, and cōmoueth hem to hearken, than is the strength of the thought moued and excyted cleapeth forthe to semblable mouynges the speces that it halte within it selfe, and addeth the speces to the notes, and to thynges withoutforth, and meddleth the ymages of thynges withoutforth, to thinges hyd within hym selfe.

Quod si in corporibus senciēdis quāuis efficiant instrumenta sensuum. ꝛc

But what is that, in bodyes to be feled, that is to say, in the takyng and in the knowing of bodyly thynges. And all be it so, ꝟ the qualities of bodyes that be obiect fro withoutforth, mouen and entalenten the instrumentes of the wyttes, and all be it so, that the passyon of the body, that is to sayne, the wyt or the suffraunce goeth beforne the strength or the worchynge corage, the which passyon or suffraūce clepeth forth the dede of the thought in it selfe, and moueth and excyteth in this meane whyle, the fourmes that resten withinforth, and insensyble bodyes, as I haue sayde, our corages nis not taught or emprynted by passyon to knowe these thynges, but demeth and knoweth of his owne strēgth the passion or suffraunce, subiect to the body: moche more thā tho thynges ben absolute and quyte fro all talentes or affections of bodyes, as god or his aungels, ne folowen not in decernynge thynges obiect fro woutforth, but they accōplysshē and speden the dedes of her thought By this reason than there comen many maner of knowynges to dyuers, and to differynge substaunces. For the wyt of the body the which wyt is naked and dispoyled of all other knowynge, thylke wyt cōmeth to beestes, the whiche ne mowen not mouen hem selfe here and there, as oysters and muskels and other suche shelfysh of the see, that cleuē ben norysshed to rockes, but ꝟ ymaginacion cōmeth of remuable beestes, that semen to haue talent to flyen or to desirē any thing But reason is alonelye the lynage of mankynde, ryght as intelligence is alonly the diuine nature, of which it foloweth, that thilk knowynge is more worthe than is eyther syns it knoweth by his propre nature, not onelye his subiecte, as who sayth: it ne knoweth not alonely that appertayneth proprely to his knowyng, but it knoweth the subiectes of al other knowynges.

But how shal it than be, ꝟ that wyt and ymaginacion stryuen ayen reasonynge, and sayne that of thylke vniuersall thynge that reason weneth to sene, ꝟ it nis ryght nought for wyt and ymaginacion sayne, that that is sensyble or ymagynable, it ne maye not ben vniuersall. Than is there either the iugement of reason sothe, ne that there nys nothynge sensyble, or els for that reason wote well, that many thynges be subiecte to wyt and to ymaginacyon: than is the conceptiō of reason vaine and false, which that loketh and comprehendeth, that that is sensyble ꝛ synguler, as vniuersall. And ꝟ that the reason wolde answer ayenst these two, that is to saye, to wyt and ymaginacion, and saye that sothly she her selfe, that is to sayne reason, loketh and comprehendeth by reason of vniuersalitie, both that that is sensible, and that that is ymaginable, and thylke two, ꝟ is to sayne, wyt and ymaginacion, ne mowen not stretchen hem selfe to the knowing of vniuersalitie, for that the knowynge of hem, ne maye not exceaden ne surmounten the bodyly fygures. Certes of the knowyng of thynges men oughten rather yeuen more credence to the more stedfast, and to ꝟ more perfyte iudgement in this maner stryuyng, than we that haue strēgth of reasoning and

of

of ymagynacion, and of wytte, that is to say, by reason and by ymaginacion, we wolde rather prayse the cause of reason, as who sayth, than the cause of wytte and of ymagynacion. Semblable thyng is it, that the reson of mãkynde ne weneth not that the diuyne intellygẽce, beholdeth or knoweth thynges to come, but right as the reason of mãkynde knoweth hem: for thou arguyst thus, that yf that it ne seme not to men, that some thynges haue certayne betydinges, they ne maye not be wyste before certaynly to betyden, and than is there no prescience of thylke thynges: & yf we trow that prescience be in these thynges, than is there nothing that betydeth by necessyte. But yf we myght haue iugement of the diuyne thought, as we ben parteners of reson, right so as we haue demed, that it behoueth by ymagynacion and wytte, and beneth reason, ryght so wolde we demen that it were rightfull thing, that mans reason ought to submyt it selfe to be beneth the diuyne thought, for whyche yf we may, as who sayth, that yf we may I counsayle that we enhaunce vs in the heyght of thylke souerayne intellygence, for there shal reason wel sene that that it ne may not behold in it selfe, and certes that is thus, in what maner the prescience of god seeth al thynges and diffynysheth, all though they haue no certayne betydynges: ne this is none opynyon, but rather the symplicite of the souerayne science, that is not shette wythin no maner of boundes.

Quam variis terras animalia permeant figuris. Namq; alia extento sunt corpore. &c.

The beestes passen by ẏ erthes by ful diuers figures, for some of hẽ haue her bodyes strauzt, and crepen in the duste, & drawen after hem a trace or a forough continued, that is to saye, as nedders and snayles, & other beestes, by the wandrynge lyghtnesse of her wynges beaten the wyndes, and ouer swymmen the spaces of the longe ayre, by most flyeng. And other beestes gladen hem selfe, to dyggen her traces or her steppes in the erthe wyth her goynge or wyth her fete, and to gone eyther by the grene feldes, or els to walken vnder the woodes. And all be it so that thou seest that they discorden by dyuers fourmes, algates her faces enclyned heauyeth her dull wyttes, ouely the lynage of man heaueth highest hys hye heed, and standeth lyght wyth hys vprygh bodye, and beholdeth the erthes vnder hym. And but yf thou erthly man waxest yuell out of thy wytte, thys fygure amonesteth the, that askest the heuen with thy right vysage, and hast areysed thy forheed to bearen vp on hygh thy corage, so that thy thouzt ne be not heuyed ne put lowe vnder fote, syth that thy body is so hygh areysed.

Quoniam igitur vti paulo ante monstratum est, omne quod scitur. &c.

Therfore than, as I haue shewed a lytell here before, ẏ all thing ẏ is wyst nys not knowen by thys nature propre, but by ẏ nature of hẽ ẏ cõprehenden it. Let vs loken nowe in as moch as it is lefull to vs, as who saith, let vs loken nowe as we may, which that is the estate of the diuyne substaunce, so that we may well knowe eke what his science is.

The commune iugement of all creatures reasonables than is, that God is eterne. Let vs consydre than what is eternyte, for certes that shall shewen vs togyder the diuyne nature and the diuyne science. Eternyte than is perfyte possessyon, and all togyder of lyfe intermynable, and that sheweth the more clerely by the cõparyson or collacyon of temporall thynges. For all thyng that lyueth in tyme, it is present, and procedeth fro preterytees in to futures, that is to sayne, from tyme passed in to tyme comynge: ne there nys nothynge establysched in tyme, that maye embracen togyther all the space of thys lyfe, for certes yet ne hathe it not taken the tyme of to morowe, and it hath lost that of yesterday. And certes in the lyfe of thys daye, ye ne lyuẽ nomore, but ryght as in thys mouable and transytorye moment. Than thylke thynge that suffreth temporall condycion, al though that it neuer began to be, ne though it neuer cease to be (as Arystoteles demed of the worlde) & although the lifé of it be stretched

wyth infynite of tyme, yet algates nys it no
suche thynge, as men might trowen by right
that it is eterne. For all thought that it com-
prehende and enbrace the space of the lyfe in-
fynite, yet algates ne embraseth it not ȳ space
of the lyfe all togyther, for it ne hath not the
futures that be not yet: ne it ne hathe no len-
ger the preteritees that bē don or passed. But
thylke thyng than, that hath and comprehen-
deth togyder al the plentie of the lyfe intermy
nable, to whome there ne fayleth naught of
the future, and to whom there nys naught of
the preterite escaped or passed, thylke same is
ywitnessed and proued by right to ben etern.
And it behoueth by necessyte that thylke
thynge be alway present to him selfe, and cō-
petent, as who saythe, alway present to hym
selfe, and so mighty, that all be ryght at hys
pleasaunce, and that he haue all present the
infynyte of ȳ mouable tyme. Wherfore some
men trowen wrongfully, that whan they he-
ren that it semed to Plato, that thys worlde
had neuer begynnynge of tyme, that it neuer
shall haue faylyng: they wene in thylke ma-
ner, that this worlde be maked eterne, wyth
hys maker, as who saith, they wene that this
worlde and god be maked togyther eterne.
And that is a wrongfull wenynge, for other
thyng it is to be ladde by the lyfe intermina-
ble, as Plato graunted to the worlde, and o-
ther thyng it is to embrace togyther, al ȳ pre-
sence of the lyfe that is intermynable, which
thynge is clere and manyfest to the diuyne
thought. Ne it ne shulde not seme to vs that
god is elder than thynges that ben maked by
quantyte of tyme, but rather by ȳ prosperyte
of hys symple nature. For thys ylke infynyte
mouynges of temporall thynges foloweth
this presentary estate of this life immouable
& so as it ne may not countrefayten ne fayne
it, ne be euenlyke to it for ȳ immobilyte', that
is to say, that is in the eternyte of god, it fay-
leth & falleth in to mouyng fro the symplicite
of the presence of god, & disencreaseth in ȳ in-
fynite quantyte of future & preterite. And so
as it maye not haue togyther al the plentie of
the lyfe, algates yet for as moch as it ceaseth
neuer for to ben in some maner, yet it semeth
somdele to vs, that it foloweth & resembleth
thylke thing, that it ne may not attayne to ne
fulfyllen, and byndeth it selfe to some maner
presence of this lytel moment, the which pre-
sence of this lytel and swift moment, for that
it beareth a maner ymage or lykenesse of the
aye dwellyng of god: it graunteth to such ma
ner thynges, as it betydeth to, that it semeth
hem, as these thinges haue ben, and ben. And
for that the presence of such lytell moment ne
may not dwell, therfore it rauyshed and toke
thinfynite way of tyme, that is to say, by suc-
cessyon, and by this maner it is done, for that
it shulde cōtinue the lyfe in goyng, of ȳ which
lyfe it ne myght not enbrace the plentye of
dwellyng. And for thy if we wollen put wor
thy names to thynges that folowen Plato,
let vs saye than sothlye, that god is eterne,
and that the worlde is perpetuell. Than syth
euery iugemēt knoweth and comprehendeth
by hys own nature, thynges that ben subiect
vnto hym, there is to god alwayes an eterne
and a presentarye estate. And the scyence of
hym that ouerpasseth all temporall moment,
dwelleth in symplycite of hys presence, and
enbraseth and consydereth all the infynyte
spaces of tymes preterytes, and of tymes fu-
tures, and loketh in hys symple knowyng all
thynges of preterite, right as they werē ydon
presentlye ryght nowe. If thou wylte than
thynken and aduyse the prescyence, by which
it knoweth all thynges, thou ne shalt not de-
men it as prescience of thynges to comen, but
thou shalt demen more ryghtfully that it is
scyence of presence or of instaunce that neuer
ne fayleth, for whyche it nys not ycleped pre-
uidence, but it shulde rather ben cleaped pur-
ueyaunce, whyche is establyshed ful ferre fro
ryght lowe thynges, and beholdeth frome a
ferre all thynges, right as it were fro the hye
heyght of thynges. Why askest thou than, or
why dysputest thou thā, that thylke thynges
ben done by necessyte, whyche that ben ysene
and yknowen by the deuyne syght, sythe that
forsoth men ne maken nat thylke thynges ne
cessarye, whyche that they sene ben ydone in
her syght, for addeth thy beholdynge any ne-
cessyte, to thylke thynges which thou behol-
dest present? Boe. Naye (q I) Philo. Certes
(q she) than, yf men myghten maken anye
digne cōparyson or collacyon of the presence
dyuyne, and of the presence of mankynde:
right so as ye sene some thynges in this tem-
porall presence, ryght so seeth god all thynge
by his eterne presence, wherfore this diuyne
prescience ne chaungeth not the nature of the
propertie

propertie of thinges, but beholdeth such thinges present to him ward, as they shulden betyden to you warde in tyme to comen. Ne it ne confoundeth not the iugementes of thynges, but by one syght of hys thought he knoweth the thynges to comen, as well necessary as not necessary. Right so whan ye sene togyther a man walke on the erth, and ꝑ sunne arysen in the heuen, all be it so that ye sene togyther that one and that other: yet neuerthelesse ye demen and discernen, that that one is voluntary, and that other is necessary: Ryght so than the diuyne lokyng, beholding al thinges vnder hym, ne troubleth nat the qualyte of thynges that ben certaynly present to him warde, but as to the condycyon of tyme, forsoth they ben future, for whiche it foloweth, that this hys none opinyon, but rather a sted fast knowynge ystrengthed by sothnesse, that whan that god knoweth any thynge to be, he ne vnwote nat that thilke thyng wanteth necessyte to be, thys is to sayne, that whan that god knoweth any thynge to betyde, he wote well ꝑ it ne hathe no necessyte to betyde. And yf thou seyst here that thylke thynge that god seeth to betyde, it ne maye not vnbetyde, as who sayth it mote betyde, and thilke thynge that ne may nat vnbetyde, it mote betyden by necessyte, & that thou streyn me to this name of the necessyte. Certes I wyll well confessen and beknowen a thyng of full sad trouth, but vnneth shall there any wyght mowe sene it or come therto, but yf that he be beholder of the deuyne thought, for I wyll answere the thus, that thylke thyng that is future, whē it is referred to the deuyne knowyng, than it is necessary. But certes whan it is vnderstandē in hys own kynde, men sene it vtterly fre and absolute fro al necessyte. For certes there ben two maners of necessytees, that one necessyte is symple, as thus, that is behoueth by necessyte, that all men ben mortall or deedly. Another necessyte is condicyonel, as thus, if thou wost that a man walketh, it behoueth by necessyte that he walke, thylke thyng than that any wight hath yknowe to be, it ne maye nat be none otherwyse than he knoweth it to be. But this condicion ne draweth nat with her thilk necessyte simple, for certes this necessite condicionall, ꝑ propre nature of it ne maketh it nat, but the adiection of the condycyon maketh it. For no necessyte ne constrayneth a mā to gone, that goth by his propre wyll, al be it so that whan he goth, that it is necessary that he gothe. Right on this same maner than, yf that the purueyaunce of god seeth any thyng present, thā mote thylke thynge ben by necessyte, although that it ne haue no necessyte of his owne nature. But certes the futures that betyden by fredom of arbytrie, god seeth hem al togyder present. These thynges thā if they ben referred to the deuyne syght, than ben they maked necessary by the condicyon of the deuyne knowyng. But certes, yf thylke thynges ben consydered by hem selfe, they ben absolute of necessyte, and ne forleten not, ne cessen nat of the lyberte of her own nature. Thā certes wythout doute all the thynges shullen ben don, whyche that god woot before that they ben to comen and betyden of free arbytrie, or of frewyll, that al be it so that they betyden, yet algates ne lese they not her propre nature in beynge, by the whyche fyrst or they weren done, they hadden power not to haue betyde. Boe. What is thys to sayne than (q I) that thynges ne be not necessarye by her propre nature, so that they comen in all maners in the lykenesse of necessyte, by condicyō of the diuyne science. Philo. This is the difference (q she) that tho thynges whyche that I purposed the a lytell here before, that is to sayn, sonne arysyng, and the man walkyng that therwhyles that thylke thynges ben done, they ne myght not ben vndone. Natheless that one of hem or it was done, it behoueth by necessyte that it was doone, but not that other. Ryght so it is here that the thynges whych that god hath present, withouten doute they shullen ben, but some of hem dyscendeth of the nature of thynges, as ꝑ sunne arysynge, and some discendeth of the power of the doers, as the man walkynge. Boece. Than sayde I, no wrong, that yf these thynges be referred to the diuyne knowyng, than ben they necessarye, and yf they ben consydred by hem selfe, than ben they absolute fro the bonde of necessyte. Ryght so as all thynges that apereth or sheweth to the wyttes, yf thou referre hem to reason it is vnyuersal, and yf thou loke it or refer it to it selfe, than is it synguler. But nowe yf thou sayest thus, that yf that it be in my power to chaungen my purpose, than shall I boyden the pourueyaunce of god, whan perauenture I shall

haue chaunged the thynges whyche that he knoweth before. Phi. Than shall I answeren the thus: Certes thou mayst wel chaũge thy purpose, but for as moche as the present sothnesse of the diuyne purueyaunce beholdeth that thou mayste chaunge thy purpose, and whether thou chaunge it or no, and why derwarde that thou tourne it, thou ne mayste not eschue the diuyne prescience: rightso thou ne mayste not flye the syght of the present eye all though that thou tourne thy selfe by thy fre wyll in to dyuers actiõs. But thou mayst sayne ayen to thys thus: Howe shall it than be, shall not the diuyne science ben chaunged by my dyspoſycion, whan that I wyll one thyng nowe, and nowe another thyng. And thylke prescience ne semeth it not to entrechaunge stoundes of knowing, as who saith ne shall it not semen to vs, that the diuyne prescience entrechaungeth hys dyuers stoũdes of knowynge, so that it knowe somtyme one thynge, and somtyme it knoweth the contrarye of that thynge. Philo.

No forsothe (q̃ he) for the diuyne syght renneth before and seeth al the futures, and clepeth hem ayen, and retourneth hem to the propre prescience of hys propre knowynge, ne he entrechaungeth not, so as thou wenest the stoundes of hys foreknowynge, as nowe this, nowe that: but he dwellyng aye cometh before, and enbraseth at o stroke all the mutacions. And this prescience to comprehedeu and to sene all thynges, god ne hath not takẽ it of the betydinges of thynges to comen, but of hys propre symplicite. And hereby is assoyled thylke thynges that thou puttest a lytell here before, that is to sayn, that it is vnworthy thyng to sayne ẏ our futures yeuen cause of the prescięce of god. For certes strength of the diuyne science, whyche that enbraseth all thynges by his presentarie knowynge, establysheth maner to all thynges, and it ne oweth not to latter thynges. And sythe ẏ these thynges ben thus, that is to sayne, that necessyte is not in thynges by the diuyne prescience, than is there fredom of arbytrie that dwelleth hole and vnwemmed to mortal mẽ, ne the lawes ne purposen not wycked medes and paynes to the wyllynges of men, that ben vnboundẽ and quyte of all necessyte: And god beholder & foreweter of al thinges dwelleth aboue, and the presente eternyte of syght renneth alwaye wyth the dyuers qualyte of our dedes, dispensynge or ordeynyng medes to good men, and tourmentes to wycked mẽ. Ne in ydell ne in vayne ne ben there not put in god hope and prayers, that ne mowen not ben vnspedefull, ne wythout effecte, whan they ben ryghtfull.

Withstande than and eschew thou vices, worschyppe and loue thou vertues, areyse thy corage to rightful hopes, yelde thou humble prayers and hyghe. Great necessyte of prowesse and of vertue is encharged and commaũded to you yf ye nyll not dissimulen, syth that ye worchen and doone, that is to sayne, your dedes and your werkes before the eyen of the iuge, that seeth and also that demeth al thynges. Deo gracias.

¶ Thus endeth the boke of Boecius of the consolacion of philosophie, and herafter foloweth the dreame of Chaucer.

The dreame

✠ The dreame of Chaucer.

Haue gret wōder by thys
lyght
Howe I lyue, for daye ne
nyght
I maye not slepe, welnye
nought
I haue so many an ydle
thought
Purely for defaute of slepe
That by my trouthe, I take no kepe
Of nothyng, howe it cometh or gothe
Ne me nys nothyng lefe nor lothe
All is ilyche good to me
Joye or sorowe, where so it be
For I haue felyng in no thyng
But as it were a mased thyng
All day in poynte to fall adoun
For sorowfull ymagynacyoun
Is alway holy in my mynde
And well ye wote, agaynst kynde
It were to lyuen in thys wyse
For nature wolde not suffyse
To none erthly creature
Not longe tyme to endure
Without slepe, and be in sorowe
And I ne maye, ne nyght ne morowe
Slepe, and this melancolye
And drede I haue for to dye
Defaute of slepe and heuynesse
Hath slayne my spyrite of quicknesse
That I haue loste all lustyheed
Suche fantasyes ben in myne heed
So I not what is beste to do
But men myght aske me why so
I may not slepe, and what me is
But natheleſſe, who aske thys
Leseth hys askyng trewly
My seluen can not tell why
The sothe, but trewly as I gesse
I holde it be a sycknesse
That I haue suffred thys eyght yere
And yet my boote is neuer the nere
For there is phisycien but one
That may me heale, but that is done
Passe we ouer vntyll efte
That wyll not be, mote nede be lefte
Our fyrst mater is good to kepe
So whan I sawe I myght not slepe
Tyll nowe late, thys other nyght
Upon my bedde I sate vpryght
And bade one reche me a booke
A romaunce, and he it me toke
To rede, and dryue the nyght away
For me thought it better play
Than play eyther at Chesse or tables
And in thys boke were written fables
That clerkes had in olde tyme
And other poetes, put in ryme
To rede, and for to be in mynde
Whyle men loued the lawe of kynde
Thys boke ne spake, but of suche thynges
Of quenes lyues, and of kynges
And many other thynges smale
Amonge all thys I fonde a tale
That me thought awonder thyng.
This was the tale: There was a kyng
That hyght Seys, and had a wyfe
The beste that myght beare lyfe
And thys quene hyght Alcyone
So it befyll, therafter sone
Thys kyng woll wenden ouer see
To tellen shortly, whan that he
Was in the see, thus in thys wyse
Suche a tempest gan to ryse
That brake her maste, and made it fall
And cleft her shyp, and dreynt hem all
That neuer was founde, as it telles
Borde ne man, ne nothyng elles
Right thus thys kyng Seys loste hys lyfe
Nowe for to speke of Alcyone hys wyfe
This lady that was lefte at home
Hath wonder, that the kyng ne come
Home, for it was a longe terme
Anon her herte began to yerne
And for that her thought euer mo
It was not wele, her thought so
She longed so after the kyng
That certes it were a pytous thyng
To tell her hertely sorowfull lyfe
That she had, thys noble wyfe
For hym alas, she loued alderbest
Anone she sent bothe eest and west
To seke hym, but they founde nought
Alas (qꝑ she) that I was wrought
And wher my lorde my loue be deed:
Certes I nyll neuer eate breed
I make a vowe to my god here
But I mowe of my lorde here

Suche sorowe thys lady to her toke
That trewly, I that made thys boke
Had suche pyte, and suche routhe
To rede her sorowe, that by my trouthe
I farde the worse all the morowe
After to thynken on her sorowe
So whan thys lady coude here no worde
That no man myght fynde her lorde
Full ofte she swowned, and sayd alas
For sorowe, full nyghe woode she was
Ne she coude no rede but one
But downe on knees she sate anone
And wepte, that pyte was to here
A mercy swete lady dere
(q̃ she) to Juno her goddesse
Helpe me out of thys distresse
And yeue me grace my lorde to se
Soone, or wete where so he be
Or howe he fareth, or in what wyse
And I shall make you sacrifyse
And holy yours become I shall
Wyth good wyll, body, herte and all
And but thou wolte this, lady swete
Sende me grace to slepe and mete
In my slepe some certayne sweuen
where through that I may knowe euen
whether my lorde be quicke or deed
With that word she hynge down the heed
And fell in a swoune, as colde as stone
Her women caught her vp anone
And brought her in bed all naked
And she forweped and forwaked
was wery, and thus the deed slepe
Fell on her, or she toke kepe
Through Juno, that had herde her boone
That made her to slepe soone
For as she prayde, ryght so was done
In dede, for Juno ryght anone
Called thus her messangere
To do her erande, and he come nere
whan he was come, she bad hym thus
Go bet (q̃ Juno) to Morpheus
Thou knowest hym well, the god of slepe
Nowe vnderstande well, and take kepe
Saye thus on my halfe, that he
Go fast in to the great see
And byd hym that on all thynge
He take vp Seys body the kynge
That lyeth full pale, and nothynge rody
Byd hym crepe in to the body
And do it gone to Alcyone
The quene, there she lyeth alone
And shewe her shortly it is no nay
Howe it was dreynt thys other day
And do the body speke ryght so
Right as it was wonned to do
The whyles that it was alyue
Go nowe fast, and hye the blyue.
This messanger toke leue and wente
Upon hys way, and neuer he stente
Tyll he came to the darke valey
That stante bytwene rockes twey
There neuer yet grewe corne ne gras
Ne tree, ne naught that ought was
Beest ne man, ne nought elles
Saue that there were a fewe welles
Came rennynge fro the clyffes adowne
That made a deedly slepynge sowne
And rennen downe ryght by a caue
That was vnder a rocke ygraue
Amyd the valey wonder depe
There these goddes lay allepe
Morpheus and Eclympasteyre
That was the god of slepes heyre
That slepte, and dyd none other werke
Thys caue was also as derke
As hell pytte, ouer all aboute
They had good leyser for to route
To bye who might slepe best
Some hynge her chynne vpon her brest
And slepte vpryght her heed yhed
And some lay naked in her bed
And slepte whyles theyr dayes last
Thys messangere come rennyng fast
And cryed ho ho, awake anone
It was for nought, there herde hym none
Awake (q̃ he) who lyeth there
And blewe hys horne ryght in her eere
And cryed awaketh wonder hye
Thys god of slepe, wyth hys one eye
Cast vp, and asked who clepeth there
It am I (q̃ thys messangere)
Juno bade thou shuldest gone
And tolde hym what he shulde done
As I haue tolde you here before
It is no nede reherse it more
And wente hys waye whan he had sayde
Anone thys god of slepe abrayde
Out of hys slepe and gan to go
And dyd as he had bydde hym do
Toke vp the dede body soone
And bare it forthe to Alcione
His wyfe the quene, there as she lay
Right euen a quarter before day

And stode

And stode ryght at her beddes fete
And called her ryght as she hete
By name,and sayd: My swete wyfe
Awake,let be your sorowfull lyfe
For in your sorowe,there lyeth no rede
For certes swete loue,I am but dede
Ye shall me neuer on lyue yse
But good swete herte that ye
Bury my body,for suche a tyde
Ye mowe it fynde,the see besyde
And farewell swete,my worldes blysse
I praye god your sorowe lysse
To lytell whyle our blysse lasteth
wyth that her eyen vp she casteth
And sawe naught,alas(quod she)for sorowe
And dyed wythin the thyrde morowe
But what she sayd more in that swowe
I maye not tell you as nowe
It were to longe for to dwell
My fyrst matere I wyll you tell
wherfore I haue tolde thys thynge
Of Alcione,and Seys the kynge
For thus moche dare I saye well
I had be doluen euerydel
And deed,ryght through defaute of slepe
Yf I ne had red,and take kepe
Of thys tale nexte before
And I wyll tell you wherfore
For I ne myght for bote ne bale
Slepe,or I had redde thys tale
Of thys dreynte Seys the kynge
And of the goddes of slepynge
when I had red thys tale wele
And ouerloked it euerydele
Me thought wonder,yf it were so
For I had neuer herde speake or tho
Of no goddes,that coude make
Men to slepe,ne for to wake
For I ne knewe neuer god but one
And in my game,I sayd anone
And yet me lyst ryght euell to pley
Rather then that I shulde dey
Through defaute of slepynge thus
I wolde gyue thylke Morpheus
Or that goddes dame Juno
Or some wyght els,I ne rought who
To make me slepe,and haue some rest
I wyll gyue hym the alther best
Yeft,that euer he abode hys lyue
And here onwarde,ryght nowe as blyue
Yf he woll make me slepe a lyte
Of downe of pure downes whyte
I woll gyue hym a fether bed
Rayed wyth golde,and ryght well cled
In fyne blacke Sattyn doutremere
And many a pylowe,and euery bere
Of cloth of raynes to slepe on softe
Hym thare not nede to tourne ofte
And I woll yeue hym all that falles
To hys chambre and to hys halles
I woll do paynte wyth pure golde
And tapyte hem full many folde
Of one sute thys shall he haue
Yf I wyst where were hys caue
Yf he can make me slepe sone
As dyd the goddesse,quene Alcione
And thus thys ylke god Morpheus
Maye wynne of me mo fees thus
Then euer he wanne,and to Juno
That is hys goddesse,I shall so do
I trowe that she shall holde her payde.
I had vnneth that worde ysayde
Ryght thus as I haue tolde you
That sodeynly I nyst howe
Suche a lust anone me toke
To slepe,that ryght vpon my boke
I fell aslepe,and therwyth euen
Me mette so inly suche a sweuen
So wonderfull,that neuer yet
I trowe no man had the wyt
To coone well my sweuen rede
No nought Joseph wythout drede
Of Egypte,he that rad so
The kynges metynge Pharao
No more then coude the lest of vs
Ne nat scarsly Macrobeus
He that wrote all the auysyon
That he met kynge Scipion
The noble man the Affrican
Suche meruayles fortuned then
I trowe a rede my dremes euen
Lo thus it was,thys was my sweuen.
Me thought thus,that it was Maye
And in the dawnynge there I laye
Me met thus in my bed all naked
And loked forth,for I was waked
wyth smale foules a great hepe
That had afrayed me out of my slepe
Through noyse,& swetnesse of her songe
And as me met,they sate amonge
Upon my chambre rofe wythout
Upon the tyles ouer all about
And euerych songe in hys wyse
The moste solempne seruyse

Be note, that euer man I trowe
Had herde, for some of hem songe lowe
Some hygh, and all of one accorde
To tell shortly at o worde
was neuer herde so swete steuen
But it had be a thynge of heuen
So mery a sowne, so swete entunes
That certes for the towne of Tewnes
I nolde, but I had herde hem synge
For all my chambre gan to rynge
Through syngynge of her ermony
For instrument, nor melody
was no where herde, yet halfe so swete
Nor of accorde halfe so mete
For there was none of hem that fayned
To synge, for eche of hem hym payned
To synde out many crafty notes
They ne spared not her throtes
And soth to sayne, my chambre was
Full well depaynted, and wyth glas
were all the wyndowes, well yglased
Full clere, and not an hole ycrased
That to beholde it was great ioy
For holly all the storye of Troy
was in the glasynge ywrought thus
Of Hector, and of kynge Priamus
Of Achylles, and of kynge Laomedon
And eke of Medea, and of Jason
Of Parys, Heleyne, and of Lauyne
And all the walles wyth colours fyne
were paynte, both texte and glose
And all the Romaunce of the rose
My wyndowes were shyt echone
And through the glasse the sunne shone
Upon my bedde wyth bryght bemes
wyth many glad gyldy stremes
And eke the welkyn was so fayre
Blewe, bryght, clere was the ayre
And full atempre, forsoth it was
For neyther to colde, ne hote it nas
Ne in all the welkyn was no clowde
And as I lay thus wonder lowde
Me thought I herde an hunte blowe
Tassay hys great horne, and for to knowe
whether it was clere, or horse of sowne
And I herde goynge both vp and downe
Men horse, houndes, and other thynge
And all men speake of huntynge
Howe they wolde slee the herte with strēgth
And howe the herte had vpon length
So moche enbosed, I not nowe what
Anone ryght when I herde that
Howe that they wolde, on huntynge gone
I was ryght glad, and vp anone
Toke my horse, and forth I wente
Out of my chambre, I neuer stente
Tyll I come to the felde wythout
There ouer toke I a great route
Of hunters, and eke of foresters
And many relayes and lymers
And hyed hem to the forest fast
And I wyth hem, so at the last
I asked one ladde, a lymere
Say felowe, who shall hunte here
(Quod I) and he answered ayen
Syr, the Emperour Octauien
(Quod he) and is here fast by
A goddes halfe, in good tyme (quod I)
Go we fast, and gan to ryde
when we come to the forest syde
Euery man dyd ryght sone
As to huntynge fell to done
The maylster hunte, anone fote hote
wyth his horne blewe thre mote
At the vncouplynge of hys houndes
wythin a whyle the herte founde is
Ihalowed, and rechased fast
Longe tyme, and so at the last
Thys herte rouled and stale awaye
Fro all the houndes a preuy waye
The houndes had ouershot hym all
And were vpon a defaulte yfall.
Therwyth the hunte, wonder faste
Blewe a forloyne at the laste
I was go walked fro my tre
And as I wente, there came by me
A whelpe, that fawned me as I stoode
That had yfolowed, and coude no good
It came and crepte to me as lowe
Ryght as it had me yknowe
Helde downe hys heede, & ioyned his eeres
And layde all smoth downe hys heeres
I wolde haue caught it anone
It fledde, and was fro me gone
As I hym folowed, and it forth wente
Downe by a floury grene it wente
Full thycke of grasse, full softe and swete
wyth floures fele, fayre vnder fete
And lytell vsed, it semed thus
For both Flora, and zepherus
They two, that make floures growe
Had made her dwellynge there I trowe
For it was on to beholde
As though the erthe enuye wolde

To

To be gayer then the heuen
To haue mo floures, suche seuen
As in the welken sterres be
It had forget the pouerte
That wynter, through hys colde morowes
Had made it suffre, and hys sorowes
All was forgyten, and that was sene
For all the woode was woxen grene
Swetnesse of dewe, had made it wase
It is no nede eke for to ase
where there were many grene greues
Of thycke of trees, so full of leues
And euery tree stode by hym selue
Fro other, well ten foote or twelue
So great trees, so huge of strength
Of fourty or fyfty fedome length
Cleane wythout bowe or stycke
wyth croppes brode, and eke as thycke
They were not an ynche a sonder
That it was shadde ouer all vnder
And many an harte, and many an hynde
was both before me, and behynde
Of fawnes, sowers, buckes, does
was full of the wodde, and many roes
And many squyrels, that sete
Full hygh vpon the trees and ete
And in her maner made feestes
Shortly, it was so full of beestes
That though Argus, the noble countour
Sat to reken in hys countour
And reken wyth hys fygures ten
For by tho fygures newe al ken
Yf they be crafty, reken and nombre
And tell of euery thynge the nombre
Yet shulde he fayle to reken euen
The wonders me met in my sweuen
But forth I romed, ryght wonder faste
Downe the wodde, so at the laste
I was ware of a man in blacke
That sate, and had yturned hys backe
To an ooke, an huge tree
Lorde thought I, who maye that be
what eyleth hym to sytten here
Anone ryght, I went nere
Then founde I sytte, euen vpryght
A wonder welfaynge knyght
By the maner me thought so
Of good mokell, and ryght yonge therto
Of the age of foure and twenty yere
Vpon hys berde, but lytell heere
And he was clothed all in blacke
I stalked euen vnto hys backe
And there I stode, as styll as ought
The sothe to say, he sawe me nought
For why he hynge his heed adowne
And with a deedly, sorouful sowne
He made of ryme, ten verses or twelue
Of a complaynt, to him selue
The moste pyte, the moste routhe
That euer I herde, for by my trouthe
It was great wonder that nature
Wyght suffre any creature
To haue suche sorowe, and he not deed
Ful pytous pale, and nothyng reed
He sayd a laye a maner songe
without note, without songe
And was this, for ful wel I can
Reherse it, right thus it began
I haue of sorowe so great wone
That ioye gette I neuer none
Nowe that I se my lady bright
whiche I haue loued, withal my myght
Is fro me deed, and is agone
And thus in sorowe, lefte me alone
Alas, deth what ayleth the
That thou noldest haue taken me
when that thou toke my lady swete
Of all goodnesse, she had none mete
That was so fayre, so freshe, so fre
So good, that men maye well se
when he had made thus hys complaynte
Hys sorowfull herte, gan fast faynte
And hys spirites wexen dede
The bloode was fledde, for pure drede
Downe to hys herte, to maken hym warme
For well it feled the herte had harme
To wete eke, why it was adradde
By kynde, and for to make it gladde
For it is membre principall
Of the body, and that made all
Hys hewe chaunge, and wexe grene
And pale, for there no bloode is sene
In no maner lymme of hys
Anone therwyth, when I sawe thys
He farde thus yuell, there he sete
I wente and stode ryght at hys fete
And grette hym, but he spake nought
But argued wyth hys owne thought
And in hys wytte, dysputed faste
why, and howe hys lyfe myght laste
Hym thought hys sorowes were so smerte
And lay so colde vpon hys herte
So through hys sorowe, a holy thought
Made hym that he herde me nought

For

For he had welnye loste hys mynde
Though Pan, that mē clepeth god of kynde
Were for hys sorowes neuer so wrothe
But at the last, to sayne ryght sothe
He was ware of me, howe I stoode
Before hym, and dyd of my hoode
And had ygret hym, as I best coude
Debonayrly, and nothynge loude
He sayd, I praye the be not wrothe
I herde the not: to sayne the sothe
Ne I sawe the not, syr truely
Ah good syr, no force (quod I)
I am ryght sory, yf I haue ought
Dystroubled you, out of your thought
Forgeue me, yf I haue mysse take
Yes, thamendes is lyght to make
(Quod he) for there lyeth none therto
There is nothynge myssayde, nor do
Lo howe goodly spake thys knyght
As it had be another wyght
And made it neyther tough ne queynt
And I sawe that, and gan me aqueynt
wyth hym, and founde hym so tretable
Ryght wonder skylfull, and resonable
As me thought, for all hys bale
Anone ryght, I gan fynde a tale
To hym, to loke where I myght ought
Haue more knowlegynge of hys thought
Syr (quod I) thys game is done
I holde that thys herte be gone
These huntes can hym no where se
I do no force therof (quod he)
My thought is theron neuer a dele
By our lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele
Ryght so me thynketh by your chere
But syr, o thynge woll ye here
Me thynketh in great sorowe I you se
But certes syr, yf that ye
wolde ought dyscure me your wo
I wolde, as wyse god helpe me so
Amende it, yf I can or may
Ye mowe proue it by assay
For by my trouth, to make you hole
I woll do all my power hole
And telleth me, of your sorowes smerte
Parauenter it maye ease your herte
That semeth full sycke vnder your syde
wyth that he loked on me a syde
As who sayeth nay, that wyll not be
Graunt mercy good frende (quod he)
I thanke the, that thou woldest so
But it maye neuer the rather be do
No man may my sorowe glade
That maketh my hewe to fall and fade
And hath myne vnderstandynge lorne
That me is wo, that I was borne
Nay nought make my sorowes slyde
Not all the remedyes of Ouide
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye
Ne Dedalus, wyth hys playes slye
Ne heale me, may no phisicien
Naught Ipocras, ne Galien
Me is wo, that I lyue houres twelue
But who so woll assaye hym selue
whether hys herte can haue pyte
Of any sorowe, let hym se me
I wretch, that death hath made all naked
Of all the blysse that euer was maked
I wroth, werste of all wyghtes
That hate my dayes, and my nyghtes
My lyfe, my lustes, be me lothe
For all fare and I be wrothe
The pure death is so full my fo
That I wolde dye, it wyll not so
For when I folowe it, it wyll flye
I wolde haue hym, it nyl nat me
Thys is payne wythout reed
Alwaye dyenge, and be not deed
That Tesyphus that lyeth in hell
Maye not of more sorowe tell
And who so wyste all, by my trouthe
My sorowe, but he had routhe
And pyte of my sorowes smerte
That man hath a fendly herte
For who so seeth me fyrst on morowe
Maye sayne he hath mette wyth sorowe
For I am sorowe, and sorowe is I
Alas, and I wyll tell the why
My sorowe is turned to playnynge
And all my laughter to weepynge
My glad thoughtes to heuynesse
In trauayle is myne ydlenesse
And eke my reste, my wele is wo
My good is harme, and euer wo
In wrath is turned my playnyng
And my delyte in to sorowyng
Myne heale is turned in to sicknesse
In drede is al my sykernesse
To derke is turned al my lyght
My witte is foly, my day is nyght
My loue is hate, my slepe wakyng
My myrthe and melis, is fastyng
My countenaunce is nycete
And al abawed, where so I be

My peace pleadynge, and in werre
Alas, howe myght I fare werre
My boldnesse is turned to shame
For false fortune hath played a game
At the Chesse wyth me, alas the whyle
The trayteresse false, and full of gyle
That all behoteth, and nothynge halte
She goeth vprypght, and yet she halte
That baggeth foule, and loketh fayre
The dyspytous debonayre
That scorneth many a creature
An ydole of false purtrayture
Is she, for she woll sone wryen
She is the monstres heed ywryen
As fylthe, ouer ystrowed wyth floures
Her moste worschyp and her floures
To lyen, for that is her nature
wythout fayth, lawe, or mesure
She false is, and euer laughynge
wyth one eye, and that other weepynge
That is brought vp, she set all downe
I lyken her to the Scorpiowne
That is a false flatterynge beest
For wyth hys heed be maketh feest
But all amyd hys flaterynge
wyth hys tayle he wyll stynge
And enuenym, and so wyll she
She is the enuyous charite
That is aye false, and semeth wele
So turneth she her false whele
Aboute, for it is nothynge stable
Nowe by the fyre, nowe at table
Ful many one hath she thus yblent
She is playe of enchauntement
That semeth one, and is not so
The false theefe, what hath she do
Trowest thou, by our lorde I wyll the say
At the Chesse wyth me she gan to play
wyth her false draughtes full dyuers
She stale on me, and toke my feers
And when I sawe my feers away
Alas, I couth no lenger play
But sayd, farewell swete ywys
And farewell all that euer there is
Therwyth fortune sayd, checke here
And mate in the mydde poynt of the checkere
wyth a paune errant, alas
Full craftyer to playe she was
Then Athalus that made the game
Fyrst of the Chesse, so was hys name
But god wolde I had ons or twyse
I conde, and knowe the ieoperdyse
That coude the Greke Pithagores
I shulde haue playde the bet at ches
And kepte my feers the bet therby
And though wherto, for truely
I holde that wyche not worth a stre
It had be neuer the bet for me
For fortune can so many a wyle
There be but fewe, can her begyle
And eke she is the lasse to blame
My selfe I wolde haue do the same
Before god, had I ben as she
She ought the more excused be
For thys I say, yet more therto
Had I be god, and myght haue do
My wyll, when she me feers caught
I wolde haue drawe the same draught
For also wyse, god yeue me rest
I dare well swere, she toke the best
But through that draught I haue lorne
My blysse, alas that I was borne
For euermore I trowe truely
For all my wyll, my lust holy
Is tourned, but ye, what to done
By our lorde it is to dye sone
For nothynge I leaue it nought
But lyue and dye, ryght in thys thought
For there nys planet in fyrmament
Ne in ayre ne in earth none element
That they ne yeue me a yefte echone
Of weepynge when I am alone
For when that I aduyse me wele
And bethynke me euery dele
Howe that there lyeth in rekenynge
In my sorowe for nothynge
And howe there lyueth no gladnesse
May glad me of my dystresse
And howe I haue lost suffysaunce
And therto I haue no pleasaunce
Then maye I saye, I haue ryght nought
And when all thys falleth in my thought
Alas, then am I ouercome
For that is done, is not to come
I haue more sorowe then Tantale
And when I herde hym tell thys tale
Thus pytously, as I you tell
Vnneth myght I lenger dwell
It dyd myne herte so moche wo
A good syr (quod I) say not so
Haue some pyte on your nature
That formed you to creature
Remembreth you of Socrates
For he ne counteth not thre strees

Of nought that fortune coude do
No(quod he) I can not so
why so good syr, yes perde(quod I)
Ne saye not so, for truly
Though ye had lost the feerses twelue
And ye for sorowe murdred your selue
Ye shulde be dampned in thys case
By as good ryght as Medea was
That slough her chyldren for Jason
And Phyllis also, for Demophon
Hynge her selfe, so welaway
For he had broke hys terme day
To come to her: Another rage
Had Dido, the quene eke of Cartage
That slough her selfe, for Eneas
was false, whych a foole she was.
And Ecquo dyed, for Narcisus
Nolde not loue her, and ryght thus
Hath many another foly done
And for Dalida dyed Sampson
That slough hym selfe wyth a pylere
But there is no man alyue here
wolde for her feers make thys wo
why so(quod he) it is not so
Thou wotest full lytell what thou menest
I haue lost more then thou wenest
Howe that maye be(quod I)
Good syr, tell me all holy
In what wyse, howe, why, and wherfore
That ye haue thus your blysse lore
Blythely(quod he) come syt doun
I tell the vpon a condicioun
That thou shalt holly wyth all thy wyt
Do thyne entente to herken it
Yes syr: Swere thy trouth therto
Gladly do then holde here to
I shall ryght blythly, so god me saue
Holly wyth all the wyt I haue
Here you as well as I can
A goddes halfe(quod he) and began
Syr(quod he) syth fyrst I couthe
Haue any maner wyt fro youth
Or kyndely vnderstandynge
To comprehende in any thynge
what loue was, in myne owne wyt
Dredelesse I haue euer yet
Be trybutary, and yeue rente
To loue holly, wyth good entente
And through pleasaunce, become hys thrall
wyth good wyll, body, herte and all
All thys I put in hys seruage
As to my lorde, and dyd homage
And full deuoutly I prayde hym to
He shulde beset myne herte so
That it pleasaunce to hym were
And worshyp to my lady dere
And thys was longe, and many a yere
(Er that myne herte was set owhere)
That I dyd thus, and nyste why
I trowe it came me kyndely
Paraunter I was therto moste able
As a whyte wall, or a table
For it is redy to ketche and take
All that men wyll therin make
whether so men woll portrey or paynte
Be the werkes neuer so quaynte.
And thylke tyme I fared ryght so
I was able to haue lerned tho
And to haue conde, as well or better
Paraunter, eyther arte or letter
But for loue came fyrst in my thought
Therfore I forgate it nought
I chees loue to my fyrst crafte
Therfore it is wyth me lafte
For why, I toke it of so yonge age
That malyce had my corage
Not that tyme, turned to no thynge
Through to mokell knowlegynge
For that tyme, youth my maystresse
Gouerned me in ydelnesse
For it was in my fyrst youthe
And tho full lytell good I couthe
For al my werkes were flyttyng
That tyme, and al my though varyeng
Al were to me ilyche goode
That I knewe tho, but thus it stode
It happed that I came on a day
In to a place, there that I sey
Trewly the fayrest companye
Of ladyes, that euer man with eye
Had sene togythers in o place
Shal I clepe it happe, eyther grace
That brought me there, not but fortune
That is to lyen ful comune
The false trayteresse peruerse
God wolde I coulde clepe her werse
For nowe she worcheth me ful wo
And I wol tel sone why so
Among these ladyes thus echone
Soth to sayne, I sawe one
That was lyke none of the route
For I dare swere, without doute
That as the somers sunne bryght
Is fayrer, clerer, and hath more lyght

Then

Than any other planet in heuen
The moone, or the sterres seuen
For all the worlde, so had she
Surmounted hem al of beautie
Of maner, and of comlynesse
Of stature, and of wel set gladnesse
Of goodlyhede, and so wel besey
Shortly what shal I more sey
By god and by his halowes twelue
It was my swete, ryght all her selue
She had so stedfast countenaunce
So noble porte, and mayntenaunce
And loue, that wel herde my bone
Had espyed me thus sone
That she full sone in my thought
As helpe me god, so was I cought
So sodaynly, that I ne toke
No maner counsayle, but at her loke
And at myne herte, for why, her eyen
So gladly I trowe myne hert seyne
That purely tho, myne owne thought
Sayd it were better serue her for nought
Than with an other to be wele
And it was soth, for euery dele
I wyll anon ryght tell the why
I sawe her daunce so comely
Caroll and synge so swetely
Laugh and playe so womanly
And loke so debonayrly
So goodly speke and so frendly
That certes I trowe that neuermore
Nas sene so blyssful a tresore
For euery heer on her heed
Soth to saye it was not reed
Ne neyther yelowe, ne browne it nas
Me thought moost lyke golde it was
And which eyen my lady had
Debonayre, good, glad, and sad
Symple, of good mokell, not to wyde
Therto her loke nas nat asyde
Ne ouerthwart, but beset so wele
It drewe and toke vp euery dele
All that on her gan beholde
Her eyen semed anon she wolde
Haue mercy, folly wenden so
But it was neuer the rather do
It nas no counterfeyted thynge
It was her owne pure lokyng
That the goddesse dame nature
Had made hem open by measure
And close, for were she neuer so glad
Her lokyng was not folyche spread
Ne wyldly, though that she played
But euer me thought her eyen sayde
By god my wrath is all forgeue
Therwith her lyst so wel to lyue
That dulnesse was of her adrad
She nas to sobre ne to glad
In all thynges more measure
Had neuer I trowe creature
But many one with her loke she hert
And that sate her full lytle at herte
For she knewe nothyng of her thought
But whether she knewe or knewe it nought
Algate she ne rought of hym a stre
To get her loue no nere nas he
That wōned at home, than he in Inde
The formost was alway behynde
But good folke ouer all other
She loued as man may do his brother
Of which loue she was wondre large
In skylful places that bere charge
But which a vysage had she therto
Alas my hert is wondre wo
That I ne can descryuen it
Me lacketh both englysh and wyt
For to vndo it at the full
And eke my spyrites ben so dull
So great a thyng for to deuyse
I haue no wyt that can suffyse
To comprehende her beauti
But thus moche I dare sayne that she
was whyte, rodye, fresh, & lyuely hewed
And euery daye her beautie newed
And nygh her face was alderbest
For certes nature had suche lest
To make that fayre, that truly she
was her chefe patron of beautie
And chefe ensample of all her werke
And moustre, for be it neuer so darke
Me thynketh I se her euermo
And yet moreouer though al tho
That euer lyued, were now alyue
Ne wolde haue founde to discryue
In al her face, a wicked signe
For it was sad, symple, and benigne
And suche a goodly swete speche
Had that swete, my lyues leche
So frendly, and so well ygrounded
Upon al reason so well yfounded
And so tretable to all good
That I dare sweare well by the rood
Of eloquence was neuer founde
So swete a sownyng facounde

Ne trewer tonged, ne scorned lasse
Ne bet coulde heale: That by the masse
I durst sweare, though the pope it songe
That there was neuer yet through her tōg
Man ne woman greatly harmyd
As for her was all harme hyd
Ne lasse flattryng in her worde
That purely her symple recorde
Was founde as true as any bonde
Or trouth, of any mans honde
Ne chyde she coulde neuer a dele
That knoweth all the worlde ful wele
But suche a fayrnesse of a necke
Had that swete, that bone nor brecke
Nas ther none sene, that myssat
It was whyte, smothe, streyght, & pure flat
without hole, or cauell bone
And by semyng she had none
Her throte, as I haue now memoire
Semed as a rounde tour of yuoire
Of good greatnesse, and not to grete
And Fayre whyte she hete
That was my ladyes name ryght
She was therto fayre and bryght
She had not her name wronge
Ryght fayre shulders, and body longe
She had, and armes euery lyth
Fattysh fleschy, not great ther with
Ryght whyte handes, and nayles red
Rounde brestes, and of good brede
Her hyppes were: a streyght flat backe
I knewe on her none other lacke
That all her lymmes were pure sewyng
In as ferre as I had knowyng
Therto she coulde so wel playe
what that her lyst, that I dare saye
That was lyke to torche bryght
That euery man maye take of lyght
Ynough, and it hath neuer the lesse
Of maner and of comlynesse
Ryght so farde my lady dere
For euery wyght of her manere
Wyght catche ynough, yf that he wolde
Yf he had eyen her to beholde
For I dare sweare wel, yf that she
Had amonge ten thousande be
She wolde haue be at the best
A chese myrrour of all the frest
Though they had stonde in a rowe
To mens eyen, that coulde haue knowe
For where so men had played, or waked
Me thought the felowshyp as naked
without her, that I sawe onces
As a crowne without stones
Truly she was to myne eye
The soleyn Fenix of Arabye
For there lyueth neuer but one
Ne suche as she, ne knowe I none
To speke of goodnesse, truly she
Had as moche debonayrtie
As euer had Hester in the Byble
And more, yf more were possyble
And soth to sayne, therwithall
She had a wyt so generall
So hole enclyned to all good
That all her wyt was set by the roode
without malyce, vpon gladnesse
And therto I sawe neuer yet a lesse
Harmfull, than she was in doing
I say not that she ne had knowyng
what harme was, or els she
Had coulde no good, so thynketh me
And truly for to speke of trouth
But she had had, it had be routh
Therof she had so moche her dele
And I dare sayne, and swere it wele
That trouth hym selfe ouer all and all
Had chose his maner principall
In her, that was his restyng place
Therto she had the moost grace
To haue stedfast perseueraunce
And easye attempre gouernaunce
That euer I knewe, or wyst yet
So pure suffraunt was her wyt
And reason gladly she vnderstode
It followed well, she coulde good
She vsed gladly to do wele
These were her maners euery dele
Therwith she loued so well ryght
She wronge do wolde to no wyght
No wyght myght do her no shame
She loued so wel her owne name
Her lust to holde no wyght in honde
Ne be thou syker, she wolde not fonde
To holde no wyght in balaunce
By halfe worde, ne by countenaunce
But yf men wolde vpon her lye
Ne sende men into walakye
To Pruyse, and to Tartarie
To Alisandrie, ne into Turkye
And byd hym fast, anon that he
Go hoodlesse into the dyre see
And come home by the Carromare
And syr, be now ryght ware

That I may of you here sayne
worshyp, or that ye come agayne
She ne vsed no suche knackes smale
But therfore that I tell my tale
Ryght on this same I haue sayde
was hooly all my loue layde
For certes she was that swete wyfe
My suffysaunce, my lust, my lyfe
Myne hope, myne heale, and all blesse
My worldes welfare, and my goodesse
And I holy hers, and euerydele
By our lorde (q I) I trowe you wele
Hardly your loue was wel beset
I not how ye myght haue do bet
Bet, ne not so well (quod he)
I trowe syr (quod I) parde.
Nay leue it wel: Syr so do I
I leue you well, that truly
You thought that she was the best
And to beholde, the alderfayrest
whoso had loked her with your eyen
with myne, nay al that her seyen
Sayde and swore, it was so
And though they ne had, I wolde tho
Haue loued best my lady fre
Though I had had all the beautie
That euer had Alcibyades
And all the strength of Hercules
And therto had the worthynesse
Of Alisaundre, and all the rychesse
That euer was in Babiloyne
In Cartage, or in Macedoyne
Or in Rome, or in Niniue
And therto also hardy be
As was Hector, so haue I ioye
That Achiles slough at Troye
And therfore was he slayne also
In a temple, for both two
wer slayne, he and Antigelius
And so sayth Dares Frigius
For loue of Polixena
Or ben as wyse as Mynerua
I wolde euer, without drede
Haue loued her, for I must nede
Nede-nay truly I gabbe nowe
Nought nede, and I woll tellen howe
For of good wyll myne hert it wolde
And eke to loue her, I was holde
As for the fayrest and the best
She was as good, so haue I rest
As euer was Penelope of Grece
Or as the noble wyfe Lucrece
That was the best, he telleth thus
The Romayne Titus Lyuius
She was as good, and nothyng lyk
Though her stories be autentyke
Algate she was as true as she
But wherfore that I tell the
whan I fyrst my ladye seye
I was ryght yonge, soth to say
And ful great nede I had to lerne
whan myne hert wolde yerne
To loue it was a great emprise
But as my wyt wolde best suffyse
After my yonge chyldly wyt
without drede I beset it
To loue her in my best wyse
To do her worshyp, and the seruyse
That I coude tho, by my trouth
without faynyng, eyther slouth
For wonder fayne I wolde her se
So mokell it amended me
That whan I sawe her a morowe
I was warysched of al my sorowe
Of alday after tyl it were eue
Me thought nothyng myght me greue
were my sorowes neuer so smerte
And yet she syt so in myne herte
That by my trouth, I nolde nought
For al this worlde, out of my thought
Leaue my lady, no truly
Now by my trouth syr (quod I)
Me thynketh ye haue suche a chaunce
As shryft without repentaunce
Repentaunce, nay fye (quod he)
Shulde I nowe repent me
To loue, nay certes than were I well
werse than was Achitophel
Or Antenor, so haue I ioye
The traytour that betrayed Troye
Or the false Genellon
He that purchased the trayson
Of Roulande, and of Olyuere
Nay, whyle I am alyue here
I nyll forfet her neuer mo,
Now good syr (quod I) tho
Ye haue well tolde me here before
It is no nede to reherse it more
How ye sawe her fyrst, and where
But wolde ye tel me the manere
To her, which was your fyrst speche
Therof I wolde you beseche
And howe she knewe fyrst your thoughe

whether ye loued her or nought
And telleth me eke what ye haue lore
I herde you tel here before
ye sayd, thou notest what thou menest
I haue lost more than thou wenest
what losse is that (quod I tho)
Nyl she not loue you is it so
Or haue ye aught done amys
That she hath lefte you, is it this
For goddes loue tel me al
Before god (quod he) and I shal
I say right as I haue sayde
On her was al me loue layd
And yet she nist it not neuer a dele
Not long tyme, leue it wele
For be right syker, I durst nought
For al this worlde, tel her my thought
Ne I wolde haue wrathed her truly
For woste thou why, she was lady
Of the body that had the herte
And whoso hath that may not asterte
But for to kepe me fro ydlenesse
Truly I dyd my busynesse
To make songes as I best coude
And oft tyme I songe hem loude
And made songes, this a great deale
Although I coude not make so wele
Songes, ne knewe the arte all
As coude Lamekes sonne Tuball
That founde out fyrst the arte of songe
For as his brothers hamers ronge
Upon his anuelt vp and downe
Therof he toke the fyrst sownne
But grekes sayne of Pithagoras
That he the fyrst fynder was
Of the arte, Auroza telleth so
But therof nofore of hem two
Algates songes this I made
Of my felyng, myne hert to glade
And lo, this was alther ferst
I not where it were the werst
Lorde it maketh myne hert lyght
whan I thynke on that swete wyght
That is so semely on to se
And wysh to god it myght so be
That she wolde holde me for her knyght
My lady that is so fayre and bryght
Now haue I tolde the, soth to say
My fyrst songe vpon a daye
I bethought me what wo
And sorowe that I suffred tho
For her, and yet she wyst it nought
Ne tel her durst I not my thought
Alas thought I, I can no rede
And but I tell her, I am but deed
And yf I tell her, to say ryght soth
I am adrad she woll be wroth
Alas, what shall I than do
In this debate, I was so wo
Me thought myne hert brast atwayne
So at the last, soth for to sayne
I bethought me that nature
Ne formed neuer in creature
So moche beautie truly
And bountie without mercy
In hope of that, my tale I tolde
with sorowe, as that I neuer sholde
For nedes, and maugre myne heed
I must haue tolde her, or be deed
I not well how that I began
Full euyll reherse it I can
And eke as helpe me god withall
I trowe it was in the dismal
That was the ten woundes of Egypt
For many a worde I ouer skypt
In my tale for pure fere
Lest my wordes mysse set were
with sorowfull hert and woundes deed
Softe and quakyng for pure drede
And shame, and styntyng in my tale
For ferde, and myne hewe all pale
Full oft I wext both pale and red
Bowyng to her I hynge the heed
I durst not ones loke her on
For wyt, maner, and all was gone
I sayd: mercy, and nomore
It nas no game, it sat me sore.
So at the last, soth to sayne
whan that myne hert was come agayne
To tell shortly al my speche
with hole hert I gan her beseche
That she wolde be my lady swete
And swore, and hertely gan her hete
Euer to be stedfast and trewe
And loue her alway freshly newe
And neuer other lady haue
And all her worshyp for to saue
As I best coude, I swere her this
For yours is all that euer there is
For euermore myne herte swete
And neuer to false you, but I mete
I nyll, as wyse god helpe me so
And whan I had my tale ydo
God wot she accompted not a stre

Of my tale, so thought me
To tell shortly, ryght as it is
Truly her answer it was this
I can not now wel countrefete
Her wordes, but this was the grete
Of her answer, she sayd nay
All vtterly, alas that daye
The sorowe I suffred and the wo,
That truly Cassandra that so
Bewayled the destruction
Of Troye, and of Illion
Had neuer suche sorwe as I tho
I durst nomore say thereto
For pure feare, but stale awaye
And thus I lyued full many a day
That truly I had no nede
Further than my beds heed
Neuer a day to seche sorowe
I founde it redy euery morowe
For why, I loued her in no gere
So it befell an other yere
I thought ones I wolde fonde
To do her knowe, and vnderstonde
My wo, and she well vnderstoode
That I ne wylled thynge but good
And worshyp, and to kepe her name
Ouer al thynges, and drede her shame
And was so busy her to serue
And pytie were I shulde sterue
Sith that I willed none harme iwys
So whan my lady knewe all this
My lady yaue me all holy
The noble yeft of her mercy
Sauyng her worshyp by al wayes
Dredlesse, I mene non other wayes
And therwith she yaue me a ryngе
I trowe it was the fyrst thynge
But yf myne hert was ywaxe
Glad, that it is no nede to axe
As helpe me god, I was as blyue
Rayled, as fro deth to lyue
Of al happes the alder best
The gladdest and the moost at rest
For truly that swete wyght
whan I had wronge, & she the ryght
She wolde alway so goodly
Forgeue me so debonayrly
In all my youth, in all chaunce
She toke me in her gouernaunce
Therwith she was alway so trewe
Our ioye was euery lyche newe
Our hertes weren so euen a payre
That neuer nas that one contrayre
To that other, for no wo
For soth ilyche they suffred tho
O blysse and eke o sorowe both
Ilych they were both glad and wroth
Al was vs one without were
And thus we lyued ful many a yere
So well, I can not tell howe
Sir (quod I) where is she nowe
Now (quod he) and stynt anon
Therwith he woxe as deed as stone
And sayde alas that I was boxe
That was the losse, that here before
I tolde the, that I had lorne
Bethinke the, how I sayd here beforne
Thou wost ful lytle what thou meneſt
I haue lost more than thou weneſt
God wot alas, ryght that was she
Alas syr how, what may that be
She is deed: Nay: yes by my trouth
Is that your losse, by god it is routh.

¶And with that worde ryght anon
They gan to strake forth, all was done
For that tyme the hart huntyng
with that me thought that this kynge
Gan homeward for to ryde
Unto a place was there besyde
which was from vs but a lyte
A longe castell with walles whyte
By saynt John on a ryche hyll
As me mette, but thus it fyll
Ryght thus me met, as I you tell
Than in the castell there was a bell
As it had smyt houres twelue
Therwith I awoke my selue
And founde me lying in my bed
And the boke that I had red
Of Alcione and Seys the kynge
And of the goddes of slepyng
I founde it in myne honde full euen
Thought I, this is so queynt a sweuen
That I wolde by processe of tyme
Fonde, to put this sweuen in ryme
As I can best, and that anon
This was my sweuen, now it is done.

¶Explicit.

My maystet. &c. whan of
Chryst our kynge
was asked, what is
trouth or sothfastnesse
He not a worde answe-
red to that askynge
As who sayeth, no man
is all true I gesse
And therfore though I hyght to expresse
The sorowe and wo that is in maryage
I dare not wryten of it no wyckednesse
Lest I my selfe fall efte in suche dotage.

I woll not say how that it is the chayne
Of Sathanas, on whiche he gnaweth euer
But I dare sayne, were he out of his payne
As by his wyll, he wolde be bounden neuer
But thylke doted foole that eft hath leuer
Ychayned be, than out of prison crepe
God let hym neuer fro his wo disceuer
Ne no man hym bewayle, though he wepe.

But yet lest thou do worse, take a wyfe
Bet is to wed, then bren in worse wyse
But ÿ shalt haue sorow on thy flesh thy lyfe
And bē thy wyues thral, as sayn these wise
And if that holy wrytte may not suffyse
Experience shall the teache, so may happe
Take the waye leuer to be take in Fryse
Than efte to fall of weddyng in the trappe.

This lytle wryt, prouerbes or fygures
I sende you, take kepe of it I rede
Unwyse is he, that can no wele endure
Yf thou be syker, put the not in drede
The wyfe of Bathe I praye you ÿ ye rede
Of this mater that we haue on honde
God graunt you your lyfe frely to lede
In fredome, for foule is to be bonde.

¶ Explicit.

The assemble of foules.

The lyfe so shorte, ÿ craft
so longe to lerne
Thassaye so harde, so
sharpe the cōquering
The dredful ioy alway
that flyt so yerne
All this mene I by loue
that my felynge
Astonyeth with his wondrefull werkynge
So sore iwys, that whan I on him thynke
Nought wet I wel, whether I flete or sink

For al be that I, knowe not loue in dede
Ne wot how that he quyteth folke her hyre
Yet happeth me full oft in bokes rede
Of his myracles, and of his cruell yre
There rede I well, he wol be lorde and syre
I dare not sayne, his strokes be sore
But god saue suche a lorde, I can nomore

Of vsage, what for lust, & what for lore
On bokes rede I oft, as I you tolde
But wherfore I speke all this, nought yore
Agone, it happed me to beholde
Upon a boke was ywrytten w̄ letters olde
And therupon a certayne thynge to lerne
The longe day ful fast I rad and yerne.

For out of olde feldes, as men sayth
Cōmeth al this newe corne fro yere to yere
And out of olde bokes, in good fayth
Cōmeth all this newe science that men lere
But now to purpose, as of this matere
To rede forth, it gan me so delyte
That al that day me thought it but lyte.

This boke of which I make mencyon
Entytled was ryght thus, as I shall tell
Tullius, of the dreame of Scipion
Chapiters seuen it had, of heauen and hell
And erth, and soules that therin dwel
Of which as shortly as I can it treate
Of his sentence, I woll you sayne the great

Fyrst telleth it, whan Scipion was come
In Affryke, how he meteth Massynysse
That

That hym for ioye, in armes hath ynome
Than telleth he her speche, and all the blysse
that was betwixe hem, tyll ý day gan mysse
And howe hys auncestre Affrykan so dere
Gan in his slepe that nyght tyll him apere

Than telleth it, that from a sterry place
Howe affrikan hath hym Cartage shewed
And warned him before, of al hys grace
And sayd him what man, lered eyther leude
That loueth comune profyte, wel ytheude
He shulde into a blysfull place wende
There as the ioye is wythouten any ende

Than asked he, yf folke that here bene dede
Haue lyfe, and dwellyng in another place
And Affrikan sayd yee, without any drede
And howe our present lyues space
ment but a maner deth, what way we trace
And rightful folke, shul gone after they dye
To heauen, and shewed hym the Galaxie

Than shewed he him, the lytle erth ý here is
To regarde of the heuens quantyte
And after shewed he him the nyne speris
And after that the melodye herde he
That cometh of thylke speres thrise thre
That welles of musyke bene, and melodye
In thys worlde here, and cause of armonye

Than sayd he him, sens erth was so lyte
And ful of turment, and of harde grace
That he ne shulde him in this worlde delyte
That tolde he hym, in certayne yeres space
That euery sterre, shuld come into his place
Ther it was first, and al shuld out of minde
That in thys worlde is done, of al mãkinde

Than prayed hym Scipion, to tel hym al
The waye to come into that heuen blysse
And he sayd: Fyrst know thy selfe immortal
And loke aye besely, that thou werch & wisse
To comune profite, and thou shalt not misse
To come swyftly, vnto that place dere
That full of blysse is, and of soules clere

And brekers of the lawe, sothe to sayne
And lykerous folke, after that they ben dede
Shul whirle about ý world alway in paine
Tyl many a worlde be passed, out of drede
And than forgeuen al her wycked dede
than shullen they come, to that blysful place
To whych to comen, God sende the grace

The day gan faylen, and the derke nyght
That reueth beestes from her besynesse
Berafte me my boke for lacke of lyght
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse
Fulfylled of thought, and besy heuynesse
For both I had thing, which that I nolde
And eke I ne had that thyng that I wolde

But fynally my spyrite at laste
For wery of my labour al that daye
Toke reste, that made me to slepe faste
And in my slepe I mette, as that I laye
Howe Affrikan, ryght in the selfe araye
That Scipion hym sawe, before that tyde
was come, & stode ryght at my beddes syde

The wery hunter: slepyng in hys bedde
To wodde ayen hys mynde goth anone
The iuge dremeth, how hys plees be spedde
The carter dremeth, howe his cartes gone
the rych of golde, ý knight fyght w̃ his fone
The sycke mette he drynketh of the tonne
The louer met, he hath hys lady wonne

Can I not sayne, yf that the cause were
For I had radde of affrikan before
That made me to mete that he stode there
but thus sayd he: thou hast the so wel bore
In lokynge of myne olde boke al to tore
Of whych Macrobie rought not a lyte
That somdele of thy labour wolde I quyte

Citherea, thou blysful lady swete
That w̃ thy fyre brõde, dauntest whã ý lest
That madest me thys sweuen for to mete
be thou my helpe in this, for thou maist best
As wysely as I seygh the north north west
whan I began my sweuen for to write
So yeue me myght, to ryme it and endyte

This foresayde Affrikan me hente anone
And forth with him to a gate brought
Ryght of a parke, walled wyth grene stone
and ouer ý gate, with letters large ywrort
There were verse ywritten, as me thought
On eyther halfe, of full great difference
of which I shal you say, the playne sentence

Through me men gone into ý blysful place
Of hertes heale, and deedly woundes cure

Through me men gon into the wel of grace
There grene & lusty May, shall euer endure
Thys is the waye to all good auenture
Be glad thou reder, and thy sorowe of cast
Al open am I, passe in and spede the fast

Through me mē gon, thā spake ý other syde
Unto the mortal strokes of the speere
Of which disdayne & daunger is the gyde
There neuer tree shall frute, ne leaues beere
this streme you ledeth to the sorouful weere
There as the fysche in prison is all drye
The eschewyng is onely the remedye

These verses of gold & asure ywritten were
Of whych I gan, astonyed to beholde
For with that one, encreased al my feare
And with that other gan my herte to bolde
That one me hette, that other dyd me colde
No wytte had I, for errour for to chese
To entre or flye, or me to saue or lese

Ryght as betwene Adamantes two
Of euyn weyght, a pece of yron set
Ne hath no myght to moue to ne fro
For what that one may hale, that other let
So fared I, that I nyst where me was bet
To entre or leaue, tyl Affrikan my gyde
Me hente and shoue in, at the gates wyde

And sayd, it standeth writen in thy face
Thyne errour, though thou tell it not me
But drede the not, to come into thys place
For thys writtyng is nothinge ment by the
Ne by none, but he loues seruaunte be
For thou of loue, hast lost thy tast I gesse
As sycke man hath, of swete and bytternesse

But nathlesse, although thou be dul
That thou canst not do, yet mayst thou se
For many a man, that may not stande a pul
Yet lyketh it hym, at the wrestlyng for to be
And demeth yet, whether he do bet, or he
And yf thou haddest connyng for tendyte
I shal the shewe matter of to wryte

And wyth ý my hande in hys he toke anone
Of whych I comfort caught, & went in fast
But lorde so I was glad, and wel begon
For ouer al, where I myne eyen cast
were trees clad wyth leues ý aye shall last
Eche in hys kynde, w̄ colour fresh & grene
As Emeraude, that ioye it was to sene

The bylder Oke, and eke the hardy asche
The pyller elme, the coffer bnto carayne
The boxe pype tre, holme to whyppes lasche
The saylynge fyre, ý cypres deth to playne
The shoter ewe, the aspe for shaftes playne
The Oliue of peace, and eke ý dronken vine
The victor Palme, the laurer to dryuyne

A gardeyne saw I, full of blosomed bowis
Upon a ryuer, in a grene mede
There as swetnesse, euermore ynough is
wyth floures whyte, blew, yelow, and rede
And colde wel stremes, nothynge dede
That swōmen ful of smal fysches lyght
with fynnes rede, and scales syluer bryght

On euery bough the bydes herde I synge
with voyce of aungel, in her armony
that busyed hem, her bydes forth to bryuge
The lytle prety conyes, to her playe gan hy
And further al aboute, I gan espy
The dredeful Roe, ý bucke, the hart, & hynde
Squyrels, & beestes small of gentyl kynde

Of instrumentes, of strynges in accorde
Herde I so playe, a rauyshynge swetnesse
That God, that maker is of al and lorde
Ne herde neuer better, as I gesse
Therwyth a winde, vnneth it might be lesse
Made in the leaues grene, a noyse softe
Accordaunt to the foules songe on lost

The ayre of the place, so attēpre was (colde
That neuer was there greuaunce of hote ne
There was eke euery holsome spyce & grace
Ne no man may there waxe sycke ne olde
yet was there more ioy a thousande folde
Than I can tell, or euer coude or myght
There is euer clere day, and neuer nyght

Under a tree, besyde a well I sey
Cupyde our lorde, his arowes forge & fyle
And at hys fete, hys bowe al redy ley
And wel his doughter tēpred al the whyle
The heedes in the wel, with her wyle
She couched hem after, as they shuld serue
Some to slee, & some to wounde and carue

Tho was I ware of pleasaūce anone right
And of aray, lust, beaute, and curtesy

And

And of the crafte, that can & hath the myght
To done before, a wyght to done foly
Disfygured was she, I wyl not lye
And by hym selfe, vnder an oke I gesse
Saw I delyte, that stode wyth gentylnesse

Than sawe I beaute, wyth a nyce atyre
And youth ful of game and iolyte
Folehardenesse, flatery, and desyre
Messagery, mede, and other thre
Her names shal not here be tolde for me
And vpon pyllers great of Jasper longe
I saw a temple of brasse yfounded stronge

And aboute the temple, daunced alway
women ynowe, of whych some there were
Fayre of hem selfe, & some of hem were gay
In kyrtyls al dishevelled went they there
That was theyr offyce euer, fro yere to yere
And on the temple, sawe I whyte and fayre
Of dowues sitting, many a thousand payre

And before the temple dore ful soberly
Dame peace satte, a curteyne in her honde
And her beside, wonder dyscretly
Dame Pacience syttynge there I founde
wyth face pale, vpon an hyl of sonde
And alther nexte, wythin and wythout
Behest and arte, and of her folke a rout

wythin the temple, of syghes hote as fyre
I herde a swough, that gan aboute ren
whych syghes were engendred wyth desyre
That made euery herte for to bren
Of newe flambe, and wel espyed I then
That al the cause of sorowes, ý they dye
Come of the bytter goddes ialousye

The god Pyriapus, sawe I as I went
wythin the temple, in soueraine place stonde
In such arraye, as whan the asse hym shent
with crye by nigt, and with sceptre in honde
Ful busely men gan assay and sonde
Upon hys heed to sette of sondry hewe
Garlandes, ful of fresche floures newe

And in a preuy corner, in disporte
Founde I Venus, and her porter Rychesse
That was ful noble, and hauten of her port
Derke was that place, but after lyghtnesse
I sawe a lyte, vnnethes it myght be lesse
And on a bed of golde, she lay to rest
Tyll that the hote sunne gan to west

Her gylte heeres, wyth a golde threde
Ybounde were, vntressed as she lay
And naked from the brest vnto the hede
Men myght her se, and sothly for to say
The remenaunt, couered wel to my pay
Ryght wyth a lytle kerchefe of valence
There was no thycker cloth of defence

The place gaue a thousande sauours sote
And Bacchus god of wyne, sate her beside
And Ceres nexte, that doth of hunger bote
And as I sayd, a myddes lay Cupyde
To whom on knees, the yonge folkes cryed
To be theyr helpe, but thus I let her lye
And farther in the temple, I gan espye

That in dispyte of Dyane the chaste
Ful many a bowe ybroke, hynge on the wal
Of maydens, such as gon her tymes waste
In her seruyce, and paynted ouer al
Of many a storye, of whyche I touche shall
A fewe, as of Calixte and Athalante
and many a maide, of which ý name I wāt

Semyramus, Caudace, and Hercules
Byblys, Dydo, Tysbe, and Piramus
Tristram, Isoude, Parys, and Achilles
Heleyne, Cleopatre, and Troylus
Sylla, and eke the mother of Romulus
All these were paynted on that other syde
And al her loue, and in what plyte they dide

Whan I was comen ayen into the place
That I of spake, that was so sote & grene
Forth walked I tho, my seluen to solace
Tho was I ware, where there sate a quene
That as of lyght, the sōmer sunne shene
Passeth the sterre, ryght so ouer measure
She fayrer was than any creature

And in a launde, vpon an hyl of floures
was sette this noble goddesse Nature
Of braūches were her halles & her boures
Iwrought, after her crafte and her mesure
Ne there nas foule, ý cometh of engendrure
That there ne were preest, in her presence
To take her dome, and yeue her audience

For thys was on saynt Valentynes daye
whan euery foule cometh to chese her make

Of

Of euery kynde, that men thynke may
And that so huge a noyse gan they make
That erth, see, and tree, and euery lake
So ful was, that vnneth there was space
For me to stande, so ful was al the place

And right as Alayne, in the playnt of kynde
Deuyseth Nature, of such aray and face
In such aray, men myght her there fynde
Thys noble Emprelle ful of al grace
Bad euery foule to take her owne place
As they were wonte alway, fro yere to yere
On saynt Valentynes day, to stauden there

That is to say, the foules of rauyne
were hyghest set, and than the foules smale
That eaten, as that nature wolde enclyne
As worme or thynge, of which I tel no tale
But water foule, sat lowest in the dale
& foules ý liueth be sede sate on they grene
And that so many, that wōder was to sene

There myght men the royal Egle fynde
That wyth his sharpe loke perseth the son
And other Egles, of a lower kynde
Of which that clerkes wel deuysen con
There was the tyrant with his fethers don
And grene, I mene ý goshauke ý doth pyne
To bydes, for hys outragyous rauyne

The gētyl faucō, ý with his fete distreyneth
The kynges hande, the hardy sperhauke eke
The quales foe, the merlyon that peyneth
Hym selfe ful ofte, the larke for to seke
There was the doue, with her eyen meke
The ielous swan, ayenst his deth ý syngeth
The oule eke, that of deth the bode bryngeth

The crane, the geant, w̄ his trompes sowne
The thefe the choughe, & the chateryng pye
The scorning Jaye ý Eles foe the herowne
The false lapwyng, ful of trechery
The stare, that the counsayle can bewry
The tame Ruddocke, and the cowarde kyte
The Cocke, that horiloge is of thorpes lyte

The sparow Venus son, & the nyghtyngale
That clepeth forth the fresh leaues newe
The swalowe murdrer of the flyes smale
That maken hony, of floures freshe of hewe
The wedded turtel, with his herte trewe
The pecocke, wyth his aūgel fethers bryght
The Fesaunt, scorner of the cocke by nyght

The waker gose, the cuckowe euer vnkinde
The popyngey, ful of delycasy
The drake stroyer of hys owne kynde
The storke, wrecker of auoutry
The hote cormeraunt, ful of glotony
The rauyn & the crow with her voice of care
The throstle olde, and the frosty feldefare

what shulde I say, of foules of euery kynde
That in thys worlde haue fethers & stature
Men myght in that place assembled fynde
Before that noble goddes of Nature
And eche of them dyd hys busy cure
Benignely to chese, or for to take
By her accorde, his formell or his make

But to the point, Nature helde on her honde
A formal Egle, of shap the gentyllest
That euer she amonge her workes fonde
The moost benigne, and eke the goodlyest
In her was euery vertue, at his rest
So farforth, that Nature her self had blisse
To loke on her, and ofte her becke to kysse

Nature, the vycar of the almyghty lorde
That hote, colde, heuy, lyght, moyst & drey
Hath knytte, by euen nombre of accorde
In easy voyce, began to speke and say
Foules take hede of my sentence I pray
& for your owne ease, in fordrig of your nede
As fast as I may speke, I wyl me spede

ye know wel, how on saint Valentines day
By my statute, & throughe my gouernaunce
ye do chese your makes, & after flye away
with hem, as I pricke you wyth pleasaunce
But nathlesse, as by ryghtful ordinaunce
May I not let, for al this worlde to wyn
But he that most worthyest is, shal begyn

The tercel Egle, as ye knowe ful wele
The foule royal, aboue you al in degre
The wyse & worthy the secrete true as stele
The whych I haue formed, as ye may se
In euery parte as it best lyketh me
It nedeth not hys shappe you to deuyse
He shal fyrst chese and speken in hys gyse

And after hym by ordre shal ye chese
After your kynde eueryche as you lyketh

And

And as your hap is, shal ye wynne or lese
But which of you, that loue moost entrikith
God sende hym her, ý forest for hym liketh
And there withal, the Tercel gan she cal
And sayd, my some the choyse is to the fal

But nathlesse, in thys condicion
Must be the choyse, of euerych that is here
That she agree to hys election
Who so he be, that shulde bene her fere
Thys is our vsage alway, fro yere to yere
& who so may at this tyme haue his grace
In blysful tyme he came into thys place

wyth heed enclined, & with ful humble chere
Thys royal Tercell spake, & taryed nought
Unto my souerayne lady, and not my fere
I chose & chese, with wyl, herte, & thought
The formel on your hande, so well ywrought
Whose I am al, and euer wyl her serue
Do what her lust, to do me lyue or sterue

Besechyng her of mercy, and of grace
As she that is my lady souerayne
Or let me dye, here present in thys place
For certes, longe may I not lyue in payne
For in my herte is corven euery vayne
Hauyng regarde onely to my trouth
Wy dere herte, haue on my wo some routh

And yf I be founde to her vntrewe
Dysobeysaunt, or wylful negligent
I vauntour, or in processe loue a newe
I pray to you thys be my iugement
That wyth these foules I be al to rent
That yike daye, that she me euer fynde
Unto her vntrue, or in my gylte vnkynde

And syth that none loueth her so wel as I
Although she neuer of loue me behet
Thā ought she be myne, through her mercy
For other bonde, can I none on her knet
For wele nor wo, neuer shall I let
To serue her, howe farre so that she wende
Say what you lyst, my tale is at an ende

Ryght as the freshe reed rose newe
Agaynst the sommer sunne coloured is
Ryght so for shame, al waxen gan the hewe
Of thys formel, whan she herde al this
Neyther she answerde well, ne sayd amys
So sore abashed was she, tyl that nature
Said, doughter drede you not, I you assure

Another Tercel Egle spake anone
Of lower kynde, & sayd that shulde nat be
I loue her better than ye do, by saynt Jhon
Or at leest, I loue her as wel as ye
And lenger haue serued her in my degre
& yf she shulde haue loued for longe louing
To me alone had be the guerdonyng

I dare eke say, yf she me fynde false
Unkynde, iangler, or rebel in any wyse
Or iolous, do me hange by the halse
And but I beare me in her seruyse
As wel as my wyt can me suffyce
Fro poynt to poynt, her honour for to saue
Take she my lyfe, and al the good I haue

The thyrde tercel Egle, answerde tho
Nowe syrs, ye se the lytle leyser here
For euery foule cryeth out to be ago
Forth wyth hys make, or with his lady dere
And eke Nature her selfe, ne wyl not here
For taryeng her, not halfe that I wolde sey
And but I speke, I muste for sorowe dey

Of longe seruyce, auaunt I me nothyng
But as possible is me to dye to daye
For wo, as he that hath be languyshyng
Thys twenty wynter, & wel it happen may
A man may serue better, and more to pay
In halfe a yere, although it were no more
Thā some man doth, ý hath serued ful yore

I ne say nat thys by me, for I ne can
Do no seruyce, that may my lady please
But I dare say, I am her trewest man
As to my dome, & fayrest wolde her please
At shorte wordes, tyl that deth me cease
I wyl be hers, whether I wake or wynke
And trewe in al that herte may bethynke

Of al my lyfe, syth that day I was borne
So gentyl plee, in loue or other thyng
Ne herde neuer no man me before
Who so that had leyser and connyng
For to reherce theyr chere, & theyr spekyng
And from the morowe gan thys spech last
Tyl downwarde went the sūne wōder fast

The noyse of foules for to be delyuerde
So loude range, haue done & let vs wende

That

That wel wende I ý wod had al to shiuerd
Come of they cryed, alas ye wyl vs shende
whã shal your cursed pledinge haue an ende
Howe shulde a iudge, eyther partye leue
For yee or nay, without any preue

The gose, the ducke, and the cuckowe also
So cryed keke keke, cuckow queke queke hy
That through mine eares ý noyse went tho
The gose said than, al this nys worth a flye
But I can shape herof a remedy
And wyl say my verdyte fayre & swythe
For water foule who so be wroth or blythe

And I for wormfoule, sayd ý fole cuckow
For I wyll of myne owne authorite
for cõmon spede, take on me the charge now
For to delyuer vs, it is great charyte
Ye may abyde a whyle yet parde
(Quod the Turtel) yf it be your wyl
A wyght may speke, it were as good be styl

I am a sede foule, one the vnworthyest
That wote I wel, and leest of connyng
But better it is, that a wyghtes tonge rest
Than entremete hym of such doynge
Of which he neyther rede can nor synge
And who so it doth, ful foule him self acloy-
For office vncõmitted, ofte anoyeth (eth

Nature whych that alway had an eare
To murmur of the leudnesse behinde (there
with faconde voice sayd, holde your tonges
And I shall sone, I hope a counsayle fynde
You for to delyuer, & fro thys noyse vnbinde
I charge, of euery flocke ye shal one cal
To say the verdyte of you foules al

Assented were, to thys conclusyon
The brydes al, and foules of rauyne
Haue chosen fyrst, by playne electyon
The Tercelet of the faucon to dyffyne
All her sentence, and as him lust to termyne
And to Nature, him they dyd present
And she accepteth him with glad entent

The tercelet sayd than, in this manere
Ful herde it were, to preue it by reason
who loueth best, this gentyl formel here
For euerych hath such replication
that by skylles may none be brought adoun
I can not se, that arguementes auayle
Than semeth it, there must be batayle

Al redy quod these Egles tarcelles tho
Naye sys (quod he) yf that I durst it say
Ye do me wronge, my tale is not ydo
For sys, taketh nat agrefe I pray
It may not be as ye wolde, in this way
Ours is ý voice, ý hath the charge in hande
And to the Juges dome, ye must stande

And therfore peace I saye, as to my wyt
Ye wolde thynke, howe that the worthyest
Of knyghthode, and lengest had vsed it
Moost of estate, of blode the gentyllest
were syttyng for her, yf that her lest
And of these thre, she wote her selfe I trow
which that he be, for it is lyght to know

The water foules, haue theyr heedes layd
Togyther, and of shorte auysement
whan eucryche had hys verdyte sayd
They sayd sothly, al by one assent
Howe that the goos, with the faconde gent
That so desyreth, to pronounce our nede
Shal tel our tale, & prayed to god her spede

And for these water foules, tho began
The goose to speke, and in her cakelynge
She sayd, peace nowe, take kepe euery man
& herken which a reason I shall forth bryng
My wytte is sharpe, I loue no tarying
I say I rede him, tho he were my brother
But she wyll loue him, let hym loue another

Lo here a parfyte reason of a gose
(Quod the sperhauke) neuer mote she the
Lo, such a thyng it is to haue a tonge lose
Nowe parde foole, yet were it better for the
Haue holde thy peace, than shewe thy nicete
It lyeth not in his wyt, nor in his wyl
But soth is sayd, a foole can not be styl

The laughter arose, of gentyl foules al
And right anone, the sede foules chosen had
The Turtel trewe, and gan her to hem cal
And prayed her to say, the soth sad
Of this mater, and asked what she rad
And she answered, that playnly her entent
She wolde shewe, & sothly what she ment

Nay, god forbede a louer shulde chaunge
The Turtel sayd, & wexte for shame all reed
Though

Though that hys lady, euermore be straũge
Yet let hym serue her alwaye, tyll he be deed
Forsoth, I prayse not the goses reed
For tho she dyed, I wolde none other make
I wyll be hers, tyll that the death me take

well ybourded (q̃ the ducke) by my hat
That men shulde loue alway causelesse
who can a reason fynde, or wyt in that
Daunceth he mery, that is myrthlesse
who shulde recke, of that is rechelesse
Ye queke yet (q̃ the ducke) ful wel and fayre
There be mo sterres in the skye then a payre

Now kye churle (q̃ the gentyl Tercelet)
Out of the donghyl, came that worde aryght
Thou canst not se, whych thyng is wel beset
Thou farest by loue, as oules do by lyght
The day hẽ blindeth, ful wel they se by night
Thy kynde is of so lowe wretchednesse
That what loue is, thou cãst not se nor gesse

Tho gan ẏ cuckowe put him forth in preace
For foule that eateth worme, and sayd blyue
So I (q̃ he) may haue my make in peace
I retche nought, howe longe that ye stryue
Let eche of hem be soleyn all her lyue
Thys is my rede, sens they may not accorde
Thys short lesson, nedeth not recorde

Yea, haue the glutton fylde hys paunche
Then are we well, sayd the Emerlon
Thou murdrer of ẏ heisugge, on the braũche
That brought the forth, thou rufull glotton
Lyue thou soleyn, wormes corruption
For no force is, of lacke of thy nature
So leude be thou, whyle ẏ world may dure

Now peace (q̃ Nature) I cõmaunde here
For I haue herde all your opinion
And in effecte, yet be we neuer the nere
But fynally, thys is my conclusion
That she her selfe shall haue her election
Of whom her lyst, who so be wroth or blyth
Him ẏ she cheseth, he shal her haue as swyth

For syth it may not here dyscussed be
who loueth her beste, as sayd the Tercelet
Thẽ wol I done this fauour to her, that she
Shal haue right him, on whõ her hert is set
And he her, that hys herte hath on her knet
Thys iuge I Nature, for I may not lye
To none estate, I haue none other eye

But as for counsayle, for to chose a make
Yf I were reason, then wolde I
Counsayle you, the royall tercell take
As sayd the tercelet, full skylfully
As for the gentyllest, and moste worthy
whych I haue wrought so wel to my plesãce
That to you it ought ben a suffysaunce

wyth dredful voyce, ẏ formel her answerde
My ryghfull lady, goddesse of Nature
Soth is, that I am euer vnder your yerde
As is euerych other creature
And must be yours, whyle my lyfe may dure
And therfore graunt me my fyrst boone
And myne entẽt, you woll I say ryght soone

I graunt it you (q̃ she) and ryght anone
Thys formel Egle spake in thys degre
Almyghty quene, vnto thys yere be done
I aske respyte for to auysen me
And after that to haue my choyce all fre
Thys all & some, that I wolde speke & sey
Ye get nomore, al though ye do me dey

I woll not seruen Venus, ne Cupide
Forsoth as yet, by no maner way
Nowe sens it may none other wayes betyde
(Quod Nature) here is no more to say
Then wolde I that thys foules were away
Eche wyth hys make, for taryeng lẽger here
And sayd hem thus, as ye shall after here

To you speke I, ye tercelets (q̃ Nature)
Beth of good herte, and serueth all tyre
A yere is not so longe to endure
And eche of you payne hym in hys degree
For to do well, for god wote quyte is she
For you thys yere, what after so befall
Thys entremes, is dressed fro you all

And whẽ this werke brought was to an end
To euery foule, Nature yaue hys make
By euen acorde, and on her way they wende
And lorde the blysse and ioye that they make
For ech of hem gan other in his wynges take
And wyth her neckes, eche gan other wynde
Thãkyng alway, ẏ noble goddesse of kynde

But fyrst were chosen foules for to synge
As yere by yere, was alway her vsaunce

To synge a roundell at her departynge
To do Nature honoure and pleasaunce
The note I trowe, maked was in Fraunce
The wordes were such, as ye may here fynd
The next vers, as I nowe haue in mynde

Qui bien ayme tarde oublie.

Now welcom cõmer, w̃ thy sunnes softe
That haste thys wynter wethers ouershake
Saynt Valentyne, thou arte ful hye on lofte
whych dryuest away, the lõge nyghtes blake
Thus syngen smale foules for thy sake
well haue they cause for to gladen ofte
Sens eche of hem recouered hath hys make
Ful blysful may they syng whẽ they awake.
And w̃ the shoutynge whẽ her songe was do
That foules made, at her flyght away
I woke, and other bokes toke me to
To rede vpon, and yet I rede alway
I hope ywys to rede so some day
That I shall mete somthynge for to fare
The bet, and thus to rede I nyll not spare.

Explicit.

The Floure of Curtesy.

N Feuerier, when ꝑ frostye moone
was horned, full of Phebus fyry lyght
And that she gan to reyse her streames sone
Saynt Valentyne, vpon thy blysfull nyght
Of dutye, when gladis euery wyght
And foules chese, tobyde her olde sorowe
Euerych hys make, vpon the next morowe

The same tyme, I herde a lerke synge
Full lustely, agayne the morowe gray
Awake ye louers, out of your slombrynge
Thys glad morowe, in all the haste ye may
Some obseruaunce doth vnto thys day
Your choyse ayen of herte to renewe
In conforymynge, for euer to be trewe

And ye that be of chosynge at your large
Thys lusty day, by custome of nature
Take vpon you the blysfull holy charge
To serue loue, whyle your lyfe may dure
wyth herte, body, and all your besy cure
For euermore, as Venus and Cipride
For you dysposeth, and the god Cupyde

For ioye owe we playnly to obey
Vnto thys lordes myghty ordinaunce
And mercylesse rather for to dye
Then euer in you be founden variaunce
And though your lyfe be medled w̃ greuaũce
And at your herte closet be your wounde
Beth alwaye one, there as ye are bounde

That when I had herde and lysted longe
wyth deuoute herte, the lusty melody
Of thys heuenly comfortable songe
So agreable, as by ermonye
I rose anone, and faste gan me hye
Towarde a groue, and the waye take
Foules to sene, euerych chose hys make

And yet I was full thursty in languyshyng
Myne ague was so feruent in hys hete
when Aurora, for drery complaynyng
Can dystyll her chrystall teeres wete
Vpon the soyle, wyth syluer dewe so swete
For she durste for shame not apere
Under the lyght of Phebus beames clere

And so for anguysche of my paynes kene
And for constraynte of my syghes sore
I set me downe, vnder a laurer grene
Full pytously, and alway more and more
As I behelde in to the holtes hore
I gan cõplayne myne inward deedly smerte
That aye so sore crampeth at myne herte

And whyle that I in my drery payne
Sate, and behelde aboute on euery tre
The foules sytte, alway twayne & twayne
Thẽ thought I thus, alas what may this (be
That euery foule hath hys lyberte
Frely to chose, after hys desyre
Euerych his make, thus fro yere to yere

The sely wrenne, the tytemose also

The lytell redbrest, haue free election
To flyen yfere, and together go
where as hem lyst, aboute enuyron
As they of kynde haue inclinacion
And as Nature, empresse and gyde
Of euery thynge lyst to prouyde

But man alone, alas the harde stounde
Full cruelly, by kyndes ordynaunce
Constrayned is, and by statute bounde
And debarred from all suche plesaunce
what meneth this, what is this purueyaũce
Of god aboue, agayne all ryght of kynde
wythout cause, so narow man to bynde

Thus maye I sene and playne, alas
My wofull houre, and my dysauenture
That doulfully stonde in the same caas
So ferre behynde, from all health and cure
My wounde abydeth lyke a sursanure
For me fortune so felly lyst dyspose
My harme is hyd, that I dare not dysclose

For I my herte haue set, in suche a place
where I am neuer lykely for to spede
So ferre I am hyndred from her grace
That saue daunger, I haue none other mede
And thus alas, I not who shall me rede
Ne for myne helpe shape remedye
For Wale bouche, and for false enuye

The whiche twayne, aye stõdeth in my wey
Malyciously, and false suspection
Is very cause also that I dey
Synnyng and rote of my distruction
So that I fele, in conclusyon
with her trayues, that they wol me shende
Of my labour, that deth mote make an ende

Yet or I dye, with herte, wyl, and thought
To god of loue, this auowe I make
As I best can, howe dere that it be bought
where so it be, that I slepe or wake
whyle Boreas dothe the leaues slake
As I haue heyght, plainly tyl I sterue
For wel or wo, that I shal her serue

And for her sake, nowe this holy tyme
Saynt Valentyne, somwhat shal I write
Al though so be, that I can not ryme
Nor curyously by no crafte endyte
Yet leuer I haue, that she put the wyte
In vnconnynge, then in negligence
what euer I saye, of her excellence

what euer I saye, it is of dute
In sothfastnesse, and no presumpcion
Thys I ensure to you that shall it se
That it is all vnder correction
what I reherce in cõmendacion
Of her, that I shall to you as blyue
So as I can, her vertues here dyscryue.

¶ Ryght by example, as the somer sonne
Passeth the sterre, wyth hys beames shene
And Lucyfer, amonge the skyes donne
A morowe sheweth, to boyde nyghtes tene
So verely, wythouten any wene
My lady passeth, who so taketh hede
All tho alyue, to speake of womanhede

And as the Ruby hath the souerayne
Of ryche stones, and the regalye
And the rose of swetenesse and beaute
Of fresche floures, wythout any lye
Ryght so in sothe, wyth her goodly eye
She passeth all, in bounty and fayrenesse
Of maner eke, and of gentylnesse

For she is both the fayrest and the beste
To reken all, in very sothfastnesse
For euery vertue is in her at reste
And furthermore, to speake of stedfastnesse
She is the rote, and of semelynesse
The very myrrour, and of gouernaunce
To all example, wythouten variaunce

Of porte benygne, and wonder glad of chere
Hauynge euermore her trewe aduertence
Allwaye to reason, so that her desyre
Is brydeled aye, by wytte and prouydence
There to of wytte, and of hye prudence
She is the welle, aye deuoyde of pryde
That vnto vertue, her seluen is the gyde

And ouer thys, in her daliaunce
Lowly she is, dyscrete and wyse
And goodly gladde, by attemperaunce
That euery wyght, of hygh and lowe degre
Are glad in herte, wyth her for to be
So that shortly, yf I shall not lye
She named is, the Floure of Curtesye

And there to speake of femynyte

The leste manyshe in comparison
Goodly abashed, hauynge aye pyte
Of hem that ben in tribulacion
For she alone is consolacion
To all that arne in myscheke and in nede
To comforte hem, of her womanhede

And aye in vertue is her besy charge
Sadde and demure, and but of wordes fewe
Dredefull also of tonges that ben large
Eschewynge aye hem, that lysten to hewe
Aboue her heed, her wordes for to shewe
Dyshonestly to speke of any wyght
She deedly hateth, of hem to haue a syght

The herte of whom, so honest is and clene
And her entent, so faythfull and entere
That she ne may, for all the worlde sustene
To suffre her eeres any worde to here
Of frende nor foe, neyther ferre ne nere
Amysse resonynge, ý hinder shulde his name
And yf she do, she weyreth reed for shame

So trewly in menynge she is in sette
wythout chaungynge, or any doubleneſſe
For bountie and beautie, are together knette
In her persone, vnder faythfulneſſe
For voyde she is of newfangleneſſe
In herte aye one, for euer to perseuer
There she is sette, and neuer to dysseuer

I am to rude, her vertues euerychone
Connyngly to dyscryue and wryte
For well ye wote, colour haue I none
Lyke her dyscrecion, craftely to endyte
For what I saye, all it is to lyte
wherfore to you, thus I me excuse
That I aqueynted am not wyth no muse

By rethoryke, my style to gouerne
In her prayse and cõmendacyon
I am to blynde, so hylye to dysceerne
Of her goodneſſe, to make dyscripcion
Saue thus I saye in conclusion
yf that I shall shortly commende
In her is naught, that nature can amende

For good she is, lyke to Polycene
And in fayreneſſe, to the quene Helayne
Stedfast of herte, as was Dorigene
And wykely trouth, yf I shall not fayne
In constaunce eke & fayth, she may attayne
To Cleopatre, and therto as setrone
As was of Troye, the whyte Antygone

As Hester meke, lyke Judith of prudence
Kynde as Alcest, or Marcia Catoun
And to Grisylde lyke in pacience
And Ariadne of dyscrecioun
And to Lucrece, that was of Rome toun
She may be lykened as for honeste
And for her fayth, vnto Penelope

To fayre Phyllis, and to Hipsiphiles
For innocence, and for womanhede
For semelyneſſe vnto Canace
And ouer thys, to speke of goodlyhede
She passeth all that I can of rede
For worde and dede, that she nought ne fall
Acorde in vertue, and her werkes all

For though that Dido wyth wytte sage
was in her tyme stedfast to Enee
Of hastyneſſe yet she dyd outrage
And so for Jason dyd also Medee
But my lady is so auysee
That boũty & beautye, both in her demeyne
She maketh bountye alwaye souerayne

This is to meane, bountye goeth afore
Lad by prudence, and hath the souerainte
And beautye foloweth, ruled by her lore
That she ne fende her in no degre
So that in one, thys goodly freche fre
Surmountynge al, wythouten any were
Is good and fayre, in one persone yfere

And though that I for very ignorauncе
Ne maye dyscryue her vertues by and by
yet on thys daye for a remembrauncе
Onely supported vnder her mercy
wyth quakynge honde, I shall full humbly
To her hyneſſe, my rudeneſſe for to quyte
A lytell balade, here byneth endyte

Euer as I can suppryse in myne herte
Alwaye wyth feare, betwyxte drede & shame
Leste out of lose, any worde asterte
In thys metre, to make it seme lame
Chaucer is deed, that had suche a name
Of fayre makynge, that wythout wene
Fayrest in our tonge, as the Laurer grene

we maye assaye for to countrefete

Hys gaye style, but it wyll not be
The welle is drye, wyth the lycoure swete
Both of Clye, and of Caliope
And fyrst of all, I woll excuse me
To her that is grounde of goodlyhede
And thus I saye, vntyll her womanhede

Balade symple.

Wyth all my myght, and my beste entente
Wyth all the fayth that myghtye god of kynde
He yaue, syth he me soule & knowynge sent
I chese, and to thys bonde euer I me bynde
To loue you best, whyle I haue lyfe & mynd
Thus herde I foules in the daunynge
Upon the daye of saynt Ualentyne synge

Yet chese I at the begynnyng, in thys entent
To loue you, though I no mercy fynde
And yf you lyste I dyed, I wolde assent
As euer twynne I quycke out of thys lyne
Suffyseth me to sene your fethers ynde
Thus herde I foules in the morynge
Upon the daye of saynt Ualentyne synge

And ouer thys, myne hertes luste to bente
In honour onely of the wodde bynde
Holy I yeue, neuer to repente
In ioye or wo, where so that I wynde
To fore Cupide, wyth hys eyen blynde
The foules all, when Tytan dyd sprynge
wyth deuout hert, me thought I herd synge.

Lenuoye.

Pryncesse of beauty, to you I represent
Thys symple dyte, rude as in makynge
Of herte and wyll, faythfull in myne entent
Lyke as thys daye, foules herde I synge.

Here endeth the Floure of Curtesy and here after foloweth, howe pyte is deed and buryed in a gentle herte.

Pyte ÿ I haue sought so yore ago
wyth herte sore and full of besy payne
ÿ in this world was neuer wyght so wo
wythout deth, and yf I shall not fayne
My purpose was, pyte to complayne
Upon teh cruelte and tyrannye
Of loue, that for my trouth doth me dye

And that I by length of certayne yeres
Had euer in one, sought a tyme to speke
To Pyte ran I, all by spreynt wyth teeres
To prayen her on Cruelte me awreke
But or I myght wyth any worde out breke
Or tell her any of my paynes smerte
I founde her deed, and buryed in an herte

Adowne I fell, when I sawe the herse
Deed as a stone, whyle ÿ the sowne me lasse
But vp I rose, wyth colour full dyuerse
And pytously on her myne eyen I casse
And nerer the corse I gan preasen fasse
And for the soule, I shope me for to pray
I was but lorne, there was no more to say

Thus am I slayne, syth that Pyte is deed
Alas that daye that euer it shulde fall
what maner man dare now hold vp his heed
To whome shal nowe any sorowful hert cal
Nowe Cruelte hath casse to slee vs all
In ydle hope, folke redelesse of payne
Syth she is deed, to whom shal we cõplayne

But yet encreaseth me thys wonder newe
That no wyght wote that she is deed but I
So many men as in her tyme her knewe
And yet she deyde so sodeynly
For I haue sought her euer full besely
Syth I had fyrst wyte or mynde
But she was deed er I coude her fynde

Aboute her herse there stoden lustely
wythouten any mo, as thought me
Bountie, perfytly well armed and rychely
And fresche Beaute, Lust, and Jolyte
Assured maner, youthe, and Honeste
wysedome, Estate, Drede, & Gouernaunce
Confedred both by bonde and alyaunce

A complaynt had I wrytten in my honde
To haue put to Pyte, as a byll
But I there all thys company fonde
That rather wolde all my cause spyll
Then do me helpe, I helde my playnt styll
For to those folke wythouten fayle
wythout pyte, there maye no byll auayle

Then leaue all vertues, saue onely pyte
Keppynge the corse, as ye haue herde me sayne
Confedred by bonde vnto Cruelte
And be assented when I shalbe slayne
And I haue put my complaynte vp agayne
For to my foes, my byll I dare not shewe
The effecte, whych sayeth thus in wordes (kewe

Thumblest of herte, hyest of reuerence
Benigne floure, crowne of vertues all
Sheweth vnto your royall excellence
Your seruaunt, yf I durst me so call
Hys mortall harme, in whych he is yfall
And nought all onely for hys wofull fare
But for your renome, as he shall declare

It stōdeth thus, that your cōtrary cruelte
Alyed is ayenst your regalye
Under colour of womanly beaute
For men shulde not knowe her tyrannye
wyth bountie, Gentyllesse, and Curtesye
And hath deprived you of your place
That is hygh beaute, apertenannt to youre (grace

For kyndly, by your heritage ryght
Ye be annexed euer vnto bounte
And verely ye ought do your myght
To helpe trouth in hys aduersite
Ye be also the crowne of beaute
And certes yf ye wante in these twayne
The world is lore, there is no more to sayne

Eke what auayleth maner & gentyllesse
wythout you, benigne creature
Shall cruelte be your gouernesse
Alas, what herte may it longe endure
wherfore but ye rather take cure
To breke that peryllous alyaunce
Ye sleen hem that ben in your obeysaunce

And further, yf ye suffre thus
Your renome is fordo in a throwe
There shall no man wete what pyte is
Alas, that euer your renome is fall so lowe
Ye be also fro your herytage ythrowe
By cruelte, that occupyeth your place
And we dyspayred, that seken your grace

Haue mercy on me, thou Herenus quene
That you haue sought, so tenderly and sore
Let some streme of lyght on me be sene
That loue and drede you euer lenger ꝑ more
For sothly to sayne, I beare so sore
And though I be not connyng for to playne
For goddes loue haue mercy on my payne

My payne is thys, that what so I desyre
That haue I not, ne nothynge lyke therto
And euer setteth desyre myne herte on fyre
Eke on that other syde where that I go
what maner thyng that may encrease my wo
That haue I redy vnsought euery where
Me lacketh but my dethe, and then my bere

what nedeth to shewe percell of my payne
Syth euery wo, that herte may bethynke
I suffre, and yet I dare not to you playne
For well I wote, though I wake or wynke
Ye recke not whether I flete or synke
And nathelesse yet my trouth I shall sustene
Unto my death, and that shall well be sene

Thys is to sayne, I wyll be yours euer
Though ye me slee by cruelte your fo
Algate my spirite shall neuer dysceuer
Fro your seruyce, for any payne or wo
Syth ye be yet deed, alas that it is so
Thus for your death, I may wepe & playne
wyth herte sore, and full of besy payne.

Explicit.

¶ La belle dame sans mercy.

HAlfe in a dreame, not fully
well awaked
The goldē slepe me wrap-
ped vnder hys wyng
yet nat for thy I rose, and
well nygh naked
All sodaynlye my selfe re-
membryng
Of a mater, leuynge all other thynge
Whyche I muste do wythouten more delay
For hem, whiche I durst nat dysobey

My charge was this, to translate by and by
All thynge forgyue, as parte of my penaunce
A boke, called La belle dame sauns mercy
whiche mayster Aleyne made of remēbraūce
Chefe secretarie wyth the kyng of Fraunce
And here vpon a whyle I stode musynge
And in my selfe greatly ymagenynge

What wyse I shuld perform ẏ sayd processe
Consyderynge by good aduysement
My vnconnynge, and my great sympleneſſe
And ayenwarde the strayte cōmaundement
whiche that I had, and thus in myne entent
I was vexed and tourned vp and downe
And yet at last, as in conclusyon

I cast my clothes on, and went my way
This foresaid charge hauyng in remēbraūce
Tyll I came to a lusty grene valey
Full of floures, to se a great pleasaunce
And so boldly with theyr benigne suffraunce
whych rede this boke, touchyng thys matere
Thus I began, yf it please you to here.

NAt longe ago, rydynge an
easy paas
I fell in thought of ioye
full desperate
with gret dyseaſe & payne
so that I was
Of all louers the most vn
fortunate
Syth by his darte, most cruell full of hate
The dethe hath take my lady and maystresse
And lefte me sole, thus dyscomfyte and mate
Sore languysshynge, and in way of distresse

Than sayd I thus, it falleth me to cesse
Eyther to ryme, or dytees for to make
And I surely to make a full promesse
To laugh no more, but wepe in clothesblake
My ioyfull tyme (alas) nowe doth it slake
For in my selfe I fele no maner of ease
Let it be wrytten, suche fortune (as I take)
which neyther me, nor non other doth please

If it were so, my wyll or myne entent
Constrayned were, a ioyfull thyng to wryte
My penne coude neuer knowe, what it ment
To speke therof, my tonge hath no delyte
Tho with my mouthe I laugh, moch or lyte
Myne eyen sholde make a coūtenaūce vntrue
My herte also, wolde haue therof dyspyte
The wepynge teares, haue so large yssue

These sicke louers I leue, that to hem lōges
whiche lede theyr lyfe in hope of alegeaunce
That is to saye, to make balades and songes
Euery of hem, as they fele theyr greuaunce
For she that was my ioye, and my plesaunce
whose soule I pray god, of hys mercy saue
She hath my wyll, myne hertes ordynaunce
whiche lyeth here, within this tombe ygraue

Fro this tyme forth, tyme is to hold my pees
It weryeth me, this mater for to trete
Let other louers put hem selfe in prees
Theyr season is, my tyme is nowe forgete
Fortune by strength, the forcer hath vnshete
wheryn was sperde all my worldly rychesse
And all the goodes, whyche that I haue gete
In my best tyme of youthe, and lustynesse

Loue hath me kepte vnder hys gouernaunce
If I mysdyd, god graunt me forgyuenesse
Yf I dyd well, yet felte I no pleasaunce
It caused neyther ioye nor heuynesse
For whan she dyed, that was my maystres
My welfare, than made the same purchase
The dethe hath shette my boudes of wytnes
which for nothyng myn herte shal neuer pase

In this gret thought, sore troubled in minde
Alone thus rode I, all the morowe tyde
Tyll at the last it happed me to fynde

The place, wherin I cast me to abyde
whan that I had no further for to ryde
And as I went, my lodgynge to purueyy
Ryght soone I herde, a lytell me besyde
In a garden, where mynstrels gan to play

Wyth that anone, I went me backer more
My selfe and I, me thought we were ynowe
But twayne ẏ were my frendes here before
Had me espyed, and yet I wote nat howe
They came for me, awayward I me drowe
Somwhat by force, somwhat by her request
That in no wyse, I coude my selfe rescowe
But nedes I must come in and se the feest

At my cõmynge, the ladyes euerchone
Bad me welcome, god wote right gentylly
And made me chere, euery one by one
A great dele better than I was worthy
And of theyr grace, shewed me grete curtesy
w̃ good disport, bycause I shuld nat mourne
That day I bode styll in theyr company
whyche was to me, a gracyous soiourne

The bordes were spred, in ryght lytell space
The ladyes sat, eche as hem semed best
There were no deedly seruaũtes in the place
But chosen men, ryght of the goodlyest
& some there were, parauenture most freshest
That sawe theyr iuges full demure
wythout semblaunt, eyther to most or lest
Natwithstandyng, they had hem vnder cure

Amonge all other, one I gan espy
which in grete thought, ful oftẽ came & went
As one that had ben rauysched vtterly
In hys language, nat greatly dylygent
His countenaunce he kept w̃ great tourment
But his desyre farre passed hys reason
For euer hys eye, went after hys entent
Full many a tyme, whan it was no season

To make chere, sore him selfe he payned
And outwardly he fayned great gladnesse
To synge also, byforce he was constrayned
For no pleasaunce, but very shamfastnesse
For the complaynte of hys moste heuynesse
Came to hys voyce, alway without request
Lyke as the sowne of byrdes dothe expresse
whan they synge loude, in frythe or in forest

Other there were, that serued in the hall
But none lyke hym, as after myne aduyse
For he was pale, and somwhat leane withal
Hys speche also trymbled in fereful wyse
And euer alone, but whan he dyd seruyse
All blacke he ware, & no deuyse but playne
Ye thouȝt by hym, as my wyt coude suffyse
His herte was nothing in his own demeyne

To feest hem all, he dyd his dylygence
And well he coude, ryght as it semed me
But euermore, whan he was in presence
Hys chere was done, it wolde none other be
Hys schole maylster had suche authorite
That all the whyle he bode styll in the place
Speke coude he nat, but vpon her beaute
He loked styll, with ryght a pytous face

Wyth that hys heed he tourned at the last
For to beholde the ladyes euerychone
But euer in one, he set his eye stedfast
On her, whiche his thought was most vpon
For of hys eyen, the shot I knewe anone
which ferefull was, w̃ right hũble requestes
Than to my selfe I sayd, by god alone
Such one was I, or that I sawe these iestes

Out of the prese he wente full easely
To make stable his heuy countenaunce
And wote ye well, he syghed wonderly
For hys sorowes and wofull remembraunce
That in hym selfe, he made his ordynaunce
And forthwithall came to bryng in the messe
But for to iuge, hys most wofull penaunce
God wote it was a pytous entremesse

After dyner anone, they hem auaunced
To daunce aboue the folkes euerychone
And forthwithal, thys heuy man he daunced
Somtyme with twayne, & somtyme w̃ one
Unto hem all, hys chere was after one
Nowe here nowe there, as fell by auenture
But euer amonge, he drewe to her alone
whyche he most dred, of lyuynge creature

To myne aduyse, good was his purueyaũce
whan he her chase, to hys maystres alone
If that her herte were set to hys pleasaunce
As moche as was her beauteous persone
For who so euer setteth hys trust vpon
The reporte of the eyen, wythouten more
He might be deed, and grauen vnder stone

Or euer

Or euer he shulde, his hertes ease restore

In her fayled nothynge, that I coude gesse
One wyse nor other, preuy nor perte
A garyson she was, of al goodlynesse
To make a krounter, for a louers herte
Right yonge & fresshe, a woman ful couerte
Assured wele of porte, and eke of chere
wele at her ease, withouten wo or smerte
Al vnderneth the standerde of daungere

To se the feest, it weryed me ful sore
For heuy ioye doth sore the herte trauayle
Out of the prese, I me withdrawe therfore
And set me downe alone behynde a trayle
Ful of leues, to se a great meruayle
with grene wrethes ybounden wonderly
The leues were so thycke withouten fayle
That throughout, no man might me espy

To this lady he came ful curtesly
whã he thought tyme to daũce w̃ her a trace
Set in an herber, made fule plesauntly
They rested hem fro thens but a lytel space
Nygh hem were none, of a certayne compace
But onely they, as farre as I coude se
Saue the trayle, there I had chose my place
There was no more bytwene hem two & me

I harde the louer syghyng wonder sore
For aye the more, the sorer it him sought
His inwarde paine he coude not kepe in store
Nor for to speke, so hardy was he nought
His leche was nere, ẏ gretter was his thourt
He mused sore, to conquere his desyre
For no mã may to more penaũce be brought
That in his heate, to bring him to the fyre

The herte began to swel within his chest
So sore strayned, for anguisshe & for payne
That al to peces almoste it to brest
whan both at ones, so sore it dyd constrayne
Desyre was bold, but shame it gan refrayne
That one was large, the other was ful close
No lytel charge was layde on him certayne
To kepe suche werre, and haue so many fose

Ful oftẽ tymes to speke, him selfe he payned
But shamfastnesse & drede, sayd euer nay
Yet at the last, so sore he was constrayned
whan he full longe had put it in delay
To his lady, ryght thus than gan he say
with dredeful voyce, wepyng, halfe in a rage
For me was purueyed, an vnhappy day
whan I fyrst had a syght of your vysage

I suffre payne god wote, ful hote brennynge
To cause my dethe, all for my true seruyse
And I se well, ye recke therof nothyng
Nor take no hede of it, in no kynde wyse
But whan I speke after my best aduyse
ye set it at nought, but make therof a game
And thoughe I sewe, so great an entrepryse
Yet peyreth not your worship nor your fame

Alas, what shulde it be to you preiudyce
If that a man do loue you faythfully
To your worshyp, eschewynge euery vyce
So am I yours, and wyll be veryly
I chalenge nought of ryght, and reason why
For I am hole submyt vnto your seruyce
Ryght as ye lyst it be, ryght so wyll I
To bynde my self, where I was in fraũchise

Lamant

Though it be so, that I can nat deserue
To haue your grace, but alway lyue in drede
Yet suffre me, you for to loue and serue
withouten maugre, of your most goodlyhede
Both faith & trouth I gyue your womãhede
And my seruyce wythout any callynge
Loue hath me boũd, withoute wage or mede
To be your man, and leue all other thynge

La dame

Whan thys lady had herde al this language
She gaue answere, full softe and demurely
wythout chaungynge of colour or courage
Nothynge in haste, but mesurably
Ye thinketh syr, your thought is great foly
Purpose ye nought, your labour for to cese
For thynketh not, whyles ye lyue and I
In thys mater, to set your herte in pease

Lamant

There may none make the peace, but only ye
which are the grounde & cause of al this war
For wyth your eyen, the letters written be
By whyche I am defyed and put a far
Your plesaunt loke, my very lode star
was made heraude, of thilke same defyaunce
whiche vtterly behyght me for to barre
My fayhtfull trust, and all myne affyaunce

La dame

To lyue in wo, he hath great fantasy
And of hys herte also slypper holde
That onely for beholdynge of an eye

Can nat

Can nat abyde in peace, as reason wolde
Other or me, yf ye lyst ye may beholde
our eyē are made to loke, why shuld we spare
I take no kepe, neyther of yonge ne olde
who feleth smerte, I counsayle hym beware

Lamant.

If it be so, one hurte another sore
In hys defaute, that feleth the greuaunce
Of very ryght, a man may do no more
Yet reason wolde it were in remembraunce
And syth fortune onely by her chaunce
Hath caused me to suffre all thys payne
By your beaute, wyth all the cyrcumstaunce
why lyste ye haue me, in so great dysdayne

La dame.

To your persone, ne haue I no dysdayne
Nor neuer had trewly, ne nought wyll haue
Nor ryght great loue, nor hatred in certayne
Nor your counsayle to know, so god me saue
yf suche loue be in your mynde ygraue
That lytell thynge, may do you dyspleasaūce
You to begyle, or make you for to raue
I wyll nat cause, no suche encomberaunce

Lamant.

What euer it be, ý me hath thus purchased
wenynge hath nat dysceyued me certayne
But feruent loue, so sore hath me ychased
That I vnware, am casten in your chayne
And syth so is, as fortune lyst ordayne
All my welfare, is in your haundes fall
In eschewynge of more myscheuous payne
who sonest dyeth, hys care is leest of all

La dame.

This syckenesse is ryght easy to endure
But fewe people, it causeth for to dye
But what they meane, I knowe it very sure
Of more comforte, to drawe the remedy
Suche be there nowe, playnyng ful pytously
That fele god wote, nat alther grettest paine
And yf so be, loue hurte so greuously
Lesse harm it were, one sorowful thā twayn

Lamant.

Alas madame, yf that it myght you please
Moche better it were, by way of gentylnesse
Of one sory, to make twayne wel at ease
Than hym to destroye that lyueth in distresse
For my desyre is, neyther more nor lesse
But my seruyce, to do for your pleasaunce
In eschewynge all maner doublenesse
To make two ioyes, in stede of one greuaūce

La dame.

Of loue I seke, neyther pleasaunce nor ease
Nor haue therin no great affyaunce
Though ye be sick, it doth me nothing please
Also I take no hede of your pleasaunce
Chese who so wyll, her hertes to auaunce
Fre am I nowe, and free wyll I endure
To be ruled by maunes gouernaunce
For erthely good, Nay, that I you ensure

Lamant.

Loue, which that ioy & sorowe doth departe
Hath set the ladyes out of all seruage
And largely dothe graunt hem for her parte
Lordshyp and rule of euery maner of age
The poore seruaūt, nought hath of auantage
But what he may gete onely by purchesse
And he that ones, to loue doth hys homage
Full often tymes, dere bought is the rychesse

La dame.

Ladyes be nat so symple, thus I mene
So dull of wyt, so sotted in foly
That for wordes, whiche sayd be of ý splene
In fayre langage, paynted full plesauntly
whiche ye and mo, holde scholes of dayly
To make hem all, great wonders to suppose
But sone they can away, theyr heedes wrye
And to fayre speche, lyghtly theyr eres close

Lamant.

There is no man, that iangleth busyly
And setteth hys herte, & all mynde therfore
That by reason, may playne so pytously
As he that hath moche heuynesse in store
whose heed is hole, and sayth that it is sore
Hys fayned chere, is harde to kepe in mewe
But thought, whyche is vnfayned euermore
The wordes preueth, as the workes shewe

La dame.

Loue is subtell, and hath a great awayte
sharpe in working, in gabbing gret plesaūce
And can hem venge, of suche as by dysceyte
wolde fele and knowe, his secret gouernaūce
And maketh hem to obey hys ordynaunce
By cherefull wayes, as in hem is supposed
But whan they fall in to repentaunce
Than in a rage, her counsayle is disclosed

Lamant.

Syth for as moche, as god and eke nature
Hath auaunced loue, to so hye degre
Moche sharpe is the poynt, thus am I sure
Yet greueth more the faute, where euer it be
who hath no colde, of heate hath no deynte
The one for that other, asked is expresse
And of plesaunce, knoweth none certeyne
But it be one, in thought and heuynesse

La dame.

La dame

As for pleasaunce, it is nat alway one
That you thinke swete, I thinke it bitter pain
Ye may nat me cõstrayne, nor yet right none
After your lust to loue, that is but vayn
To chalenge loue by ryght, was neuer seyne
But herte assent, before bonde and promyse
For strength and force, may nat attayne
A wyll that standeth enfeffed in fraunchyse

Lamant

Ryght fayre lady, god mote I neuer please
Yf I seke other ryght in thys case
But for to shewe you playnly my dysease
And your mercy to abyde, & eke your grace
If I purpose your honour to deface
Or euer dyd, god and fortune me shende
And that I neuer vnrightfully purchace
One onely ioy, vnto my lyues ende

La dame

Ye and other, that swere suche othes faste
And so condempne, and cursen to and fro
Full sykerly ye wene your othes laste
No lenger than the wordes ben ago
And god, and eke his sayntes laughe also
In suche sweryng, there is no stedfastnesse
And these wretches that haue ful trust therto
After they wepe and waylen in distresse

Lamant

He hath no corage of a man trewly
That secheth plesaunce, worshyp to dispyse
Nor to be called forthe, is not worthy
The erthe to touche, ý ayre in no kyns wyse
A trusty herte, a mouth without feyntyse
Thus be the strength of euery maner name
And who that layeth his fayth for lytel pryse
He leseth bothe hys worshyp and hys fame

La dame.

A cursed herte, a mouth that is curteyse
Ful well ye wote they be not accordynge
Yet fayned chere, right soone may hẽ apeyse
where of malyce is set all her workynge
Full false semblaunt they bere, & true semyng
Her name, her fame, her tonges but fayned
worshyp in hem is put in forgettynge
Nought repented, nor in no wyse cõplayned

Lamant.

Who thynketh yll, no good may hym befall
God of hys grace graunt eche man his desert
But for hys loue, amonge your thoughtes all
As thynke vpon my wofull sorowes smert
For of my payne, wheder your tender herte
Of swete pyte, be not therwyth agreued
And of your grace, to me were discouerte
That by your mean, sone shulde I be releued

La dame.

A lightsome herte, a folly of plesaunce
Are moche better, the lesse whyle they abyde
They make you think, & bring you in atraũce
But that sycknesse, wyll sone be remedyde
Respyte your thought, and put al thys aside
Full good dispoyte werieth me all day
To helpe nor hurte, my wyll is not aplyde
who troweth me not, I let hem passe away

Lamant.

Who hath a byrde, a faucon, or a hounde
That foloweth hym for loue in euery place
He cherisheth hym, & kepeth hym full sounde
Out of hys syght, he wyl not hym enchace
And I that set me wyttes in this cace
On you alone, wythouten any chaunge
Am put vnder, moche farther out of grace
And lesse set by, than other that be straunge

La dame.

Though I make chere to euery man aboute
For my worship, & for myne owne fraũchyse
To you I nyl do so, wythouten doute
In eschewynge all maner preiudyse
For wote ye well, loue is so lytell wyse
And in byleue, so lyghtly wyll be brought
That he taketh all at hys owne deuyse
Of thyng god wote, ý serueth him of nought

Lamant.

yf I by loue, and by my true seruyce
Lese ý good chere ý straungers haue alway
wherof shall serue my trouth in any wyse
Lesse than to him, that cometh & goth all day
whiche holdeth of you nothynge, ý is no nay
Also in you is lost, as to my semynge
All curtesy, whyche of reason wyll say
That loue for loue, were lawfull desyrynge

La dame.

Curtesy is alyed wonder nere
To worshyp, whyche hym loueth tenderly
And he wyll nat be bounde for no prayere
Nor for no gyftes, I say you verely
But hys good chere, departe full largely
where hym lyketh, as his conceyte wyll fall
Guerdon cõstrayned a gifte done thankfully
These twayn cã neuer accorde nor neuer shal

Lamant.

As for guerdon I seke none in this cace
For that desert, to me it is to hye
wherfore I aske your pardon & your grace
Sythe me behoueth dethe, or your mercy

To gyue

To gyue the good where it wanteth truely
That were reason, and a curtyse manere
And to your owne moch better were worthy
Thã to straungers, to shew hem louely chere

La dame

What call ye good, fayne wolde I ẏ I wyst
That pleaseth one, another smerteth sore
But of hys owne, to large is he that lyst
Gyue moch, and lese hys good name therfore
One shulde nat make a graunt, lytel ne more
But the request were ryght well accordynge
Yf worshyp be not kepte and set before
All that is lefte, is but a lytell thynge

Lamant

In to this worlde was founded neuer none
Nor vnder heuen creature yborn
Nor neuer shall, saue onely your persone
To whõ your worshyp toucheth halfe so sore
But me whiche haue no season lesse ne more
Of youthe ne age, but styll in your seruyce
I haue no eyen, no wit, nor mouth in store
But all be gyuen to the same offyce

La dame.

A full great charge hath he wythouten fayle
That hys worshyp kepeth in sykernesse
But in daunger he setteth hys trauayle
That fesseth it wyth others busynesse
To hym that longeth, honour and noblesse
Upon none other shulde nat be awayte
For of hys owne, so moche hath he the lesse
That of other, moche folowet hthe conceyte

Lamant

Your eyen hath set ẏ prynt, which that I fele
wythin my herte, that where so euer I go
Yf I do thynge, that sowneth vnto wele
Nedes must it come from you, & fro no mo
Fortune wyll thys, that I for wele or wo
My lyfe endure, your mercy abydynge
And very ryght wyll, that I thynke also
Of your worshyp, aboue all other thynge

La dame.

To your worshyp se well, for that is nede
That ye spende nat your season all in vayne
As touchynge myne, I rede you take no hede
By your folly, to put your selfe in payne
To ouercome is good, and to restrayne
An herte, wyche is disceyued follyly
For worse it is to breke than bowe certayne
Better bowe, than to fall sodaynly

Lamant.

Nowe fayre lady thynke, syth it fyrst began
That loue hath set myn herte vnder his cure
It neuer myght, ne truely I ne can
None other serue, whyle I shall here endure
In most fre wyse, therof I make you sure
which may not be withdrawe, this is no nay
I must abyde all maner aduenture
For I may neyther put to nor take away

La dame.

I holde it for no gyfte in sothfastnesse
That one offreth, where it is forsake
For suche a gyfte is abandonynge expresse
That wyth worship ayen may not be take
He hath an herte full fell that lyst to make
A gyfte lyghtly, that put is to refuse
But he is wyse, that suche conceyte wyl slake
So that hym nede, neyther to study ne muse

Lamant.

He shulde nat muse, ẏ hath hys seruyce spent
On her, wyche is a lady honourable
And yf I spende my tyme to that entent
Yet at the lest, I am not reprouable
Of fayned herte, to thynke I am vnable
Or I mystoke, whan I made thys request
By whiche loue hath of entrepryse notable
So many hertes gotten by conquest

La dame.

If that ye lyste do after my counsayle
Seche a fayrer, and of more hygher fame
wyych in seruyce of loue, wyll you preuayle
After your thought, accordynge to the same
He hurteth both hys worshyp and hys name
That follyly, for twayne hi selfe wyl trouble
And he also leseth his after game
That surely can not set hys poyntes double

Lamant.

This your counsayle, by ought that I can se
Is better sayd than done, to myne aduyse
Though I byleue it not, forgyue it me
Myne herte is such, so hole without feyntyse
That I ne may gyue credence in no wyse
To thyng, which is not sowning vnto truth
Other counsayle I se, be but fantasyse
Saue of your grace, to shewe pyte and ruth

La dame.

I holde hym wyse that worketh no foly
And whan hym lyst, can leue & parte therfro
But in connynge, he is to lerne truely
That wolde hym selfe conduyte, & can not so
And he that wyll not after counsayle do
His sute he putteth in to dysperaunce
And all the good that shulde fall hym to
Is lost and deed, clene out of remembraunce

Lamant.

Yet wyll

Yet wyl I sewe thys matter faythfully
whyles I lyue, what euer be my chaunce
And yf it hap, that in my truth I dye
Than deth shal do me no displeasaunce
But whan that I, by your harde suffraunce
Shall dye so true, & with so great a payne
Yet shal it do me much the lesse greuaũce
Than for to lyue a false louer certayne

La dame.

Of me get ye ryght nought, thys is no fable
I wyl to you be neyther harde nor strayte
And ryght wyl not no man customable
To thynke ye shulde be sure of my conceyte
who secheth sorowe, his be the receyte
Other counsayle can I not fele nor se
Nor for to lerne, I cast me not to awayte
who wyll therof, let hym assaye for me

Lamant.

Ones must it be assayde, that is no nay
wyth suche as be of reputacyon
And of true loue, the ryght honour to pay
Of free hertes gotten by dewe raunsome
For frewyl holdeth thys opinion
That it is great duresse and discomforte
To kepe a herte in so strayte a prison
That hath but one body for his disporte

La dame.

I knowe so many causes meruaylous
That I must nede of reason thynke certaine
That such auenture is wonder peryllous
And yet wel more, the coming backe againe
Good or worshyp, therof is seldome sene
where I ne wyll make suche araye
As for to fynde a pleasaunce, but a barayne
whan it shal cost so dere the fyrst assaye

Lamant.

Ye haue no cause to dout of this mater
Nor you to meue with no such fantasyse
To put me farre al out as a straunger
For your goodnesse can thinke & wel aduyse
That I haue made a pryse in euery wyse
By whiche my truth sheweth open euidence
My longe abydyng, and my trewe seruyce
Haye well be knowen by playne experience

La dame.

Of very ryght he may be called trewe
And so must he be take in euery place
That can discerne, and let as he ne knewe
And kepe the good, yf he it may purchace
For who ý prayeth, or swereth in any case
Right wel ye wote, in ý no trouth is preued
Such hath there bene, & are, that getẽ grace
And lese it sone, whan they haue it acheued

Lamant.

If truth me cause by vertue souerayne
To shewe good loue, & alway fynde cõtrary
And cherish ý, which fleeth me with ý paine
This is to me a louely aduersary
whan ý pyte, which longe on slepe doth tary
Hath set the fyne of al my heuynesse
Yet her comforte to me moost necessary
Shal set my wyll more sure in stablenesse

La dame.

The wofull wight, what maye he thynke or (say
The contrary of al ioy and gladnesse
A sicke bodye, his thought is alway
From hem that felen no sore nor sickenesse
Thus hurtes bene of diuers busynesse
which loue hath put to great hyndraunce
And truth also, put in forgetfulnesse
whan they ful sore begyn to sigh askaunce

Lamant.

Now god defende, but he be harmelesse
Of al worship or good that may befall
That to werst tourneth by his lewdnesse
A gyfte of grace, or any thinge at all
That his ladie vouchsafe vpon him call
Or cherisheth him in honorable wise
In that defaute, what euer he be that fall
Deserueth more than deth to suffre twyse

La dame.

There is no iuge yet on suche trespace
By whych of right, loue may recouered be
One curseth fast, another doth manace
Yet dyeth none, as farre as I can se
But kepe her course alway in one degre
And euermore, theyr labour doth encrease
To bryngе ladies by theyr great subtelte
For others gylte, in sorowe and disease

Lamant.

Albeit so, one doth so great offence
And is not deed, nor put to no iustyce
Right well I wote him gayneth no defence
But he must ende in ful mischeuous wyse
And all euer sayd, god wyl him dispyse
For falsched is euer ful of cursedenesse
that his worshyp may neuer haue interprise
where it reygneth, & hath the wylfulnesse

La dame.

Of that haue they no great fere now a daise
Such as wyl say and maynteyne it therto
That stedfast truth is nothing for to prayse
In hem that kepe it longe in wele or wo
Theyr busye hertes passen two and fro

They be so wel reclaymed to the lure
So wel lerned hem to wythholde also
And al to chaũg whã loue shuld best endure

Lamant.

Whan one hath set his hert in stable wyse
In such a place, as is both good and trewe
He shulde not flyt, but do forth his seruice
Alway withouten chaunge of any newe
As sone as loue begynneth to remewe
Al plesaunce goth anone in lytle space
As for my partye, that shal I eschewe
whyle the soule abydeth in hys place

La dame.

To loue truely, there as it ought of right
Ye may not be mystaken doutlesse
But ye be soule dysceyued in your syght
By lyght vnderstandyng, as I gesse
yet may ye wel repele your busynesse
And to reason haue some attendaunce
Moch better thã to abyde by foly simplenes
The feble socour of disperaunce

Lamant.

Reason, coũsayle, wysedome, & good aduise
Bene vnder loue arested euerychone
To which I can accorde in euery wyse
For they be not rebel, but styl as a stone
Their wyl and myne, be medled al in one
And therwyth boũden w̃ so strong a cheyne
That as in hem, departyng shal be none
But pyte breke the myghty bonde atwayne

La dame.

Ye loue not your selfe, what euer ye be
That in loue stande forgete in euery place
And of your wo, yf ye haue no pyte
Others pite beleue ye not to purchace
But be fully assured, as in thys case
I am alway vnder one ordynaunce
To haue better trust not after grace
And al that leueth, take to your plesaunce

Lamant.

Haue my hope so sure and so stedfast
That such a lady shulde not lacke pyte
But nowe alas, it is shyt vp so fast
That daunger sheweth on me hys cruelte
And yf she se the vertue fayle in me
Of true seruice, though she do fayle also
No wonder were, but thys is my surete
I must suffre, whych way that euer it go

La dame.

Leue chys purpose I rede you for the best
For the lenger ye kepe, it is in vayne
The lesse ye gete, as of your hertes rest
And to reioyce it shal you neuer attayne
whã ye abyde good hope to make you fayne
Ye shal be founde asotted in dotage
And in the ende, ye shal knowe for cartayne
Hope shal pay the wretches for her wage

Lamant.

Ye say as falleth moost for your plesaunce
And your power is great, al thys I se
But hope shal neuer out of my remebraunce
By whych I fele so great aduersite
For whan nature hath set in you plente
Of al goodnesse by vertue and by grace
He neuer assembled hem, as semed me
To put pyte out of hys dwellynge place

La dame.

Pyte of ryght ought to be resonable
And to no wight do no great disauauntage
There as is nede, it shulde be profytable
And to the pytous shewynge no damage
If a lady wyl do so great outrage
To shewe pyte and cause her owne debate
Of such pyte cometh dispitous rage
And of such loue, also ryght deedly hate

Lamant.

To comforte hem that lyue al comfortlesse
That is no harme, but cõforte to your name
But ye that haue a herte of such duresse
And a fayre lady I must affirme the same
If I dust say, ye wynne all thys defame
By cruelte, whych sytteth you full yl
But yf pyte, whych may al thys attame
In your hygh herte may rest and tary styll

La dame.

what euer he be that sayth he loueth me
And perauenture I leue wel it be so
Ought he be wroth, or shulde I blamed be
Though I did not as he wolde haue me do
If I medled wyth such or other mo
It myght be called pyte mercylesse
And afterwarde yf I shulde lyue in wo
Than to repent, it were to late I gesse

Lamant.

O marble hert, and yet more harde parde
whych mercy may not perce for no labour
More strong to bowe than is a myghty tre
what auayleth you to shew so great rygour
Pleaseth you more to se me dye thys hour
Before your eyen, for your disport and play
Than for to shewe some cõforte and socour
To respyte death, whych chaseth me alway

La dame.

Of your disease, ye may haue allegeaunce

And

And as for myne, I let it ouer slake
Also ye shal not dye for my pleasaunce
Nor for your heale, I can not surety make
I wyl not hurt my selfe for others sake
wepe they, laugh they, or synge they, I wa-
For this mater, so wyl I vndertake (rant
That none of hem shal make therof auaunt

Lamant.

I can not skyl of loue by god alone
I haue more cause to wepe in your presence
And wel ye wote, auauntour am I none
For certaynly, I loue better scilence
One shulde not loue by hertes credence
But he were sure to kepe it secretly
For a bauntour is of no reuerence
whan that his tonge is his moost enemy

La dame. (ment

Yale bouch in court, hath great cõmaunde-
Eche man studyeth to say the worst he may
These false louers in this time now present
They serue best to iangle as a Jay
The moost secrete ywys, yet some men say
Howe he mistrusted is in some partyse
wherfore to ladyes whã so men speke or say
It shulde be byleued in no wyse

Lamant

Of good and yl shal be, and is alway
The worlde is such, the erth is not al plaine
They ỳ be good, ỳ prose sheweth euerye day
And otherwyse great villony certayne
It is reason, though one his tonge distayne
with cursed spech, to do hym selfe a shame
That such refuse, shuld wrõgfully remayne
Upon the good renomed in theyr fame

La dame (ges newe

Suche as be nought, whan they here tidyn-
That eche trespas shal lightly haue pardon
They that pursuen to be good and trewe
wyl not set by none yl disposition
To contynewe in euery good condicion
They are the first that fallen in damage
And ful krely the hertes habandon
To lytle fayth, wyth soft and fayre langage

Lamant.

Nowe knowe I wel of very certaynte
If one do truely, yet shal he be shente
Syth al maner of iustice and pyte
Is banished out of a ladyes entente
I can not se, but al is at one stente
The good, the yl, the vice, and eke the vertue
Such as be good, such haue ỳ punyshment
For the trespas of hem that lyue vntrue

La dame.

I haue no power you to do greuaunce
Nor to punyshe none other creature
But to eschewe the more encomberaunce
To kepe vs from you al, I holde it sure
False semblaunce, hath a face ful demure
Lyghtly to catche these ladyes in a wayte
wherfore we must, yf we wyl here endure
Make ryght good watche, lo this is my cõ-

Lamant. (ceyte

Syth that of grace, a goodly worde not one
May now be had, but alwaye kepte in store
I appele to god, for he may here my mone
Of the duresse, whych greueth me sore
And of pyte, I complayne furthermore
which he forgate, in al hys ordinaunce
Or els my lyke to haue ended before
which so sone am put out of remembraunce

La dame.

Yy herte nor I haue done you no forfeyte
By which ye shulde complayne in any kynd
Nothing hurteth you but your owne cõceite
Beyng your selfe, for so ye shal it fynde
Thus alwaye let thys synke in your mynde
That your desyre shall neuer recouered be,
Ye noy me sore, in wastyng al thys wynde
For I haue sayd ynough, as semeth me

Lamant.

Thys woful man rose vp in al hys payne
And so departed wyth weping countenaũce
His woful herte, almoost to brast in twayne
Ful lyke to dye, walking forth in a traunce
And sayd deth come forth, thy selfe auaunce
Or that myne herte forgete his properte
And make shorter al thys woful penaunce
Of my pore lyke, ful of aduersyte

Fro thẽs he went, but whither wist I nouȝt
Nor in what parte he drewe in sothfastnesse
But he no more was in hys ladyes thought
For to the daunce anone she gan her dresse
And afterwarde, one tolde me thus expresse
He rent his heer, for anguyshe and for paine
And in him selfe toke so great heuynesse
That he was deed wythin a day or twayne

Lenuoy.

Ye true louers thus I besech
you all
Such auentures flye hem in
euery wyse
And as people defamed ye
hem call
For they truely do you great preiudyse
His castelles stronge stuffed with ordinaũce
For they haue had long tyme by theyr offyce
The hole countrey of loue in obeysaunce

And ye ladyes, or what estate ye be
Of whom worship hath chose his dwelling
For goddes loue do no such cruelte (place
Nor in no wyse ne foule not the trace
Of her that here is named ryghtwysly
which by reason me semeth in thys cace
Maye be called, La belle dame sans mercy

Go lytle boke, god sende the good passage
Chese wel thy way, be simple of manere
Loke thy clothyng be lyke thy pylgrimage
And specially let thys be thy prayere
Unto hem all, that they wyll rede or here
where thou art wronge after her help to cal
The to correcte in any parte or al

Pray hem also with thine humble seruite
Thy boldnesse to pardon in thys cace
For els thou arte not able in no wyse
To make thy selfe appere in any place
And furthermore beseche hem of her grace
By her fauour and supportacion
To take in gre this rude translation

The whych god wote standeth ful destitute
Of eloquence, of meter, and colours
Lyke as a beest naked without refute
Upon a playne to abyde all maner showres
I can no more, but aske of hem socours
At whose request ÿ were made in this wyse
Commaundyng me wyth body and seruyse

Right thus I make an ende of thys prosses
Besechyng hym, that all hath in balaunce
That no trewe man be vexed causelesse
As this mã was, which is of remembraũce
And all that done her kaythful obseruaunce
And in her trouth purpose hem to endure
I pray god sende hem better auenture.

¶ Explicit.

Of quene Anne lida and false Arcite.

Thou feyrs God of ar-
mes Mars the rede
That in thy frosty coun-
tre called Trace
wythin thy gryslye tem-
ples ful of drede
Honoured art as patron
of that place
wyth the Bellona Pallas full of grace
Be present, and my song continew and gye
At my begynnyng thus to the I crye

For it ful depe is sonken in my mynde
wyth pytous herte in Englyshe to endyte
Thys olde story, in latyn whych I fynde
Of quene Annelyda and false Arcyte
That elde, whych all can frete and byte
And it hath freten many a noble story
Hath nygh deuoured out of our memorye

Be fauourable eke thou Polymnia
On Pernaso that hath thy susters glade
By Elycon, not farre from Cirsa
Syngest wyth voice memorial in the shade
Under the Laurer which that may not fade
And do that I my shyp to hauen wynne
Fyrst folowe I Stace, & after him Corinne

Iamq; domos patrias Cithie post aspera gentis,
Prelia laurigero subu-
rente Thesea curru,
Letifici plausus
missusq; ad sidera vulgi.

whan Theseus wyth warres longe & great
The aspre folke of Cithe hath ouercome
The laurer crowned in his chayre gold bete
Home to hys countre houses is ycome
For whych the people blysful all and some
So cryden, that to the sterres it wente
And hym to honouren dyd al her entente

Before thys duke, in signe of victory

The

The trompes come, and in his baner large
The ymage of Mars, and in token of glorie
Men myght se of tresour many a charge
many a bright helme & many a spere & targe
Many a fresh knight & many a blyssfull rout
On horse and on foote, in all the felde about

Ipolyta his wyfe, the hardy quene
Of Cithya, that he conquered had
wyth Emelye her yong suster shene
Fayre in a chare of golde he with him lad
that all the groūde about her chare she spread
with brightnesse of beautie in her face
Fulfylled of largesse and of grace

with hys triumphe & laurer corowned thus
In al the floure of fortunes yeuyng
Lete I this noble prince Theseus
Towarde Athenes in hys way rydyng
And fonde I wol in shortly to bryng
The slye waye of that I gan to write
Of quene Annelyda and false Arcyte

Mars ý through his furious course of yre
The olde wrath of Iuno to fulfyll
Hath sette the peoples hertes both on fyre
Of Thebes & Grece, & euerych other to kyl
with blody speares neuer rested styl (both
But throng now here now there amōg hem
That euerich other slew so were they wroth

For whan Amphiorax and Tydeus
Ipomedon, and Partynope also
were deed, and slayne proude Campaneus
And whā ý wretched thebans brethrē two
were slayne, and kynge Adrastus home ago
So desolate stode Thebes and so bare
That no wyght coude remedye of his care

And whan the olde Creon gan espye
How ý the blode royal was brought adoun
He helde the citie by his tyrannye
And dyd the gentyls of that regyoun
To bene his frendes, and dwel in the toun
So what for loue of him, & what for awe
The noble folke were to the towne ydrawe

Amonge al these Annelyda the quene
Of Ermonye, was in that towne dwellyng
That fayrer was than the sunne shene
throuzout ý world so gan her name spring
That her to se had euery wyght lykyng
For as of trouth is there none her lyche
Of al the women in thys worlde ryche

Yonge was this quene, of twentye yere olde
Of myddle stature, and of such fayrenesse
That nature had a ioye her to beholde
And for to speken of her stedfastnesse
She passed hath Penelope, and Lucresse
And shortly yf she shal bene comprehended
In her myght nothyng bene amended

This Theban knyght eke soth to sayne
was yonge, & therto wythal a lusty knyght
But he was double in loue & nothing plaine
And subtyl in that crafte ouer any wyght
And with his cōnyng wan this lady bright
For so ferforth he gan her trouth assure
That she him trusteth ouer any creature

what shulde I sayne, she loueth Arcyte so
That whan that he was absent any throwe
Anone her thought her herte brast a two
For in her syght to her he bare him lowe
So that she wende haue al his hert yknow
But he was false, it nas but fayned chere
As nedeth not suche craft men to lere

But neuerthelesse ful mykel busynesse
Had he, er that he myght hys lady wynne
And swore he wolde dyen for distresse
Or from his witte he sayd he wold twynne
Alas the whyle, for it was routh and synne
That she vpon his sorowes wolde rewe
But nothinge thinketh the false as doth the (trewe
Her feedom founde Arcyte in such manere
That al was his, that she hath much or lite
Ne to no creature made she chere
Further than it lyked to Arcyte (her wyte
There was no lacke, wyth which he myght
She was so ferforth yeuen hym to please
That al that lyked him, dyd her ease

There nas to her no maner letter sent
That touched loue, from any maner wyght
That she ne shewed hym or it was brent
So playn she was, and dyd her ful myght
That she nyl hyde nothyng from her knyght
Lest he of any vntrouth her vpbreyde
wythout bode his herte she obeyed

And eke he made hym ialous ouer her

That what any man had to her sayde
Anone he wolde prayen her to swere
what was ý word, or make him yuel apayd
Thã wende she out of her wytte haue brayd
But al was but sleyght and slaterye
wythout loue he fayned ielousy

And al this toke she so debonairly
That al his wyl, her though it skylful thing
And euer the lenger she loued him tenderly
And dyd him honour as he were a kyng
Her herte was to him wedded wyth a ryng
For so ferforth vpon trouth is her entent
That where he goth, her hert with him wẽt

whã she shall eate, on hym is so her thought
That wel vnneth of meate toke she kepe
And whan she was to her rest brought
On him she thought alway tyl that she slepe
whan he was absent, priuely doth she wepe
Thus lyueth fayre Annelyda the quene
For false Arcyte, that dyd her al this tene

This false Arcyte, of his newfangleneſſe
For she to him so lowly was and trewe
Toke lesse deynte for her stedfastnesse
And sawe another lady proude and newe
And ryght anone he clad him in her hewe
wote I not whether in white, reed, or grene
And falsed fayre Annelyda the quene

But neuertheleſſe, great wõder was it none
Though he were false, for it is ý kynd of mã
Syth lameth was, that is so longe agone
To be in loue as false as euer he can
He was the first father that began
To louen two, and was in bigamye
And he founde tentes first, but yf men lye

This false Arcyte, somwhat must he fayne
whan he was false, to coueren his traytorye
Ryght as an horse, ý can both byte & playne
For he bare her in honde of trecherye
And swore he coude her doubleneſſe espye
And al was falseneſſe, that she to hym ment
Thus swore this theſe & forthe his waye he (went

Alas what hert myght endure it
For routh or wo, her sorowe for to tell
Or what man hath the connyng or the wyt
Or what mã might within the chãbre dwel
If I to him rehersen shal the hell
That suffreth fayre Annelyda the quene
For false Arcyte, that dyd al thys tene

She wepeth, wayleth, & swoueth pitously
To grounde deed she falleth as a stone
Crampysheth her lymmes crokedly
She speaketh as her wytte were al agone
Other colour than ashen hath she none
Ne none other word speketh she moch or lite
But mercy cruel hert myne Arcyte

And this endureth, tyl that she was so mate
ý she ne hath foote on which she may sustene
But forth languyshyng euer in this estate
Of which Arcyte hath neyther roth ne tene
His herte was els where newe and grene
that on her wo, ne deyneth him nat to thinke
Him recketh neuer whether she flete or sinke

Thys newe lady holdeth him so narowe
Vp by the brydel, at the staues ende
That euery worde he dred it as an arowe
Her daunger made him both bowe & bende
And as her lust, made him turne or wende
For she ne graunted him in her lyuyng
No grace, why that he hath to syng

But droue hym forth, vnneth lyst her knowe
That he was seruaunt vnto her ladyshyp
But leste he were proude, she helde him low
Thus serueth he, wythout meate or syp
She sent him nowe to lande, & now to shyp
And for she yaue him daunger al his syl
Therfore she had him at her owne wyl

Ensample of this, ye thrifty women all
Take hede of Annelyda and false Arcyte
That for her lyst him, her dere herte call
And was so meke, therfore he loued her lyte
The kynde of mannes herte is to delyte
On thyng that straung is, also god me saue
For what the may not get, ý wold they haue

Nowe turne we to Annelyda ayen
That pyneth day by day in languyshyng
But whan she saw that her ne gate no geyn
Vpon a day full sorowfully wepyng
She cast her for to make a complaynyng
And wyth her owne hand she gan it write
And sent it to her theban knyght Arcyte

The

¶ The complaynt of Annelyda to false Arcyte.

O thyrled wyth ý poynt
of remembraunce
The swerde of sorowe
whet w̃ false plesaũce
Myne hert bare of blysse
and blacke of hewe
That turned is to quakyng all my daunce
My suretie in a waped countenaunce
Syns it auayleth nought to ben trewe
For who so true is, it shal her rewe
That serueth loue, & doth her obseruaunce
Alwaye to one, and chaungeth for no newe

I wote my selfe as wel as any wyght
For I loued one w̃ al myne hert & myght
More than my selfe an hundred M. syth
And called him my hertes lyke, my knyght
And was all his, as ferre as it was ryght
And whã ý he was glad, than was I blyth
And his disease was my deth as swythe
And he ayen his trouth hath me plyght
For euermore his lady to me kythe.

Nowe is he false alas, and causelesse
And of my wo he is so routhlesse
That w̃ a worde hym lyst not ones dayne
To bryngе ayen my sorowful hert in pees
For he is caught vp in an other lees
Ryght as him lyst, he laugheth at my payn
And I ne can myne hert not restrayne
For to loue hym yet alway neuertheleſſe
And of al this I not to whom to playne.

And shulde I playne, alas the harde stound
Unto my fo, that yaue myne hert a wound
And yet desyreth that myne harme be more
Now certes ferther wol I neuer be founde
None other helpe, my sores for to sounde
My destenу hath shaped so full yore
I woll none other medicine ne lore
I woll ben aye there I was ones bounde
That I haue sayde, be sayde for euermore

Alas, where is become your gentlenesse
your wordes full of pleasaunce & humblesse
Your obseruaunce in so lowe manere
Your awaytyng, and your besynesse
On me that ye called your maystresse
Your souerayne lady in this worlde here
Alas, is there neyther worde ne chere
Ye vouchsafe vpon myne heuynesse
Alas your loue, I bye it all to dere

Now certes swete, though that ye
Thus causelesse the cause be
Of my deedly aduersitie
Your manly reason ought it to respyte
To slee your frende, and namely me
That neuer yet in no degree
Offended you, as willy he
That all wot of wo my soule quyte.

But for I was so playne Arcyte
In all my workes moche and lyte
And was so besy you to delyte
Myne houour saue, meke, kynde and free
Therfore ye put in me this wyte
Alas, ye retche not a myte
Though that the swerde of sorowe byte
My wofull hert through your crueltie

My swete fo, why do ye so for shame
And thynke ye ý furthred be your name
To loue anewe, and ben vntrue aye
And put you in slaundre now and blame
And do to me aduersitie and grame
That loue you moost, god thou wost alway
Yet turne ayen, and yet be playne somedaye
And than shal this ý now is mys ben game
And all forgeue whyle I lyue maye.

Lo hert myne, al this is for to sayne
As whether shall I praye or els playne
which is the way to done you to be trewe
For eyther mote I haue you in my chayne
Or with the deth ye mote depart vs twayn
There beth none other meane wayes newe
For god so wysely on my soule rewe
As verely ye sleen me with the payne
That mow ye sene vnkayned on myne hew

For thus ferforth haue I my deth sought
My selfe I murdre with my priuy thought
For sorowe & routh of your vnkyndnesse
I wepe, I wayle, I fast, al helpeth nought
I voyde ioye that is to speke of ought
I voyde company, I flye gladnesse
who may auaunt her better of heuynesse
Thã I, and to this plyte haue ye me brought
without gylte, me nedeth no wytnesse.

And shulde I pray, & weyuen womanhed
Nay rather deth, than do so foule a dede
And aske mercy and gyltlesse, what nede
And yf I playne what lyke I lede
You recketh not, ý knowe I out of drede
And yf I vnto you myne othes bede
For myne excuse, a scorne shalbe my mede
Your chere floureth, but it wyll not sede
Ful longe agone I myght haue takē hede.

For though I had you to morowe agayne
I myght as well holde Aprylll from rayne
As holde you to maken stedfast
Almyghty god, of trouth the souerayne
wher is ý trouth of man, who hath it slayne
She ý hem loueth, shal hem fynde as fast
As in a tempest is a rotten mast
Is that a tame beest, that is aye fayne
To renne away, whan he is lest agast

Now mercy swete, yf I missay
Haue I ought sayde out of the way
I not, my wyt is all away
I fare as doth ý songe of chaunteplure
For now I playne, and now I pley
I am so mased, that I dey
Arcyte hath borne away the key
Of al my worlde, & my good auenture

For in this worlde there nis no creature
walkyng in more discomfyture
Than I, ne more sorowe endure
For yf I slepe a furlonge way or twey
Than thynketh me that your fygure
Before me stant, clad in asure
Efte to profre a newe assure
For to ben true, and mercy me to prey

The longe nyght, this wondre syght ydrye
That on the day for suche a fraye I dye
And of al this right nought iwys ye retche
Ne neuermore myne eyen two ben drye
And to your routh, & to your trouth I crye
But welaway, to ferre ben they to fetche
Thus holdeth me my destenie a wretche
But me to rede out of this drede or gye
Ne may my wyt (so weke is it) not stretche

Than ende I thus, syth I maye do nomore
I yeue it vp, for now and euermore
For I shall neuer efte putten in balaunce
My sykernesse, ne lerne of loue the lore
But as ý swan, I haue herde saye full yore
Ayenst his deth woll synge in his penaūce
So synge I here the destenyand chaunce
How that Arcyte Annelyda so sore
Hath thrilled w̄ the poynt of remembraūce.

whan that Anneleda this wofull quene
Hath of her hande wrytten in this wyse
with face deed, betwixt pale and grene
She fell a swoune, and sythe she gan to rysse
And vnto Mars aboweth sacrifyce
within the temple with a sorowful chere
That shapen was, as ye may playnly here.

Explicit.

The assemble of Ladyes.

N Septembre at the fal
lyng of the lefe
The fresh season was all
togyther done
And of the corne was ga
thered the shefe (ter none
In a garden about .ii. af-
Ther wer ladyes walking as was her won
Foure in nōbre, as to my mynde doth fall
And I the fyfth, the symplest of hem all.

Of gentlewomen fayre there were also
Disportyng hem euerychе after her gyse
In crosse alleyes walkyng by two and two
And some alone after her fantasyese
Thus occupyed we were in dyuers wyse
And yet in trouth we were not all alone
Ther were knightes & squyres many one

wherof I serued, one of hem asked me
I sayd ayen, as it fell in my thought
To walke about the mase in certayntie
As a woman that nothyng rought
He asked me ayen whom that I sought
And of my colour, why I was so pale
For loth (q̄ I) and therby lyth a tale.

That must we wete (q̄ he) and that anon
Tel on let se, and make no taryinge
Abyde (q̄ I) ye ben a hasty one
I let you wete it is no lytle thynge
But for bycause ye haue a great longyng
In your desyre, this processe for to here
I shal you tell the playne of this matere.

It

It happed thus, that in an after noone
My felouschyp and I by one assent
whan all other besynesses were done
To passe our tyme, into this mase we went
And toke our wayes eche after our entent
Som wēt inward, & wēt they had gon out
Some stode in ý mid, and loked all about

And soth to say, som wer full ferre behynde
And ryght anon, as ferforth as the best
Other there were so mased in her mynde
Alwaies wer good for hem both eest & west
Thus went they forth & had but lytle rest
And some her corage dyd hem sore assayle
For very wrath they dyd step ouer ý rayle.

And as they sought hem selfe to and fro
I gate my selfe a lytle auauntage
All forweryed, I myght no ferther go
Thouz I had won right great for my viage
So came I forth into a strayte passage
which brought me to an herber fayre & grene
Made with benches full crafty and clene.

That as me thought, ther myght no crea-
Deuyse a better by a due proporcioun (ture
Sake it was closed well I you ensure
with masonry, of compasse enuyroun
Ful secretly with stayres going doun
In myddes ý place w̄ turnyng whele cer-
And vpon that a pot of margelayne (tayne

with margaretes growing in ordinaunce
To shew hem self as folke went to and fro
That to beholde it was a great pleasaunce
And how they were accōpanyed with mo
Ne mombrylnesse and souenesse also
The poure penses were not disloged there
Ne god wot her place was euery where

The flore & bench was paued fayre & smoth
with stones square of many dyuers hewe
So well ioyned, that for to say the soth
All semed one, that none other knewe
And vnderneth the streames newe & newe
As syluer bryght springyn in such a wyse
That whēce it came, ye coude it not deuyse

A lytle whyle was I all alone
Beholdyng well this delectable place
My felowhip were coming euerychone
So must we now abyde for a space
Remembryng of many dyuers case
Of tyme passed, with syghes depe
I set me downe, and there I fell asleepe

And as I slept, me thought thercame to me
A gentlewoman, metely of stature
Of great worshyp she semed for to be
Attyred well, not hygh but by measure
Her countenaunce ful sad and demure
Her colours blewe, all that she had vpon
There came no mo but her selfe alone

Her gowne wel was enbraudred certaynly
with stones after her owne deuyse
In her purfyl, her worde by and by
(Bien et loyalment) as I coude deuyse
Than prayde I her in any maner wyse
That of her name I mizt haue remēbraūce
She sayd, she was called Perseueraunce

So furthermore to speake was I bolde
wher she dwelled, I prayed her for to saye
And she agayne full curtesly me tolde
My dwellyng is, and hath be many a day
with a lady: what lady I you pray-
Of great estate, thus warne I you (q̄ she)
what call ye her: Her name is Loyaltie

In what offyce stande ye, or in what degre-
(q̄ I to her) that wold I wete right fayne
I am (q̄ she) vnworthye though I be
Of her chambre her husher in certayne
This rod I beare, as for a token playne
Lyke as ye knowe the rule in suche seruyce
Appertaynyng is to the same offyce

She charged me by her cōmaundement
To warne you & your felowes euerychone
That ye shuld come there as she is present
For a counsayle, which shalbe now anon
Or seuen dayes be comen and gone
And furthermore, she bad that I shulde say
Excuse there myght be none, nor delay

An other thyng was not forget behynde
which in no wyse I wolde but ye knewe
Remēbre well, and beare it in your mynde
All your felowes & ye must come in blewe
Euery lyche able, your matters for to sue
with more, which I pray you thynke vpon
Your wordes on your sleues euerychone

And

And be not abashed in no maner wyse
As many ben, in suche an hygh presence
Make your request, as ye can best deuyse
And she gladly wyll gyue you audience
There is no grefe, nor no maner offence
wherin ye fele that your hert is displeased
But w̃ her helpe right sone ye shalbe eased

I am right glad (q̃ I) ye tell me this
But there is non of vs that knoweth ỳ way
As of your way (q̃ she) ye shal not mys
Ye shal haue to gyde you day by day
Of my felowes, I can no better say
Such one as shal tel you ỳ way ful ryght
And Dyligence this gentlewoman hyght

A woman of ryght famous gouernaunce
And well cherysched I tel you in certayne
Her felowshyp shal do you great pleasaunce
Her port is suche, her maner true & playne
She with glad chere wyl do her besy payne
To bring you there, now farewel I haue
Abyde sayd I, ye may not go so sone (done

why so (q̃ she) and I haue ferre to go
To yeue warnyng in many dyuers place
To your felowes, and so to other mo
And wel ye wot I haue but lytle space
Now yet (q̃ I) ye must tel me this case
yf we shall any men vnto vs call
Not one (q̃ she) may come amonges you all

Not one than sayd I, eygh benedicite
what haue I done, I pray you tel me that
Now by my lyfe I trowe but wel (q̃ she)
But euer I can beleue there is somwhat
And for to say you trouth more can I not
In questyons I may nothyng be to large
I medle no further than my charge

Than thus (quod I) do me to vnderstande
what place is there this lady is dwellyng:
Forsoth (q̃ she) & one sought al this lande
Fayrer is none, though it were for a kynge
Deuysed well, and that in euery thyng
The toures hye, full pleasaunt shal ye fynde
with phanes fresh, turning w̃ euery wynde

The chambres and parlers of a sorte
w̃ bay windowes, goodly as may bethoust
As for daunsyng, and other wyse disport
The galeryes ryght wel ywrought
That wel I wot, yf ye wer thyder brought
And take good hede therof in euery wyse
Ye wol it thynke a very paradyse

what hight ỳ place (q̃ I) now say me that
Plesaunt regarde (q̃ she) to tel you playne
Of very trouth (quod I) and wot ye what:
It may right well be called so certayne
But forthermore this wold I wyt rist fayn
what I shulde do as sone as I come there
And after whom I may best enquere.

A gentlewoman, a porter of the yate
Ther shal ye fynde her name is coũtenanũce
yf ye so hap, ye come early or late
Of her wer good to haue som acquaintaũce
She can you tel, how ye shal you auaunce
And how to come to her ladyes presence
To her wordes I rede you gyue credence.

Now it is tyme I parte you fro
For in good fayth I haue great busynesse
I wot ryght wel (q̃ I) that it is so
And I thanke you of your great gentlenesse
Your cõfort hath yeuen me hardynesse
That now I shal be bolde withouten fayle
To do after your aduyse & good counsayle

Thus parted she, and I left all alone
with that I sawe (as I beheld a syde)
A woman come, a very goodly one
And forth withall as I had her espyde
Me thought anon it shulde be the gyde
And of her name anon I dyd enquere
Ful womanly she yaue me this answere

I am (q̃ she) a symple creature
Sent frõ the court, my name is Diligence
As sone as I myght come I you ensure
I taryed not after I had lycence
And nowe that I am come to your presence
Loke what seruyce I can do or may
Cõmaunde me, I can no further say.

I thanked her, & prayed her to come nere
Bycause I wolde se how she was arayed
Her gown was blew dressed in good maner
with her deuyse, her worde also that sayde
(Tant que ie puis) and I was wel apayed
And than wyst I withouten any more
It was full true that I had herde before

Though

Though we toke now before a lytle space
It were full good (q̃ she) as I coude gesse
How farre (q̃ I) haue we vnto the place
A dayes iourney (quod she) but lytle lesse
wherfore I rede that we outwarde dresse
For I suppose our felowshyp is past
And for nothing I wold not we were ẏ last

Thã departed we at ẏ springyng of ẏ daye
And forth we went soft and easy pace
Tyl at the last we were on our iourney
So far outwarde, ẏ we myght se the place
Now let vs rest (q̃ I) a lytle space
And saye we as deuoutly as we can
A Pater noster for saynct Julyan

with all my herte I assent with good wyll
Moche better shal we spede whã we haue
Thã taryed we, and sayd it euery dyl (done
And whan the day was past far after none
we sawe a place, and thyder came we soone
which rounde about was closed w̃ a wall
Semyng to me ful lyke an hospitall.

Ther foũd I one had brought al myn aray
(A gentlewoman of myne acquayntaunce)
I haue meruayle (q̃ I) what maner way
ye had knowlege of al this ordenaunce
yes yes (q̃ she) I herde perseueraunce
How she warned her felowes euerychone
And what aray ye shulde haue vpon

Now for my loue (q̃ I) this I you praye
Syth ye haue take vpon you all the payne
That ye wold helpe me on with myne aray
For wit ye well I wolde be gone right fayn
Al this prayer nedeth not certayne
(q̃ she agayne) come of & hye you sone
And ye shall se anon it shalbe done

But this I dout me greatly, wot ye what
That my felowes be passed by and gone
I warne you (q̃ she) that are they nat
For here they shal assemble euerychone
Notwithstanding I counsayl you anone
Make you redy, and tary you nomore
yt is no harme though ye be there before

So than I dressed me in myne araye
And asked her, whether it wer well or no
It is ryght well (q̃ she) vnto my paye
ye nede not care to what place euer ye go
And whyles that she and I debated so
Came Diligence and sawe me al in blewe
Sister (q̃ she) ryght wel broke ye your new

Discretion purueyour.

Than went we forth and met at auenture
A yonge woman, an officer semyng
what is your name (q̃ I) good creature
Discretion (quod she) without lesynge
And where (q̃ I) is your most abydynge
I haue (quod she) this office of purchace
Chefe purueyour that longeth to this place

Acquayntaunce herbyger.

Fayre loue (q̃ I) in all your ordenaunce
what is her name that is the herbyger
Forsoth (q̃ she) her name is acquayntaũce
A woman of ryght gracious manere
Thã thus q̃ I, what straũgers haue ye here
But fewe quod she, of hygh degree ne lowe
ye be the fyrst, as ferforth as I knowe

Countenaunce porter.

Thus w̃ tales we came streyght to ẏ yate
This yonge woman departed was & gone
Came Diligence and knocked fast therate
who is without (q̃ countenaunce) anone
Truly (quod I) fayre syster here is one
which one q̃ she, & therwithal she lough
I Diligence, ye knowe me wel ynough

Than opened she the gate, and in we go
with wordes fayre she sayd full gently
ye are welcome ywis, are ye no mo
Not one quod she, saue this woman & I
Now than quod she, I pray you hertly
Take my chambre for a whyle to rest
Tyl your felowes come, I holde it best

I thanked her, and forth we go euerychon
Tyl her chambre without wordes mo
Came diligence and toke her leue anon
where euer ye lyst quod I, now may ye go
And I thanke you ryght hertely also
Of your labour, for which god do you mede
I can nomore, but Jesu be your spede

Than countenaunce asked me anon
Your felowship, where ben they, quod she
Forsoth q̃ I, they be coming euerychone
But where they are I knowe no certayntie
without I may hem at this wyndowe se
Here wyl I stande awayting euer amonge
For well I wote they wyll not be longe.

Thus

Thus as I stode musyng full busily
I thought to take good hede of her aray
Her gowne was blewe, this wot I verely
Of good fasion and furred wel with gray
Upon her sleue her worde this is no nay
which sayd thus, as my penne can endyte
(A moy que ie voy) written w̃ letters white

Than forthwithal she came streight to me
Your wordes q̃ she, fayn wold I ẏ I knew
Forsoth quod I, ye shal wel knowe & se
And for my word I haue none, this is trew
It is ynough that my clothing be blewe
As here before I had cõmaundement
And so to do I am ryght wel content

Largesse stewarde.
But tel me this I pray you hertely
The stuarde here say me what is her name
She hyght largesse, I saye you surely
A fayre lady and of ryght noble fame
whan ye her se, ye wyl report the same
And vnder her to byd you welcome all
There is Belchier marchal of the hall.

Now all this whyle that ye here tary styl
your own maters ye may wel haue in mind
But tel me this, haue ye brought any byll
Yea yea (quod I) and els I wer behynde
where is there one, tel me that I may fynde
To whõ ẏ I may shew my maters playne
Surely q̃ she, vnto the Chambrelayne

Remembraunce Chambrelayne.
The chãbrelayne quod I, saye ye trewe
Yea verely quod she, by myne aduyse
Be not aferde, vnto her lowly sewe
Yt shalbe done quod I, as ye deuyse
But ye must know her name in any wyse
Truly (q̃ she) to shewe you in substaunce
wouten fayning her name is Remẽbraũce.

The secretarye she may not yet be forget
For she doth ryght moche in euery thynge
wherfore I rede, whan ye haue w̃ her ymet
Your mater hole tell her without fayninge
Ye shall her fynde ful good and ful louyng
Tel me her name (q̃ I) of gentlenesse
By my good soth quod she, Auysenesse.

That (quod I) for her is passyng good
For euery byll and sedule she must se
Now good (q̃ I) come stãd ther as I stode
My felowes be cõmyng, yonder they be
Is it iape, or saye ye sothe (quod she)
In iape, nay nay, I say you for certayne
Se how they come togyder twayne and (twayne
Ye saye ful soth (quod she) that is no naye
I se commyng a goodly company
They ben such folke quod I, dare I saye
That lyst to loue thynke it verely
And for my loue I pray you faythfully
At any tyme, whan they vpon me call
That ye woll be good frende to hem all

Of my frendshyp q̃ she, they shall not mysse
And for theyr ease to put therto my payne
God yelde it you (q̃ I) but take you this
How shal we know who is the chãbrelayne
ẏ shal ye well knowe by her worde certayne
what is her word sister, I pray you saye
(Plus ne purroy) thus wryteth she alwaye

Thus as we stode togyther she and I
Euen at the yate my felowes wer echeone
So met I hem, as me thoust was goodly
And bade hem welcome all by one and one
Than came forth Countenaunce anon
Full hertely fayre systers all (q̃ she)
Ye be ryght welcome into this countrie,

I counsayle you to take a lytle rest
In my chambre, yf it be your pleasaunce
whan ye be there, me thynke it for the best
That I go in, and call Perseueraunce
Bycause she is of your acquayntaunce
And she also wyll tell you euery thynge
How ye shalbe ruled of your comyng

My felowes al and I, by one aduyse
were wel agreed to do lyke as she sayde
Than we began to dresse vs in our gyse
that folk shuld say we wer not vnpurueyd
And good wagers amõg vs there we layde
which of vs was attyred moost goodlyest
And of vs al which shulde be prayseed best.

The porter came & brought Perseueraunce
She welcõmed vs in curtyse manere
Thynke ye not longe (q̃ she) of youre atten-
I wol go speke vnto the harbigere (daunce
That she purueye for your lodging here
Than wyll I go vnto the Chambrelayne

To speke for you, and come anone agayne

And whan she departed was and gone
We sawe folkes comynge wythout the wall
So gret people, that nombre coude we none
Ladyes they were, and gentylwomen all
Clothed in blewe echone her worde wythall
But for to knowe her worde or her deuyse
They came so thycke, ý I ne might i no wyse

Wyth that anone came in Perseueraunce
And where I stode, she came streyght to me
Ye ben (q̃ she) of myne olde acquayntaunce
You to enquere the bolder wolde I be
what worde they bere eche after her degre
I you pray tell it me in secrete wyse
And I shall kepe it close on warantyse

We ben fyue ladyes (q̃ I) all in fere
And gentylwomen foure in company
whan they begyne to open her matere
Than shall ye knowe her wordes by and by
But as for me I haue none verely
And so I tolde Countenaunce here before
All myne aray is blewe, what nedeth more

Nowe than (q̃ she) I woll go agayne
That ye may haue knowleg, what ye shulde
In soth (q̃ I) yf ye wolde take the payne (do
Ye dyd ryght moche for vs, yf ye dyd so
The rather sped, the soner may we go
Great cost alway there is in taryenge
And longe to sewe it is a wery thynge

Than parted she, and came agayne anone
Ye muste (q̃ she) come to the chamberlayne
We be nowe redy (q̃ I) euerychone
To folowe you, whan euer ye lyst certayne
we haue none eloquence to tell you playne
Besechynge you we may be so excused
Our trewe meanynge, that it be not refused

Than wente we forth after Perseueraunce
To se the prees it was a wonder cace
There for to passe it was great combraunce
The people stode so thycke in euery place
Nowe stande ye styll (q̃ she) a lytell space
And for your ease somwhat I shall assay
If I can make you any better way

And forth she goth, amonge hem euerychone
Makyng a way, ý we myght through passe
More at our ease, and whan she had so done
She beckende vs to come, where as she was
So after her we folowed more and las
She brought vs streyght vnto ý chãbrelayne
There lefte she vs, and thã she went agayne

We salued her as reason wolde it so
Full humbly besechyng her great goodnesse
In our maters that we had for to do
That she wolde be good lady and maystresse
Ye be welcome (q̃ she) in sothfastnesse
And se what I can do, you for to please
I am redy, that may be to your ease

we folowed her vnto the chambre dore
Systers (q̃ she) come ye in after me
But wete ye well, there was a paued flore
The goodlyest, that any wight myght se
And furthermore aboute than loked we
On eche corner, and vpon euery wall
whyche was made of Burell and Crystal

wherin was grauen of storyes many one
Fyrst howe Phyllis, of womanly pyte
Dyed pyteously for loue of Demophone
Nexte after was the story of Tyslbe
Howe she slewe her selfe vnder a tree
Yet sawe I more, how in a rizt pytous caas
For Antony was slayne Cleopatras

That other syde was Hawes the chene
Full vntrewly disceyued in her bayne
There was also Annelida the quene
Upon Arcyte howe sore she dyd complayne
All these storyes were graued there certayne
And many mo, than I reherce you here
It were to longe to tell you all in fere

And bycause the walles shone so bright
wyth fyne vmple they were all ouer spread
To that entẽt folke shuld nat hurt her syght
And through it the storyes myght be rad
Than furthermore I went, as I was lad
And there I sawe wythout any fayle
A chayre set, wyth full ryche aparayle

And fyue stages, it was set fro the grounde
Of Cassydony full curyously wrought
with foure pomelles of golde, a very rounde
Set w̃ saphirs, as good as coude be thouzt
That wote ye what, if it were through souzt
As I suppose, fro this countrey to Inde

Another suche it were right farre to fynde

For wete ye well, I was ryght nere that
So as I durst, beholdyng by and by
Aboue there was a ryche cloth of estate
Wrought wyth the nedle full straungely
Her worde theron, and thus it sayd trewly
I endure to tell you in wordes fewe
Wyth great letters, the better I hem knewe

Thus as we stode, a dore opened anone
A gentylwoman, semely of stature
Berynge a mace, came out her selfe alone
Sothely me thought a goodly creature
She spake nothyng to lowde, I you ensure
Nor hastely, but wyth goodly warnynge
Make rome (q̃ she) my lady is comynge

Wyth that anone I sawe Perseueraunce
Howe she helde vp the tapet in her hande
I sawe also in ryght goodly ordenaunce
This great lady within the tapet stande
Comynge outwarde, I woll ye vnderstande
And after her a noble company
I coude nat tell the nombre sykerly

Of theyr names I wolde nothyng enquere
Further than suche as we wolde sewe vnto
Saue a lady, whyche was the chauncellere
Attemperaunce sothely her name was so
For vs nedeth wyth her haue moche to do
In our maters, and alwaye more and more
And so forthe to tell you furthermore

Of thys lady, her beaute to discryue
My connynge is to symple verely
For neuer yet the dayes of my lyue
So inly fayre I haue sene none trewly
In her estate assured vtterly
There wanted naught, I dare well assure
That longed to a goodly creature

And furthermore to speke of her aray
I shall you tell the maner of her gowne
Of clothe of golde, full ryche it is no nay
The coloure blewe of a ryght goodly facyon
In taberde wyse, the sleues hangyng adown
And what purfyl there was, & in what wyse
So as I can I shall it you deuyse

After a sorte, the coller and the bente
Lyke as Armyne is made in purfelynge
Wyth great perles full fyne and orient
They were couched all after one worchynge
Wyth diamondes in stede of powderynge
The sleues and purfell of assyse
They were made lyke in euery wyse

Aboute her necke a sorte of fayre rubyes
In whyte floures of ryght fyne enamayle
Vpon her heed set in the fayrest wyse
A cercle of great balays of entayle
That in ernest to speke wythout fayle
For yonge and olde, and euery maner age
It was a worlde to loken on her vysage

Thus comynge forthe to syt in her estate
In her presence we kneled down euerychone
Presentynge our bylles, and wote ye what
Full humbly she toke hem by one and one
Whan we had done, than came they al anone
And dyd the same eche after her manere
Knelyng at ones, and rysynge all in fere

And whã this was don, & she set in her place
The chamberlayne she dyd vnto her call
And she goodly comyng vnto her a pace
Of her entent knowyng nothyng at all
Voyde backe the preace (q̃ she) vp to the wal
Make large roume, but loke ye do not tary
And take these bylles to the secretarye

The chamberlayne dyde her cõmaundement
And came agayne, as she was byd to do
The secretarye there beyng present
The bylles were delyuered her also
Not onely ours, but many other mo
Than the lady wyth good aduyce agayne
Anone wythall, called her chamberlayne

We woll (q̃ she) the fyrst thyng that ye do
The secretarye ye do make come anone
wyth her bylles, and thus we wyll also
In our presence she rede hem euerychon
That we maye take good aduyce theron
Of the ladyes that ben of oure counsayle
Loke thys be done, wythouten any fayle

Whan the chamberlayne wyste of her entẽt
Anon she dyd the secretarye call
Let your bylles (q̃ she) be here present
My lady it wyll: Madame (q̃ she) I shall
And in presence she wyll ye hem call
Wyth good wyll I am redy (q̃ she)
At her pleasure, whan she cõmaundeth me

And vpon

And vpon that was made an ordynaunce
They ỳ came first her bylles shulde be redde
Full gentelly than sayd Perseueraunce
Rayson it wyll they were sonest spedde
Anone wythall, vpon a tapet spredde
The secretarye layde hem downe echone
Our bylles first she redde one by one

The first lady bearyng in her deuyse
Sans que iamays, thus wrote she on her byl
Complaynyng sore, and in full pytous wyse
Of promesse made, with faythful hert & wyl
And so broken ayenst all maner skyll
wythout deserte, alwayes on her partye
In thys mater, desyryng a remedy

Her next folowing, her word was i this wise
(Ung sanz chaũger) & thus she dyd cõplayne
though she had be guerdoned for her seruice
Yet nothynge lyke as she that toke the payne
wherfore she coude in no wyse her restrayne
But in thys case sewe vntyll her presence
As reason wolde to haue recompence

So furthermore, to speke of other twayne
One of hem wrote after her fantasy
(Uncques puis leuer) & for to tel you playne
Her complaynt was full pytous verely
For as she sayd, there was great reason why
As I can remembre thys matere
I shall you tell the processe all in fere

Her byl was made complaynyng in her gyse
That of her ioy, her comforte and gladnesse
was no surete, for in no maner wyse
She sayd therin no poynt of stablenesse
Nowe yll nowe wele, out of all sykernesse
Full humbly desyrynge of her hygh grace
Soone to shewe her remedy in thys cace

Her felawe made her byll, and thus she sayd
In playnynge wyse there as she loued best
whether she were wrothe or wele apayde
She might nat se whan she wolde fayneſt
And wrothe she was in verye ernest
To tell her worde, as ferforth as I wote
(Entierment vostre) ryght thus she wrote

And vpon that she made a great request
wyth herte and wyl, & all that might be done
As vntyll her that might redresse it best
For in her mynd there might she fynd it sone
The remedy of that whych was her boone
Reherſynge that she had sayd before
Besechynge her it myght be so nomore

And in lyke wyse as they had done before
The gentylwomen of our company
Put her bylles, and for to tell you more
One of hem wrote (cest sanz dire) verely
And her matere hole to specify
wyth in her byll she put it in wrytynge
And what it sayd, ye shall haue knowynge

It sayd god wote, and that ful pytously
Lyke as she was disposed in her herte
No myssortbue that she toke greuously
Al one to her was the ioy and smerte
Somtyme no thanke for al her good deserte
Other comforte she wanted non comynge
And so vsed, it greued her nothynge

Desyrynge her, and lowly besechynge
That she wolde for her seke a better way
As she that had ben her dayes lyuynge
Stedfast and trewe, and wylbe alway
Of her felawe, somwhat I shal you saye
whose byl was red nexte forthe withal
And what it ment, rehersen you I shal

(En diu est) she wrote in her deuyse
And thus she sayd withouten fayle
Her trouthe myght be take in no wyse
like as she thought, wherfore she had merualle
For trouth sõtyme was wont to take auayle
In euery matere, but al that is ago
The more pyte that it is suffred so

Moche more there was, wherof she shuld cõ
But she thought it to gret encõbraũce (playn
So moche to wryte, and therfore in certayn
In god and her she put al her affiaunce
As in her worde is made a remembraunce
Besechyng her, that she wolde in this cace
Shewe vnto her the fauour of her grace

The thirde she wrote rehersing her greuaũce
Yea, wote ye what a pitous thyng to here
For as me thought she felte great dysplesaũce
One mizt right wel perceyue it by her chere
And no wonder, it sate her passynge nere
Yet lothe she was to put it in wrytynge
But nede wol haue course in euery thynge

(Soyes ensure) this was her word certayne
And thus she wrote in a lytell space
There she loued, her labour was in vayne
For he was set all in another place
Full humbly desyrynge in that cace
Some good comforte her sorowe to appese
That she myght lyue more at hertes ease

The fourth surely me thought she liked wele
As in her porte, and in her behaunynge
And (bien moneste) as farre as I coude fele
That was her word tyll her welbelongynge
wherfore to her she prayed aboue all thynge
Full hertely to say you in substaunce
That she wolde sende her good continuaunce

Ye haue reherſed me these bylles all
But nowe let se somwhat of your entent
It may so hap, parauenture ye shall
Nowe I pray you whyle I am here present
Ye shall haue knowlege parde what I ment
But thus I say, in trouthe & make no fable
The case it selfe is inly lamentable

And well I wote ye woll thynke the same
Lyke as I say, whan ye haue herde my byll
Now good tell on, I hate you by saint Jame
Abyde a whyle, it is nat yet my wyll
Yet muste ye wete by reason and by skyll
Sith ye haue knowlege of ẏ was don before
And thus it is sayd without wordes more

Nothynge so lefe as dethe to come to me
For fynall ende of my sorowes and payne
what shulde I more desyre as seme ye
And ye knewe al afore it for certayne
I wote ye wolde, and for to tell you playne
without her helpe that hath all thyng in cure
I can nat thynke that it may longe endure

As for my trouthe it hath beproued wele
To say the sothe, I can say no more
Of full longe tyme and suffred euery dele
In pacience, and kepe it all in store
Of her goodnesse, besechynge her therfore
That I myght haue my thanke in such wyse
As my deserte serueth of iustyse

Whan these bylles were rad euerychone
The ladyes toke a good aduysement
And hem to answere by one and one
She thought it was to moche in her entent
wherfore she yaue hem commaundement
In her presence to come bothe one and all
To yeue hem her answere in generall

What dyd she than suppose ye verely?
She spake her selfe, and sayd in this manere
we haue well sene your bylles by and by
And some of hem pytous for to here
we wol therfore ye knowe all thys infere
wythin shorte tyme, our courte of parlyment
Here shall be holde in our palays present

And in all thys, wherin ye fynde you greued
There shall ye fynde an open remedy
In suche wyse as ye shall be releued
Of all that ye reherce here throughly
As for the date ye shall knowe verely
That ye may haue a space in your comyng
For dyligence shall it tell you by wrytyng

We thanked her in our moste humble wyse
Our felauschyp, eche one by one assente
Submyttyng vs lowly tyll her seruyse
For as we thought, we had your trauayle spēt
In suche wyse as we helde vs contente
Than eche of vs toke other by the sleue
And forth withal, as we shulde take our leue

All sodaynly the water sprange anone
In my visage, and therwythall I woke
where am I nowe thought I, al this is gone
All mased, and vp I gan to loke
with that anone I went and made this boke
Thus symply reherſyng the substaunce
Bycause it shulde not be out of remembraūce

Nowe verily your dreame is passyng good
And worthy to be had in remembraunce
For though I stande here as long as I stode
It shulde to me be none encombraunce
I toke therin so inly great pleasaunce
But tell me nowe what ye the boke do call
For I must wete: ẅ right good wyll ye shall

As for thys boke, to say you very ryght
Of the name to tell you in certaynte
Lassemble de dames, thus it hyght
Howe thynke ye: that name is good parde
Nowe go farewell, for they call after me
My felawes all, and I muste after sone
Rede wel my dreme, for now my tale is done

F I N I S.

The conclusions of the Astrolabie.

Litell Lowys my sunne, I perceyue well by certayne euydēces thyne abilite to lerne sciences, touchyng nombres, and proporcions: and also wel cōsydre I thy besye prayer in especyall to lerne the tretyse of the Astrolabe. Than for as moche as a philosopher sayth, he wrappeth hym in hys frēde, that cōdiscendeth to the ryghtfull prayers of hys frende: Therfore I haue gyuen the a suffycient Astrolaby for our orizonte, compowned after the latytude of Oxenford: vpon ý which by medyacyon of thys lytell treatyse, I purpose to teache the a certayne nombre of conclusyons, pertaynng to this same instrument. I saye a certayne of conclusyons for thre causes, the fyrst cause is this. Truste wel that all the conclusyons that haue be foundē, or els possyblye myght be founde in so noble an instrument as is the Astrolabye, ben vnknowen perfytely to any mortall man in this regyon, as I suppose. Another cause is thys, that sothlye in any cartes of the Astrolabye that I haue ysene, there ben some conclusyōs, that woll not in all thynges perfourme her byhestes: and some of hem ben to harde to thy tender age of ten yere to conceyue. This treatyse deuyded in fyue partes wyll I shewe the wonder lyght rules and naked wordes in englishe, for latyn ne canste thou yet but smale, my lytell sonne. But neuer the lesse suffyseth to the these trewe conclusyons in englysche, as well as suffyseth to thys noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusyons in greke, and to arabyens in arabyke, and to iewes in Hebrewe, & to the Latyn folke in Latyn: which Latyne folke had hem fyrste out of other dyuers langages, and wryte hem in her owne tonge, that hys to sayne in Latyne.

And god wote that in all these languages and in manye mo, haue these conclusyons ben suffycyently lerned and taught, and yet by dyuers rules, ryght as dyuers pathes leadē dyuers folke the ryght waye to Rome.

Nowe woll I praye mekely euery person discrete, that redeth or hereth thys lytell treatyse, to haue my rude entendyng excused and my superfluyte of wordes, for two causes. The fyrst cause is, for that curyous endytyng and harde sentences is full heuy at ones, for suche a chylde to lerne. And the seconde cause is thys, that sothly me semeth better to wryten vnto a chylde twyse a good sentence, than he forgette it ones. And Lowis if it so be that I shewe the in my lyth Englysche, as trewe conclusyons, touchynge thys mater, and not onely as trewe, but as many and subtyll conclusyons as ben yshewed in Latyne in anye commune tretyse of the Astrolabye, conne me the more thanke, and pray God saue the kyng that is lorde of thys language, and all that hym faythe beareth, and obeyeth euerych in hys degre, the more and the lasse. But consydreth well, that I ne vsurpe not to haue founden thys werke of my labour or of myne engyne, I nam but a leude compylatour of the labour of olde Astrologiens, and haue it translated in myne Englysche onelye for thy doctryne: and wyth thys swerde shal I slene enuye.

¶ The fyrste partye.

The fyrste partye of this treatyse shall reherce the fygures and the membres of thyne Astrolabye, bycause that thou shalte haue the greater knowynge of thyne owne instrument.

¶ The seconde partye.

¶ The seconde partye shall teche the to werken the very practyke of the foresayde conclusyons as ferforthe and all so narowe as may be shewed in so smale an instrument portatyke aboute. For wel wote euery astrologien, that smallest fractions ne wol not be shewed in so smal an instrument, as in subtyll tables calcused for a cause.

¶ The thyrde partye.

¶ The thirde party shal contayne dyuers tables of longytudes and latytudes of sterres, fyxe in the Astrolabye. And tables of the declinacyons of the sunne, and tables of the lon-

gytude of cytes and townes. And tables as well for the gouernacyon of the clocke, as for to fynde the altitude meridyan, and many an other notable cõclusyon after the kalenders of the reuerent clerkes frere John Som. and frere N. Lenne.

¶ The fourth partye.

¶ The fourth partye shall be a theorike to declare the meanynge of the celestyall bodyes, wyth the causes, the whyche the fourth partye in specyal shall shewe in a table of the verye meuynge of the moone frome one to one euerye day and euery sygne, after thyne Almanake. Upon the whyche table there foloweth a canone, suffycyent to teache as well in maner of workynge in the same conclusyons, as to knowe in oure orysonte, wyth whyche degre of zodiac the Moone arysyeth in anye latytude, and the arysynge in anye Planete after hys latytude fro the eclyptyke lyne.

¶ The fyfte partye.

¶ The fyfthe partye shall ben an introductorye after the statutes of oure Doctours, on whyche thou mayste lerne a great parte of the generall rules of theorike in Astrologye. In whyche fyfthe partye thou shalt fynde tables of equacyons of houses, after the latitude of Oxenforde, and tables of dignytees of Planettes, and other notefull thynges, yf god vouchsafe & hys mother the mayden, mo than I behete.

¶ The rynge.

¶ Thy Astrolabye hath a rynge to putten on thy thombe on thy ryght honde, in takyng of the heyght of thynges. And take kepe, frome hence forwarde I woll cleape the heyght of heuy thynge, that is take by the rule, the altytude wythouten mo wordes.

¶ The turet.

¶ Thys rynge renneth in a maner of a turet fastned to the moder of thyne Astrolabye, in a roume a space that it dystroubeleth not the instrument to hangen after hys ryght centure.

The moder of thyne Astrolabye is thickest by the brinkes, that is the vtmoste ryng with degrees: and al the myddle wythin the rynge shall be thynner, to receyue the plates for dyuers clymates, and also for the rethe, that is shape in maner of a nette, or els after the webbe of a loppe.

¶ The moder.

¶ The moder of thyne Astrolaby is the thickest plate perced wyth a large hole, that receyueth in her wombe the thynne plates compowned of dyuers clymates, and thy reete shapen in maner of a nette or of a webbe of a loppe.

¶ Of the foure lynes.

¶ Thys moder is deuyded on the backhalfe wyth a lyne, that cometh discendynge fro the rynge downe to the nethereste bordure, the whyche lyne, fro the foresayd rynge vnto the centre of the large hole amydde, is cleped south lyne, or els the lyne merydionall: And the remenaunt of this lyne downe to the bordure is cleped the northe lyne, or all the lyne of the mydnight.

¶ Of foure lynes Eest, West, Northe, and Southe.

Uerthwarte thys forsayd longe lyne there crosseth him another lyne of the same length, fro Eest to West, of the whyche lyne, frome a lytell crosse in the bordure vnto the centure of the large hole, is cleped the Eest lyne, or els the lyne oriental: and the remenaunt of the lyne, fro the forsayd Orientall vnto the bordure, is yeleped the west lyne, or the lyne occidentall. ¶ Nowe hast thou here the foure quarters of thyn Astrolabye, deuyded after the foure principal plages or quarters of the fyrmament.

¶ Whyche is the ryght syde, and whyche is the lyfte.

He Eest syde of the Astrolaby is cleaped the ryght syde, and the weste syde is cleaped the lyft syde. Forget not this lytel Lowys. But ȳ rynge of thyne Astrolabye vpon the thombe of thy ryght hande, and than wyl hys ryght syde by towarde thy lyfte syde, and hys lyfte syde woll be towarde thy ryght syde. Take thys rule generall as well on the backe as on the wombe syde. Upon the ende of thys Eest lyne (as I fyrste sayde) is ymarked a lytell crosse, where as euermore generallye is consydred the entrynge of the Eest degre, in the whyche the sunne arysyeth.

¶ The

¶ The degrees fro the Eest lyne to the South.

Fro the lytell crosse vp to the ende of the meridionall lyne vnder the rynge shalte thou fynde the bordure, deuyded with.xc.degrees, and by that same proporciō is euery quarter of thyn Astrolaby deuyded, ouer ÿ which degrees there ben nombres of augrym, that deuyden thylke same degrees fro.v.to.v. as sheweth by lōge strykes bytwen: of ÿ which longe strykes the space bytwene conteyneth a myle waye, and euery degree of thylke bordure cōteyneth foure minutes, that is to say, foure mynutes of an houre.

¶ Of the twelue sygnes, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, and the other.

Nder the cōpas of thilke degrees ben wrytten the names of the twelue signes, as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cācer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagitarius, Capricornus, Aquaries, and pisses. And ÿ nombres of the degrees of the sygnes ben wrytte in augrym aboue, and wyth longe diuysions from fyue to fyue, deuydeth from the tyme that ÿ signe entreth vnto the laste ende. But vnderstande wel, that these degrees of signes ben euerych of hem consydred of.lx.mynutes, and euerye mynute of.lx.secondes, & so forth into smale fractions infynite, as sayth Alcabucius. And therfore knowe well that a degre of the bordure conteyneth.iiij.mynutes, and a degre of a sygne contayneth.lx.mynutes, & haue thys in mynde.

¶ The cercle of the dayes.

Exte thys foloweth the cercle of the dayes, that ben fygured in maner of the degrees, that conteynen in nombre.CCClxv.deuyded also wyth longe strykes from.v.to.v. and the nōbres of augrim wrytten vnder the cercle.

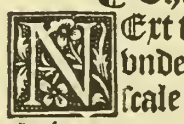
¶ The cercle of the.xij.monethes.

Exte the cercle of dayes foloweth the cercle of the.xij.names of the monethes, that is to say, Januarius, Februarius, Marcius, Aprill, Maius, Junius, Julius, August, September, October, Nouember, December. The names of these mōthes taken her names, some for properties & some by statutes of emperours, and some by other lordes of Rome. Eke of these mōthes, as lyked to Julius Cesar and Cesar Augustus, some were ycompowned of dyuers nōbres of dayes, as July & August. Then hath Januarius.xxxi.dayes. Februarius.xxviij. Marcius.xxxi.Aprill.xxx.May.xxxi. Junius xxx. August.xxxi. September.xxx. October, xxxi.Nouember.xxx.December.xxxi. Nathelesse all though that Julius Cesar toke two dayes out of Feueryre and put hem in hys month of July, and Augustus Cesar cleped the moneth of Auguste after hys name, and ordeyned it of.xxxi.dayes, yet truste well that the sunne dwelleth therfore neuer the more ne the lasse in one sygne then in another.

¶ The names of the holy dayes.

Then foloweth the names of the holy dayes in the kalender, and next hem ÿ letters A.B.C. on whych they fallen.

¶ The scale of the Astrolabye.



Ext the forsayd cercle of the A.B.C vnder the crosse lyne is marked the scale, in maner of two squyers, or els in maner of ledders that serueth by hys xxij.poyntes, and hys dyuysions of full many subtyll conclusyon of thys forsayde scale: For the crosse lyne vnto the bery angle, is cleped Umbra recta, or els vmbra extensa, and the nether party vmbra versa.

¶ The rule.

Then hast thou a brode rule that hath on euery ende a square plate, parted wyth certayne holes, some more and some lesse, to receyuen the streames of the sunne by day, and eke by mediacion of thyne eye, to knowe the altytude of the sterres by nyght.

¶ The pyn, whych is ymagined to be pole artyke and the horse.

Then is there a large pyn in maner of an

erylitre, that goth thorowe the hole that halt the tables of the clymathes in ý reeth, in the wombe of the mother, thorow whych pynne there goeth a lytel wedge, the whyche is cleped the horse, that strayneth all the partes to gether. Thys forsayd great pynne in maner of an erylitre, is ymagende to be pole artyke in thyne Astrolabye.

¶ For lynes on the wombe syde.

The wombe syde of thyne Astrolabye is also deuyded w̃ a longe crosse in foure quarters from Eest to west, frō South to North from ryght syde to left syde, as is ý backsyde.

¶ The degrees of the wombe syde.

The border of the whych wombe syde is deuyded fro the poynte of the Eestlyne vnto the poynte of the South lyne vnder ý rynge in.xc.degrees, and by the same proporcion is euery quarter deuyded, as is the backsyde, that amoũteth.CCC.lx.degrees. And vnderstande well that the degrees of thys border bene answerynge and consentynge to the degrees of equinoctiall that is deuyded in the same nombre, as euerye other cercle is in the hye heauen. Thys border is deuided also wyth xxiij.letters, and a smale crosse aboue the south lyne, that sheweth the.xxiiij.houres equales of the clocke. And I haue sayde.v.of these degrees maken a myle waye, and thre myle waye maken an houre, and euery degre of thys border conteyneth.iiij.mynutes, and euery mynute.lx.secōdes. Nowe haue I told the twyse and for the more declaracion.

¶ Of the thre principall cercles.

The plate vnder the reete is dyscryued w̃ thre cercles, of which the leest is cleped the cercle of Cancer, bycause that the heed of Cancer turneth euermore cō centryke vpon the same cercle. In thys halfe of Cancer is the greatest declinacion northewarde of the sonne, and therfore is he yclypped Solsticium of sommer, whych declinacion after Ptholome, is.xxiij.degrees and.l.minutes, as well in Cancer as in Capricorne. Thys sygne of Cancer is cleped the tropyke of sommer of tropos, that is to sayne ayenwarde. The mydle cercle in wydnesse of this iij.is cleped ý cercle equinoctial, vpon which turneth euer more ý heedes of Aries and Libra. And vnderstande well, that euermore thys cercle equinoctiall turneth iustly fro verye Eest to verye west, as I haue shewed in the sphere solide. Thys same cercle is cleped also the wayer of the daye, for when ý sunne is in the hedde of Aries and Libra, then bene dayes and nyghtes lyke of lengthe in all the worlde, and therfore bene these two sygnes called equinoctis. And all that moueth wyth in these heedes of Aries and Libra, is ycalled northwarde, and all that meueth wythoute these heedes, hys meuynge is cleped Southwarde, as for ý equinoctiall, take kepe of the latytudes North and South, & forget it not By thys cercle equinoctial ben consydred the xxiiij.houres of the clocke, for euermore the a rysynge of.xv.degrees of the equinoctial maketh an houre equal of the clocke. Thys equinoctiall is cleped the mydwaye of the fyrste meuynge, or els of the sunne. And note that the fyrst meuynge is cleped meuynge of the fyrst mouable of the eyght sphere, whych meuynge is fro Eest to weste, and agayne into Eest. Also it is cleped gyrdell of the fyrst meuyng, for it departeth the fyrst mouable, that is to sayne, the sphere in two like parties euē dystante fro the poles of thys worlde. The wydest of these thre cercles principall is cleped ý cercle of Capricorne, and turneth euermore concentryke vpon the same cercle. In the heed of thys forsayd Capricorne is ý greatest declinacyon Southwarde of the sunne, and therfore it is cleped Solsticium of wynter. Thys sygne of Capricorne is also cleped the tropyke of wynter, for then begynneth ý sunne to come agayne to vs warde.

¶ Of the almicanteras, the sygnet, and what is thyne orizonte.

Vpon thys forsayde plate ben compased certayne cercles, that hyghten almicanteras: of whyche some of hem semen parfyte cercles, and some semen impar fyte. The centure that standeth amydbest the narowest cercle is cleped the sygnet. And the nethereest cercle, that deuydeth the two emysperies that is the partye of the heauen aboue the erth, and the partie byneth.

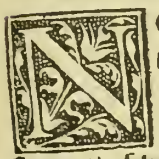
These

These almicãteras ben compowned by two & two, all be it so that on dyuers astrolabies some almycanteras ben deuyded by one, and some by two, and some by thre, after ÿ quantyte of the Astrolabye. Thys foresayd signet is ymagined to be the verye poynte ouer the crowne of thy heed, and also thys sygnet is the very pole of the orizonte in euery region.

¶ What ben thyne azimutes.

From thys sygnet (as it semeth) there comen croked strykes, lyke to the clawes of a loppe, or els lyke to ÿ werk of a womãs calle in keruynge ouerthwarte the almycanteras, and these same strykes or dyuysions ben cleped Azimutes, and they deuyden the orizontes on thyne Astrolabye in .xxiiij. dyuysions. And these azimutes serue to know the costes of the fyrmament, and to other conclusyons, as for to knowe the sygnet of the sunne and of euery sterre.

¶ Of the .xij. houres of the planetes.



Exte these azimutes, vnder the cercle of Cãcer, ben the .xij. dyuysions embolyke, moche lyke to the shap of the azimutes that shewen the spaces of houres of planetes.

¶ Thy reete or els thy zodiake.

Thy reete of thyn Astrolaby which is thy zodiake shapen in maner of a nette or of a loppe webbe, after ÿ olde dyscripcyon, whych ÿ mayste turne vp and downe as thy selfe lyketh, conteyneth certayne nõbre of sterres fyxe, wyth her longitudes and latitudes determinate, yf so be that the maker haue not erred. The names of the sterres ben written in the margin of thy reete there they syt, of the whych sterres the smale poynte is cleped the centure. And vnderstande, that all the sterres syttyng wythin the zodiake of thyne astrolabye, bene cleped sterres of the north, for they arysen by the north eest lyne, and all ÿ remnaunt fyxes out of the zodiake, ben ycleped sterres of the southe, but I saye not that they arysen all by the south eest lyne, wytnesse of Aldeberã and also Algomysa. Generally vnderstande thys rule, that thylke sterres that bene cleped sterres of ÿ north, arysen rather thẽ the degre of her longitude, and all the sterres of the south arysen after the degree of her longitude, that is to sayne, sterres in thyne astrolabye. The measure of longitude of sterres ytaken in the lyne ecliptyke of heauen, vnder ÿ whych lyne when that the sunne and the moone ben line rygh, els in the superfycie of thys lyne, then is the eclyps of the sunne or of the moone, as I shall declare & eke the cause why: but sothlye the eclyptike lyne of thy zodyake is the vtterest bordure of ÿ zodiake there thy degrees bene marked. The zodiake of thy astrolaby is shapen as a compace, whych that conteyneth a large brede, as after the quantyte of thy astrolabye, in ensemple that the zodyake of heuen is ymagyned to be a superfycyes, conteynynge the latitude of 12 sygnes, where as al the remnaunt of cercles in heauen ben ymagyned very lynes wythouten any latytude a myddes the celestyall zodiake is ymagyned a lyne, whych that is cleped ÿ eclyptyke lyne vnder the whych lyne is euermore the waye of the sunne. Thus ben there 6 degrees of the zodiake of that one syde of the lyne, and 6 degrees on that other. The zodiake is deuyded in 12 princypall deuysyons, that departen the 12 sygnes, and for ÿ straytnesse of thyne astrolabye, then is euery smale dyuisyon in a sygne yparted by two degrees and two, I meane degrees conteynynge 60 mynutes, & thys forsayd heuenysh zodiake is cleped the cercle of the sygnes, or the cercle of beestes. For zodiake in language of greke sowneth beestes in laten tonge, and in the zodiake ben the 22 sygnes that haue names of beestes, bycause when the sunne entreth in any of the sygnes, he taketh the propertie of suche beestes, or els for that the sterres that ben there ben fired ben disposed in sygne of beestes or shape lyke beestes, or els whan the planettes ben vnder the signes they trãsmue vs by her influences, operacions, and effectes, lyke to operacions of beestes: And vnderstande also, that whan an hote planet cometh in to an hote signe, thã entreth his hete, and if a planet be colde, than amenuseth his coldenesse, bycause of the hotte sygne: And by this conclusyon mayst thou taken ensample in al sygnes, be they moiste or drie, mouable or fyxe, reckenynge the qualyte of the planettes as

I fyrst sayd. And euerych of these 12 sygnes hath respecte to a certayne parcel of the body of a man, and hath it in gouernaunce: as Aries hath thyne heed, and Taurus thy necke and thy throte, Gemini thyne arme holes & thyne armes, and so forth, as shalbe shewed more playnly in the fyfth partye of thys treatyse. The zodiake the whyche is partie of the eyght sphere, ouerkerueth the equinoctiall, & he ouerkerueth hym agayne in euen partes, and that one halfe declyneth southwarde, & that other northwarde, as playnly declareth the treatyse of the sphere.

¶ The labell.

Then haste thou a labell that is shapen lyke a rule, saue that it is streyght and hathe no plates on eyther ende, but wyth the smale poynte of the forsayde labell shalte thou calcule the equacions in ỳ bordure of thyne Astrolabye as by thyne almury.

¶ The almury, the dentycle of Capricorne, or els the calculere.

Thyne almury is cleped the dẽtycle of Capricorne, or els the calculere, thys same almury set fyre in the heed of Capricorne, and it serueth of many a necessary cõclusion in equacion of thynges, as shalbe shewed.

¶ Here begynne the conclusyons of thyne Astrolabye to fynde the degre in the wbych the sunne is day by day, after hys course aboute.

RECken and knowe which is the day of the moneth, and lay thy rule vpõ the same daye, and then woll the very poynte of thy rule verely sytten on the bordure vpon the degre of the sonne. Ensample as thus. The yere of our lord 1391 ỳ 12 day of Marche at myddaye, I wolde knowe the degre of the sunne, I soughte in the backhalf of myne Astrolabye, and founde the cercle of the dayes the whych I knewe by the names of the monthes writtẽ vnder the same cerkle: tho layde I my rule ouer the foresayd daye, and founde the poynte of my rule in the border vpõ the fyrst degre of Aries, a lytel within the degree: and thus knewe I this conclusyon. Another daye I wolde knowe ỳ degre of my sunne, and thys was at mydday in the 13 daye of Decembre, I foũde the day of the moneth in maner as I sayd: tho layde I my rule vpon the forsayd 13 daye, and foũde the poynte of my rule vpõ the fyrst degree of Capricorne, a lytell wythin the degre, and then had I of this conclusion the very experience.

¶ To knowe the altytude of the sunne eyther of celestiall bodyes.

PUt the rynge of thyne Astrolabye vpon thy ryght thombe, and tourne thy lyfte syde againe the light of ỳ sunne and remeue thy rule vp and dowue tyll the streame of the sunne shyne thorowe both holes of the rule: Loke then howe many degrees thys rule is areysed fro the lytel crosse vpõ the eest lyne, and take there the altytude of thy sunne: and in thys same wyse mayste thou knowe by nyght ỳ altytude of ỳ moone or of the bryght sterres. Thys chapiter is so generall euer in one ỳ there nedeth no more declaracion, but forget it not.

¶ To knowe the degree of the sunne and of thy zodiake, by the daye in the backsyde of thyne Astrolabye.

Then yf thou wylte wete the rekenynge to knowe wbyche is the daye in thy calender of the moneth that thou arte in, laye thyne Astrolabye, that is to saye the allydatha, vpon the daye in the calender of thyne Astrolabye, and he shall shewe the thy degree of the sunne.

¶ To know euery tyme of the daye by lyght of the sunne, & euery tyme of the nyght by the sterres fyre, & eke to knowe by nyght or by daye the gree of the sygne that ascendeth on the eest orizont, wbych is cleped comenly ascendent.

TAke the altytude of the sun when the lyfte, as I haue sayde and set the degre of the sunne (in case that it be before the myddle of the daye) amonge thyne Almicanteras

on

on the eest syde of thyne astrolabye: and yf it be after the mydle of the day, set the degre of the sunne vpon the west syde. Take thys maner of settynge for a generall rule ones for euer. And when thou hast ysette ý degre of the sunne vpon as many almycāteras of heyght as was the sunne, taken by thy rule, lay ouer thy label vpon the degre of the sunne, & then woll the poynte of the labell sytten in the bordure vpon the very tyde of the daye. Ensample of thys. The yere of our lorde 1391 the 12 day of Marche, I wolde knowe the tyde of the daye, I toke the altitude of my sunne, & founde that it was 25 degrees, and 30 mynutes of heyght of ý bordure in the backsyde, tho turned I myne astrolabye, and bycause it was before myddaye I turned my reete, & set the degre of the sunne, that is to saye, the fyrst degre of Aries in the right syde in myne astrolabye, vpon the 25 degree and 30 mynutes of heyght, amonge my almycanteras: Tho layde I my labell vpō the degree of my sunne, and founde the poynte of my labell in the bordure on the capitale letter, that is cleped an X. Tho reckened I all the capitall letters fro ý lyne of mydnyght vnto the forsayd letter X. and founde it was 9 of the clocke of the daye. Tho loked I ouer my eest orizont & founde there the 12 degre of Geminius ascēdynge, whych that I toke for myne ascendēt and in thys wyse had I the experience for euermore in whych maner I shulde knowe ý tyde of the daye, and eke myne ascendēt. Tho wolde I wete that same nyght folowynge the houre of the nyght, and wrought in thys wyse: amōge an heape of sterres it lyked me to take the altytude of the fayre whyte sterre that is cleaped the Alhabor, and foūde her sytynge on the weste syde of the lyne of mydde day 18 degrees of heyght, taken by my rule on the backsyde. Tho set I the cēture of thys alhabor vpon 18 degrees amonge my almycanteras vpon the westsyde, bycause that he was founde vpon the weste syde: Tho layde I my label ouer the degree of the sunne, that was dyscended vnder the weste orizont, and reckened al the letters capitalles fro the lyne of myddaye vnto ý poynte of my labell in the bordure, and founde that it was after noone, passed 7 of the clocke the space of 11 degrees. Tho loked I downe vpon my eest orizonte, & foūde there 20 degrees of Libra ascendyng whome I toke for myne ascendent, and thus lerned ones for euer, to knowe in whych maner I shulde come to the houre of the nyghte and to myne ascendent, as verely as maye be taken by so smale an instrument. But natheleſſe thys rule in generall wyll I warne the for euer: Ne make thou neuer none ascendēt at noone of the daye. Take a iuste ascendent of thyne Astrolabye, and haue sette iustlye a clocke, when any celestial body, by the which thou wenest gouerne thilke thinges, ben nye the southe lyne: for trust well, when ý sunne is nere the meridional lyne, the degree of the sunne remeueth so longe concentryke vppon thyne almycanteras, that sothely thou shalte erre fro the iuste ascendent. The same conclusyon say I by my centure of my sterre fyxe by the nyght, & moreouer by experience I wote well that fro our orizonte fro eleuen of the clocke vnto one in takynge of the iuste ascendent in a portatyke astrolabye, it is to harde to knowe, I meane from eleuen of ý clocke before noone, tyll one of the clocke nexte folowynge: and for the more declaracion lo here thy fygure next after thys rule that foloweth

¶ To knowe the degree of the sunne in thy zodiake by the dayes in the backsyde of thyne Astrolabye.

Then thou wolte weten to recken and knowe whych is the daye of the moneth that thou arte in, and laye the rule of thy Astrolabye, that is to saye the allidatha vpō the daye in the calender of thyne astrolaby, and he shal shewe the thy degre of the sunne.

¶ Speciall declaracion of the ascendent.

The ascendent sothly, is as well in all natiuites as in questions, and as in elections ofte tymes is a thynge, whych that these astrologiens greatly obseruen, wherfore me semeth conuenient, sens I speke of the ascendent, to make of it a speciall declaracion. The ascendent sothly to take it at the largest, is thylke degree that ascendeth at any of these forsayd tymes on ý eest orizont: and therfore, yf that any planet ascende at thilke same tyme in the

forsayde

forsaid same gre of his lōgitude, mē say ȳ the ylkeplanet is in horoscopo, but sothly ȳ house of ȳ ascendent, that is to say, ȳ fyrst house or theest angle, is a thynge more brode & large, for after the statutes of astrologiens, what celestiall body that is 5 degrees aboue thylke degree that ascendeth on the orizont, or with in that nombre, that is to sayne nere the degree that ascendeth, yet reckē they thylke planette in the ascendent, & what planet that is vnder thylke degree that ascendeth the space of 15 degrees, yet sayne they that planette is lyke to hym that is the houre of the ascendēt. But sothly yf he passe the boundes of the forsayd spaces aboue or byneth, they sayne that thylke planette is fallynge fro the ascendent: yet saine these astrologiens that the ascendēt and eke the lorde of the ascendent, may be sha pē for to be fortunate or infortunate: as thus A fortunate ascendent clepen they when that no wycked planette of Saturne or Mars, or els the tayle of the dragon is in the house of the ascendent, ne that no wycked planette haue no aspecte of enemyte vpon the ascendēt but they woll cast ȳ they haue fortunate planette in her ascendent, and yet in hys felicite, and then saye they that it is well. Furthermore they sayne that fortune of an ascendent is the contrary of these forsayd thinges. The Lorde of the ascendent sayne they, that he is fortunate when he is in good place for the ascendent, and eke the lorde of the ascendent is in an angle or in a succedēt where he is in his dygnite, and confortet wyth frendely aspectes receyued, and eke he that maye se the ascē dent not retrograde ne combuste, ne ioyned wyth no shrewe in the same sygne, ne that he be not in his dyscencion, ne reigned w̄ no planette in hys dyscencions, ne haue vpon hym none aspecte infortunate, & then they sayne that he is well. Natheleſſe these bene obseruaunces of Judiciall mater and rytes of paynyms, in whych my spirite hath no faythe ne knowynge of her horuscopum, for they sayne that euerye sygne is departed in 3 euen partes, by 10 degrees and thylke porcyon they clepen a face. And althoughe a planette haue a latytude fro ȳ eclyptyke, yet sayne somfolke so that the planette aryse in that same sygne, wyth any degre of the forsayd face, in whych hys longitude is rekened. And yet is ȳ planet in horoscopo be in natiuitees or in election.

¶ To knowe the very equacion of the degrees of the sunne, yf it so be that it fall betwyxe to almicanteras.

Or as moche as the almicanteras of thyne Astrolaby ben compouned by two and two, where as some almycanteras in sondrye astrolabyes ben cō pouned by one or els by two, it is necessary to thy lernyng, to teche ȳ fyrst to knowe & wyrch w̄ thyne instrumēt: wher fore whē ȳ the degre of ȳ sun falleth betwene two almycāteras or els yf thyn almycāteras ben grauē w̄ ouer great a poynt of a cōpace, for both these thinges maye cause errour as wel in knowynge of ȳ tyde of ȳ day as of the very ascendent. Thou muste werken in thys wyse: set the degree of the sunne vppon the hygher almycanteras as of both, and wayte well where thy almurye toucheth the bordure, and sette there a prycke of ynke, sette adowne agayne the degree of the sonne vpon the nether almycanteras of bothe, & set there another prycke: remeue then thy almurye in the bordure euen amyddes both pryckes, and thys woll leaden iustlye the degre of ȳ sunne to sytte bytwene both ȳ almycanteras in hys ryght place. Laye then the label on the degre of the sunne, and kynde in the bordure the very tyde of the daye or of the nyght. And also verely shalte thou kynde vpō thy eest orizont thy ascendent.

¶ To knowe the sprynge of the dawnynge and the ende of the euenyng, the whych ben cleped the two crepusculis.

Sette the nadyre of thy sūne vpon 18 degrees of heyght amonge thyne almycanteras on the weste syde, and laye thy labell on the degre of the sunne, and then shall the poynte of the labell shewe the sprynge of the daye: also sette the nadyre of the sunne vpon the 18 degrees of the heyght amonge thyne almycanteras on the eest syde, and lay ouer thy labell vpon ȳ degree of the sunne, and wyth the poynt of thy labell kynde in the

bordure

bordure the ende of thyne euenynge, that is very nyght. The nadyre of the sunne is thilk degree that is opposyte to the degree of the sunne in the.320. sygne, as thus. Euerye degree of Aries by ordre, is nadyre to euery degree of Libra by ordre, and Taurus to Scorpion, Gemini to Sagittarius, Cãcer to Capricorne, Leo to Aquary, Virgo to Pisces. And yf any degree in thy zodyake be darke, his nadyre shall declare hym.

¶ To know the arche of the day, that some folke callen the daye artifyciall, fro the sunne arysynge tyll it go downe.

SEt the degree of the sunne vpon thyne Eest orizonte, and lay thy labell on the degree of the sunne and at the poynt of thy labell in the bordure set a prycke: tourne than thy reet about, tyll the degre of the sun syt vpon the west orizont, and lay the labell vpon the same degree of the sunne, and at ỳ poynt of the labell set an other prycke. Recken than the quantitie of tyme in the bordur betwixt both pryckes, and take there thyne arche of thy daye: the remnaunte of the bordure vnder the orizonte, is the arche of the nyght. Thus mayst thou reken both arches of euery porcion where that thou lykest, and by this maner of werkynge mayest thou se how longe that any starre fixe dwelleth about the erth, fro the tyme that he ryseth till he go to rest. But the daye naturell, that is to sayne. 24. houres is the reuolution of the equinoctiall, with as moche partie of the zodyake, as the Sunne of his propre mouing passeth in the meane whyle.

¶ To turne the houres inequalles, and the houres equalles.

KNow the nombre of the degrees in the houres inequalles, and departe hem by. 15. and take there thyne houres equalles.

¶ To knowe the quantitie of the day vulgare, that is to saye, fro sprynge of the daye vnto the very nyght.

KNow thy quãtitie of thy coepuscly's, as I haue it taughte in the chapiter before, and adde hem to the arche of the daye artificial, and take there thy space of all the hole daye vulgare vnto the very nyght. In the same maner mayest thou werke to knowe the vulgare nyght.

¶ To knowe the houres inequalles by daye

VNderstande well, that these houres inequalles ben cleped houres of the planetes: and vnderstande wel that somtyme ben they longer by daye than they be by nyght, and somtyme contrary. But vnderstonde thou well, that euermore generally the houres inequall of the daye, with the houres inequall of the nyght, conteyneth. 30. degrees of the bordure, the whiche bordure is euermore answerynge to the degrees of ỳ equinoctiall, wherfore departe the arche of the daye artificyall in. 12. and take there the quantitie of the houre inequall by daye, and yf thou abate the quantitie of the houre inequall by daye out of. 360. degrees, than shall the remnaunt that leaueth, perfourme the houre inequall by nyght.

¶ To knowe the quantitie of houres equalles.

THe quantities of houres equalles, that is to sayne, the houres of the clocke, ben departed by. 15. degrees all readye in the bordure of thy Astrolabye, as well by nyght as by day generally for euermore. what nedeth anymore declaracyon wherfore whan the lyst to knowe how manye houres of the clocke bene passed, or anye parte of any of these houres ben to comẽ fro suche a tyme to suche a tyme, by daye or by nyght, knowe the degree of thy sunne, & laye thy labell on it: than tourne thy reete aboute ioyntly with thy labell, and with the poynt of it reken in the bordre fro the Sunne arysyng into the same place there thou desyreest by daye as by nyght.

This conclusion wol I declare in the fourth partye of the last chapter of this treatyse, so openly that there shall lacke no worde that nedeth declaracyon.

¶ Specyal declaracion of the houres of the planetes.

Understande well that euermore from the arysynge of the Sunne tyll it goo to rest, the nadyre of the Sunne shall shewe the houre of the planete, and fro that tyme forwarde all the nyght, tyll the sunne aryse, than shall the very degree of the sunne shewe the houre of the planet. Ensample as thus. The. 13. daye of Marche fell vpon a saturday peraduenture, and at the rysynge of the Sunne I founde the seconde degree of Aries syttyng vpon myne eest orizont, albeit was but lytle. Than founde I the second degree of Libra nadyre of my sunne, discendyng on my west orizont, vpon which west orizont euery day generally at the sonne arysyng entreth the houre of any planet, vnder the forsayde west orizonte, after the whiche planet the daye beareth hys name, and endeth in the next stryke of the planete, vnder the forsayde weste orizonte: and euer as the sunne clymbeth vpper and vpper, so goeth hys nadyre downer and downer, & echynge fro suche strykes the houres of planetes, by ordre as they sytten in heauen. The fyrste houre inequall of euerye saturdaye is Saturne, and the seconde to Jupyter, the thyrd to Mars, the fourth to the Sunne, the fyfth to Venus, the syxt to Mercurius, the seuēth to the moone, and than ayen the eyght to saturne, the nynth to Jupiter, the 10. to Mars the enleuenth to the sunne, the twelfth to venus. And now is my Sunne gone to rest as for that saturday, than sheweth the very degre of the sun the hour of Mercury, entryng vnder my west orizonte at euen. And nexte hym succedeth the moone, and so forth by ordre planet after planet, in houre after houre all the nyght longe tyll the sun aryse. Now ryseth the Sunne the sundaye, by the morowe, and the nadyre of the sun vpō the west orizont, sheweth me the entryng of ȳ houre of the foresayde sunne. And in this maner succedeth planet vnder planet, fro Saturne vnto the moone, and from the moone vp agayne to Saturne, houre after houre generally: and thus knowe I this conclusyon.

¶ To knowe with whych degre of the zodiake any starre fyxe in thyne Astrolaby aryseth vpon the Eest orizont, although the orizont be in an other sygne.

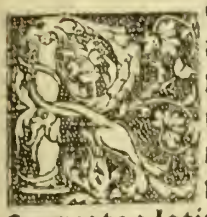
Set the centure of the starre vpon the Eest orizonte, and loke what degree of anye sygne that sytteth vpon the same orizont at the same tyme: and vnderstande well, that wyth the same degree aryseth the same starre. And thys maruelous arysyng with a stronge degree in an other sygne, is bycause that the latitude of the starre fyxe is eyther Northe or South fro the equinoctiall. But sothly, the latitudes of planetes ben comenly reckened fro the eclyptyke, bycause that none of hem declineth but fewe degrees out fro the brede of the zodyake. And take good kepe of thys chapiter of arysyng of celestiall bodyes, for there trusteth wel, that neyther moone neyther starre in our ambolyke orizont, that aryseth with the same degree of hys longitude, saue in one case, and that is whan they haue no longitude fro the eclyptyke lyne. But neuertheleſſe somtyme is euerych of these planettes vnder the same lyne.

¶ To knowe the declinacyon of euery degre in the zodiake fro the equinoctial cercle.

Set the degre of any sygne vpon the lyne meridional, and recken his altitude in the almycanteras fro the Eest orizont vp to ȳ same degree set in the foresayde lyne, & set there a prycke: Turne vp than thy reet, and sette the heed of Aries or Libra in the same meridionall lyne, and set there an other prycke. And whan that is done, consydre the altytudes of hem both: for sothly the difference of thylke altitude is the declynacyon of thylke degree fro the equinoctiall. And yf it so be that thylke degree be Northwarde fro the equinoctiall, than is his declinacyon North, and yf it be southward than is it South.

¶ To

¶ To knowe for what latitude in any regyon the almycanteras in my tables ben compowned.



Reken how many degrees of almicanteras in the meridionall lyne, be from the cercle equinoctiall vnto the sygnet, or els from the pole artike vnto the north orizonte, and for so greate a latitude or so smal a latitude, is the table compowned.

¶ To knowe the latitude of the sunne in the myddes of the daye, that is cleped the altitude meridian.

Set the degree of thy sunne vpon the lyne meridionall, and reken how many degrees of almicantras ben betwyxt thyne eest orizont, and the degre of thy sunne and take there thyne altitude meridian, that is to sayne, ÿ hyghest degre of the sunne as for that day. So mayest thou knowe in the same lyne the hyghest lyne that anye starre fyxe clymbeth by night, this is to sayn, that whan any starre fyxe is passed the lyne meridional, than begynneth it to discende, and so doth the sunne.

¶ To knowe the degre of the Sunne by the reet for a maner coriouste.

Eke busily with thy rule, ÿ highest of the sunne in the myddes of the day, turne than thyne astrolaby, and w̃ a pryck of ynke marke the nombre of the same altitude in the lyne meridionall. Turne than thy reet about tyll thou fynde a degre of thy zodiake according with the prycke, this is to sayne, syttyng on the prycke, and in soth thou shalt fynde but 2. degrees in all the zodiake of that condiciõ And yet thylke .2. degrees ben in dyuers sygnes. Than mayest thou lyghtly by the season of the yere knowe the sygne in whiche is the sunne.

¶ To knowe which day is lyke to other in length throughout the yere.

Oke whiche degrees ben ylyke from the heedes of Cancer and Capricorne, and loke whan the sunne is in any of thilk degrees than ben the dayes like of legth that is to sayne, that as longe is that day in the moneth, as was suche a daye in suche a moneth there varyeth but lytle. Also if thou take two dayes naturelles in the yere ylyke farre from either poyntes of the equinoctial in the opposyte partyes, than as long is the daye artificiall, on that one daye as on that other: and eke the contrary.

¶ This chapiter is a maner declaracion to conclusyons that foloweth.

Nderstande well, that thy zodiake is departed into halfe cercles, from the heed of Capricorne vnto ÿ heed of Cancer, and ayenwarde from the heed of Cancer vnto the heed of Capricorne. The heed of Capricorne is the loweste poynte, where as the sunne goth in wynter, and the heed of Cancer is ÿ hyghest poynt, in which the Sunne goeth in Sommer. And therefore vnderstande wel that any two degrees that bene ylyke farre from any of these two heedes, trust well, that thylke two degrees ben lyke declynacyon, be it Southwarde or Northwarde, and the dayes of hem be lyke of length, and the nyghtes also, and shadowes ylyke, and the altitudes ylyke at myddaye for euer.

¶ To knowe the very degree of anye maner starre straunge after his latitude, though he be indetermynate in thyne astrolaby, sothly to the trouth thus he shalbe knowen.

Take the altytude of thy starre whan he is on the eest syde of the lyne meridional as nygh as thou mayest gesse, and take an ascendent anon ryght by some maner starre fyxe which thou knowest, and forget not the altitude of the fyrst starre ne thyne ascendent. And whan that thys is doone, aspye dylygentlye whan thys same fyrste starre passeth any thinge to the southwestwarde, and

catche hym anon ryght in the same nombre of the altitude on the west syde of this lyne meridionall, as he was caught on the Eeste syde, and take a newe ascendent anon ryght by some maner fyre, the whiche that thou knowest, and forget not this seconde ascendent. And whan this is done, reken thā how many degrees ben betwixt the first ascendēt and the seconde ascendent, and reken well ÿ mydle degre betwixt both ascendentes, and set thylke mydle degree vpon thyne eest orizont, and than loke what degre syt vpon the lyne meridional & take there ÿ very degre of the ecliptyke, in whiche the starre standeth for the tyme. For in the eclyptyke is the longitude of a celestial body, rekened euen fro ÿ halfe of the heed of Aries vnto the ende of Pisces, and his latitude reckened after the quantitie of his declination North or south towarde the poles of this werke. As thus: yf itbe of the sunne or any fyre starre, recken this latitude or his declinacyon fro the equinoctial cercle, and yf it be of a planete, reken than the quantitie of his latitude from the ecliptike lyne, albeit so that from the equinoctiall maye the declinacion or the latitude of any body celestial be rekened after the syght North or South, and after the quantitie of his declinacion. And yet so manye the latytude or the declinacion of any body celestial saue only of the sunne, after his syght north or South. And after the quantitie of his declinacion be rekened from the ecliptike lyne, fro which lyne al planetes somtyme declyne North or South, saue onelye the forsayde sunne.

¶ To knowe degrees of longitudes of fyre sterres, after that they ben determinat in thyne astrolabye, if it so be that they ben truly set.

Set ÿ centre of the ster vpon the lyne meridionall, and take kepe of thy zodyake, and loke what degree of any sygne syt vpon the same lyne meridional at the same tyme, and there the degre in which the starre standeth, and with the same degre commeth the same starre vnto the same line from the orizonte.

¶ To knowe in specyall the latitude of oure centre, I mene after the altitude of Oxenforde & the heyght of our pole.

Vnderstande well, that as far is the heed of Aries or Libra in the equinoctial from our orizonte, as is the synet from the poole artyke, and as hye as the pole artyke from the orizont, as the equinoctial is farre from the synet, I preue it thus by the latitude of Oxenforde, vnderstande well that the heyght of our pole artyk from our north orizont is .51. degres, and .50. minutes, than is the synet from the pole artyke .38 degrees and .10. minutes, than is the equinoctial from our synet .51. degrees and .50. mynutes, than is our south orizonte from oure equinoctiall .38. degrees and .10. mynutes. Understande well this rekening also, forget not that the synet is .90. degrees of heyghte from the orizont, and our equinoctial is .90. degrees from our pole artyk. And this short rule is soth, that the latitude of any planete in a regyon, is the distaunce from the synete vnto the equinoctiall.

¶ To proue the latitude of any place in a regyon by the preeve of the heyght of the pole artyke in that saune place.

In some wynters nyght whan the firmament is clere & thycke starred, wayte a tyme tyll that euery sterre fyre syt lyne ryght perpendiculer ouer the pole artyke, & clepe that ster A. and wayte an other sterre that syt lyne ryght vnder A. and vnder the pole, and clepe that sterre F. and vnderstande well that F is not consydred but onely to declare that A that syt euer on the pole. Take than anone ryght the altitude of A from the orizont, & forget it not: let A & F goo farewell, tyll agaynst the dawnynge a great whyle, and come than agayne, and abyde tyll that A is euen vnder the poole vnder F, for sothly than wyl F syt ouer ÿ pole, take than eftsones, the altitude of A, from the orizont, and note as wel the seconde altitude as ÿ fyrst altitude. And whā that this is done, reken how many degrees ÿ the first altitude A exceded his altitude, & take halfe the

the ilke porciō that is exceded and adde it to his seconde altitude, and take there the elevacion of the poole, and eke the altitude of thy regyon. For these two ben of one nōbre, that is to sayne, as manye degrees as thy pole is elevate, so moche is the latitude of thy regyon. Ensample as thus: Parauenture the altitude of A, in the euenyng is. 62. degrees of heyght, than wyl the seconde altitude or the dawnyng be. 21. that is to sayn lesse than. 92. that was his syrste altitude at euen. Take than the halfe of. 62, and adde it to. 21. that was his seconde altitude, & than hast thou the heyght of thy pole, and the latitude of thy regyon. But vnderstande well to preue this conclusyon and many an other fayre cōclusyon, thou mayest haue a plomet hangyng on a lyne hygher than thyne heed on a perche, and that lyne mote hange euen perpendiculer betwyxt the poole and thyne eye, and than shalt thou se yf A be euen ouer the pole and ouer F at euen. And also yf F syt euen ouer the pole and ouer A or daye.

¶ An other conclusyon to preue the heyght of the pole artyke from the orizont.

Take any ster fyxe that euer descēdeth vnder the orizont in thylke region, and cōsydre his hyghest altitude, and his lowest altitude from the orizont, and make a nombre of these altitudes, take than and abate halfe ỳ nombre, and take there the eleuacyon of the pole artyke in that same regyon, and for the more declaracyon. ac.

o 82. 51. o 20.

¶ An other conclusion to preue the latitude of a region that ye ben in.

Vnderstande wel that the latitude of any place in a regyon is verelye the space betwixt the sygne of hem that dwellen there, and the equinoctiall cercle, north or south, takynge the measure in the meridionall lyne, as sheweth in the almicātras of thyne astrolabye, and thylke space is as moche as the pole artyke is hye in ỳ same place from the orizont. And than is ỳ deprei-syon of the pole artentyke beneth the orizōt the same quantitie of space, neyther more ne lesse, that yf thou desyre to knowe this latitude of the regyon, take the altitude of the sunne in the mydle of the day, whan the sun is in the heed of Aries or of Libra, for than moueth the sunne in the lyne equinoctiall, & abate the nombre of the same Sunnes altitude out of. 90. degrees, and than is the remnaunt of the nombre that leueth the altitude of the region, as thus. I suppose that ỳ sun is thilke day at noone. 38. degrees of heyght, abate than. 38. degrees out of. 90. so leaueth there. 52. than is. 52. degrees the latitude, I saye not this but for ensample. for well I wote the latitude of Oxenforde is certayne mynutes lesse. Now yf it be so that the thinketh to long a tarying to abyde tyl that the sunne be in ỳ heed of Aries or of Libra, than wayte whan that ỳ Sunne is in anye other degre of the zodiake and consydre the degre of this declinacion be northwarde from the equinoctiall, abate than from the sunnes altitude at noone the nombre of hys declinacion, and than haste thou the hyghest of the heedes of Aries and Libra, as thus. My sunne parauenture is in the. 10. degre of Leo almoost. 56. of heyght at noone, and his declinacion is almoost. 18. degrees Northwarde from the equinoctiall, abate than thylke. 18. degrees of declinacion out of the altitude at noone, than leaueth. 38. degrees, lo there the heed of Aries or Libra, and thyne equinoctiall in that regyon. Also yf so be that the sunnes declynacyon be Southwarde from the equinoctiall, adde than thylke declynacyon to the altitude of the sunne at none, and take there the heedes of Aries and Libra & thyne equinoctiall, abate than the heyght of the equinoctiall out of. 90. degrees, and than leaueth there. 38. degrees, that is the distaunce of the regyon from the equinoctiall of anye sterre fyxe that thou knowest, and take the nether elongacion lengthen from the same equinoctial lyne, and werke after the maner aforesayde.

¶ Declaracyon of the ascencion of sygnes, as well in cercle direct, as in obiyque.

The excellēce of ỳ sphere solyde amōges other noble cōclusiōs sheweth manifest ỳ diuers ascēciōs of signes in diuers places,

as wel in right cercles as in embolyke cercle These auctours wryten that thilke signe is cleped of ryght ascencyon, with whiche the more parte of the cercle equinoctial and the lesse parte of the zodyake ascendeth, & thilke signe ascendeth embolyke, with whiche the lesse of the zodiake equinoctial, and the more parte of the zodiake ascendeth, and euer mo the arche of the day and the arch of ꝑ nyght is there ylyke longe, and the sunne twyse euery yere passynge through the signet of her heed, and 2. somers and. 2. wynters in a yere haue these forsayde people, and the almycantras in her Astrolabye ben streyght as a lyne, so hath shewed in this fygure. The vtilities to knowe the ascencyons of sygnes in the ryght cercle is this. Trust well that be mediations of thylke ascencyons these Astrologiens by her tables and her instrumẽtes knowen verely the ascencion of euery degre and mynute in all the zodiake in the embolyke cercle, as shall be shewed. And note that this forsayd ryght orysont that is ycleped orizõte rectum, deuideth the equinoctial into ryght angles, and embolyke orizont where as the poole is enhaunced vpon the orizont, ouercommeth the equinoctial in embolyke angles.

¶ This is the conclusyon to knowe the ascẽcyons of sygnes in the ryght cercle, that is circulus directus.

SEt the heed of what sygne the lyst to knowe the ascending on the ryght cercle vpon the lyne meridionall, and wayte where thyne almury toucheth the bordure, and set there a prycke, tourne than thy rete westwarde, tyll the ende of the forsayde sygne, set vpon the meridionall lyne, and eftsones wayt where thine almury toucheth ꝑ bordure, & set there an other prycke. Recken than the nombres of degrees in the bordure betwyxt both pryckes, and take than the ascencyon of the sygne in the ryght cercle, and thus mayest thou werke with euery porcyõ of the zodyake.

¶ To knowe the ascencions of signes in the embolyke cercle in euery regyon, I meane in circulo obliquo.

SEt the heed of the sygnes whiche as the lyst to knowe his ascenciõ vpon the eest orizonte, and wayte where thyne almury toucheth ꝑ bordure, and set there a prycke, tourne than thy reete vpwarde tyll the ende of the same sygne, set vpon the eest orizonte, and wayte eftsones where as thyne almury toucheth ꝑ bordure, and set there an other prycke, reken than the nombre of the degrees in the bordure betwyxt bothe pryckes, and take there the ascencyon of the sygne in the embolyke cercle. And vnderstande well, that all the sygnes in the zodyake, from the heed of Aries vnto the ende of Virgo, ben cleaped sygnes of the north from the equinoctial, and these sygnes arysen betwyxt the very eest and the very north in our orizonte generally for euer and all the sygnes from the heed of Libra, vnto the ende of Pisces, ben cleped signes of the south fro the equinoctiall, and these sygnes arysen euermore betwyxte the verye Eest and the very South in our orizont, also euery sygne betwyxte the heed of Capryorne vnto the ende of Gemini ariseth in our orizont in lesse than two houres equalles, & these same signes from the heed of Capryorne vnto the ende of Gemini ben called fortuous signes or croked sygnes, for they rysen embolike in our orizont, and these croked sygnes bene obedient to the signes that ben of the ryght ascencion. These sygnes of the right ascencion ben from the heed of Cancer vnto the heed of sagitarye, and these signes arysen more vpryght than doeth the other, and therfore they ben called soueraygne sygnes, and euery of hem ariseth in more space than in two houres, of which signes Gemini obeyeth to Cancer, and Taurus to Leo, and Aries to Virgo, Pisces to Libra, Aquarius to Scorpio, and Capricorne to Sagittarye, and thus euermore two sygnes that ben farre from the heed of Capricorne obeyeth euerych of hem to other.

¶ To knowe iustly the foure quarters of the worlde, as eest, west, south and north.

TAke the altitude of thy sunne, whan thou lyst, and note weil the quarter of the worlde, in which the sunne is from

from the tyme by the almutes, tourne than thyne astrolaby and set the degree of the sun in ÿ almycantras of hys altytude, on thylke syde that the sunne standethe, as is in maner of takynge of houres, and ley thy labell on the degree of the sunne, and reken howe many degrees of the sunne ben betwene the lyne meridional and the poynte of thy labell and note well the nombres. Tourne than agayne thyne astrolabye, and set the poynt of thy greate rule there thou takest thyne altytudes vpō as many degrees in hys bordure from his meridionall, as was the poynte of thy labell from the lyne merydyonall on the wombe syde. Take than thyne astrolabye wyth bothe handes sadly and slylye, and let the sunne shyne throughe bothe holes of thy rule, and slylye in thylke shynynge ley thyne astrolabye couche adown euen vpon a plaine grounde, and than wyll the meridional lyne of thyne astrolabye be euen southe, and the Eest lyne wyll lye euen Eest, ⁊ the weste lyne west, ⁊ the Northe lyne Northe, so that thou werke softely and auysely in the couchynge, and thou hast thus foure quarters of the firmament. ⁊c.

¶ To knowe the altitude of planetes from the waye of the sunne, whether they bene North or south fro the waye aforesayd.

Loke whā a planete is on ÿ lyne meridionall, yf that her altitude be of the same height that is the degree of the sunne for that day and than is the planet in the verey waye of the sunne, and hath no latitude. And yf the altitude of the planet be hyer thā the degree of the sunne, than is the planette North from the waye of the sygne Southe, a quantyte of latitude as sheweth by thyne Almicantras, and yf the altitude be lesse thā the degree of the sunne, than is the planette Southe from the waye of the sunne, suche a quantyte of latitude as sheweth by thine almicantras. This is to sayne from the waye of the sunne in euery place of the zodiake, for on the morowe the sunne wyll be in another degree.

¶ For to knowe the sygnet for the arysyng of the sunne, thys is to sayne the partye of the orizonte in which the sūne ariseth.

Thou must fyrst consyder that the sūne aryseth not in the verey Eest sygnet, sometyme by North Eest and somtyme by South Eest, sothly the sunne aryseth euermore in the verey Eest in our orizonte, but yf he be in the heed of Aryes or Libra. Nowe is thyne orizonte departed in to. 24. partes of thy mynutes in sygnyfycacyon of. 24 partes of the worlde, thoughe it be so that shypmen reken all that parties. 32. Thā is there no more but wayte in the whych mynute that the sunne entreth at hys arysynge, and take there the signet of the rysinge of the sunne.

¶ The maner of deuision of thine astrolaby is thus enioyned, as in this case.

Fyrst it is deuyded in four places principally with the lyne that cometh fro the Eest to the weste, and than with another lyne that goth fro the South to the Northe, than is it deuided in smale parties of mynutes, as Eest and Eest by Southe, where that is the fyrste mynute aboue ÿ eest line, and so forth fro partye to partie tyl that thou come agayne to the Eest lyne. Thus thou myght vnderstande the signet of euery sterre in whych partye he aryseth.

¶ To knowe in which partie of the firmament is the coniunction.

Consyder the tyme of the coniunction by the kalender, as thus: how many houres that the cōiunction is fro mydday of the day before, as sheweth the canon of the kalender. Reken than that nombre in the bordure of thyn astrolaby, as thou were wonte to do in knowinge of the houres of the day or of ÿ nyght and lay thy label ouer the degre of the sunne than wyll the poynte of the labell sytte vpon the houre of the coniunction. Loke than in whyche mynute the degree of the sunne syt-

teth, and in that partye of the fyrmament is the coniunction.

¶ To knowe the sygnet of the altitude of the sunne.

THis is no more to saye, but any time of the daye take ÿ altitude of ÿ sũne, and by the mynutes in whych he ascendeth thou myghte se in whyche partie of the firmamente he is, and in the same wyse might thou se by night of any sterre wheder he syt Eest, west, or South, or any part bytwixe, after ÿ name of the minutes in which the sterre standeth.

¶ To knowe sothly the longitude of the mone or any planette that hath no latitude fro the tyme of the eclipstyke lyne.

TAke the altitude of the mone, and reken thyne altitude vp amonge thyne Almycantras on whyche syde that the mone standeth, and sette there a pricke. Take than anone ryght vpon the mones syde the altitude of euerye sterre fixe that thou knowest, and set his circle vpon his altitude amonge thyne almycãtras, there the sterre is founden, wayte than of whiche degree the zodiake is, to whyche the prycke of the altitude of the moone, and there take the degree in whyche the moone standeth. Thys conclusion is verey sothe of the sterres in thyne astrolabye, and standen after the trouthe. Some treatyse of the astrolabye maketh none exception whether ÿ mone haue latitude or none, nor whether syde of the mone ÿ altitude of the sterre be founde. And note yf the moone shewe her selfe by day, than maist thou wortch ÿ same cõclusion by the sũne as wel as by the sterre fixe.

¶ Thys is the werchynge of the conclusyon to knowe whether anye planet be directe or retrograde.

TAke the altitude of any sterre that is cleped a planette and note it well, and anone ryght take ÿ altitude of some sterre fixe that thou knowest & note it well also, and come agayne the thyrde or the fourth nyght nexte folowyng, for thã thou shalt perceyue well the meuynge of the planette whether he meue forwarde or bacwarde, and wayte well than whan the sterre fyxe is in the same altitude that she was whan thou toke her firste altitude of the forsayd planette and note it wel, for truste well yf so be that the planette be in the right side of the meridionall lyne, so that his seconde altitude be lesse than the fyrst altitude was, than is the planette directe, and if he be in the west side in that condition, thã is he retrograde, and yf so be that thys planette be in the Eest syde whan hys altitude is take, so that the seconde altytude be more than his fyrst altitude, thã is he retrograde and yf he be in the west side of the lyne medidionall, than is he derecte but contrary mouynge of these partyes is the course of the mone, for sothly the moone moueth the contrarye fro eyther planettes in her eclyptyke lyne, but in none other maner.

¶ The conclusyon of equacyons of houses after the astrolabye.

SEtte the begynnynge of the degree ÿ ascendeth vpon the ende of the 8 houre inequall, thã wyl the lyne of the seconde house sit vpon the lyne of mydnyght, remeue than the degree that ascendeth, and set hym vpon the ende of the 10 houre inequall, thã wyl the begynning of the 3 house syt vpõ the midnight lyne, bringe vp agayn the same degree that ascendeth fyrst, and set hym vpon the Eest orizont, and thã wyl the begynning of the 4 house syt vpon the mydnyght lyne. Take than the nadere of the degree ÿ ascendeth fyrst and set hym vpon the ende of the 2 houre inequall, and than wyl the begynning of the 5 house syt vpon the mydnyght lyne. Take than the nadere of the ascendente and set hym vpon the ende of the 4 houre inequal and than wyll the begynnyng of the 6 house syt vpon the mydnyghte lyne. The begynnyng

nynge of the 7 house is nadere of the ascendent and the begynnyng of the 8 house is nadere of the seconde, and the begynning of the 9 house is nadere of the 3 and the begynnyng of the 10 house is nadere of the 4 and the begynnynge of the 11 house is nadere of the 5 & the begynnynge of the 12 house is nadere of the 6 house.

¶ Another maner of equacyons of houses by the astrolabye.

Take thyne ascendent, and than thou hast the 4 angles, for wel thou wotest that the appolyte is of thyne ascendente, that is to saye, the begynning of the 7 house syt vpon the west orizonte, and the begynnyng of the 10 house vpon the lyne meridionall, & hys opposite vpon the lyne of mydnight, than lay thy label vpon the degre that ascendeth & reken than fro the poynte of thy labell all the degrees in the bordure tyl that thou come to the meridionall lyne, and departe al thylke degrees into 3 euen partes, & take there the euen porcyons of 3 other houses for to laye thy labell ouer euerye of these 3 parties, and thā thou might se by the label in the zodiake the begynninge of these 3 houses fro the ascendente, that is to saye the 12 nexte aboue thyne ascendent, and than the 11 house and the 10 house vpon the meridional lyne, as I ryste sayd the same wyse wyrtch fro the ascendent downe to the lyne of mydnyght, and thus thou hast thre houses, that is to saye, the begynnyng of the seconde, the thyrde, and the fourth house: than is the nadyre of these thre houses, the begynnynge of these 3 houses that foloweth.

¶ To fynde the lyne meridionall, to dwell fyxe in any certayne place.

Take a rounde plate of metall for warpinge the border the better, & make therupon a iuste compace a lytle wythin the bordure, and lay this rounde plate vpon an euen grounde, or some euen stone, or on euen stocke fixe in the grounde, and lay it euen by a rule in the centre of the compace, stycke an euen pynne or a wyre vpryghte, the smaller the better, and sette thy pinne or thy wyre by a plōme rules ende vpryght euen, and let thys pynne be no lenger than a quarter, of thy diameter of the compace fro the pynne, and wayte besyly aboute 10 or 11 of the clocke whan the sunne sheweth, whan the shadowe of the pynne entreth any thynge wyth the cercle of the compace one heer brede, and make there a pricke wyth ynke, abyde than styll wayting on the sunne after one of the clocke, tyl that the shadowe of the pynne or of the wyre passe anye thynge out of the cercle or compace, be it neuer so litle, and sette there a pricke. Take thā a compace and measure euen the middle bytwyxe both the pryckes, & set there a prycke: take than a rule and drawe a stryke euen fro the pynne vnto the myddle pricke, and take there the line meridional for euermore, as in the same place. And yf thou drawe a crosse ouerthwart the compace iustly ouer the line meridionall, than haste thou Eest and west, & per cōsequens the oppositife, that is south and North.

¶ Discription of the meridionall lyne, and of the longitudes & latitudes of cityes and townes as wel as of clymates.

Hys lyne meridional is but a maner discription of a lyne ymagined, that passeth vpon ꝑ poles of the worlde, & by the sygnet of oure heed: & it is cleped the sygnette, for in what place that any mā is at any tyme of the yere whan the sūne by meuyng of the firmament cometh to hys meridionall place, than is it the verey myddaye that we clepe noone, and therfore it is cleaped the lyne of myddaye. Than take hede that euermore of two cities or of townes, of whyche the one approcheth nerer the Eest than dothe the other towne, truste well that thylke two twones haue diuers meridians. Take kepe also ꝑ the arche of the equinoctial, that is conteyned & bounded bytwene the two meridians, is cleped ꝑ lōgitude of the towne. And if so be that two townes haue meridian lyke, or one meridian, than is the distaunce of hem bothe lyke farre: & in thys maner they chaunge not her meridian

meridian, but sothly they chaunge her almicanteras for the hauinsynge of the poole and the distaunce of the sunne. The longitude of a clymate may be cleaped the space of the erth, fro the begynnynge of the fyrst clymate vnto the last ende of the same clymate, euen directe ayenst the pole artike, thus say some auctours. And some clerkes say, that yf men cleape the latitude of a centre the arch meridian, that is conteined or intercepte betwixt the sygnette and the equinoctiall, than they say that the distaunce fro the equinoctial vnto the ende of the clymate, euen ayenste the poole artyke, is the longitude of the clymate for South.

¶ To knowe wyth what degre of the zodiake that any planette ascendeth on the orizont, where hys latitude be North or South.

KNowe by thine almynake the degree of the eclyptike of any signe, in whiche that the planette is rekened for to be and that is cleped the degree of his longitude. And knowe also the degree of hys latitude fro the eclyptyke, North or southe, and by these ensamples folowyng in especiall, thou mayst wirch wyth euerye signe of the zodiake. The longitude perauenture of Venus or of an other planet was of Capricorne, and the latitude of hym was northwarde.

Degrees fro the ecliptyke lyne, than toke I a subtyl compace, & cleped the one poynte of my compace A, and that other F, thã toke I the poynte of A, and set it in the eclyptyke lyne, and my zodiake in the degre of the longitude of heedes, that is to saye, in the heede of Capricorne, and than set I the poynte of F, vpwarde in the same sygne, bycause that the altitude was Northe, vpon the latitude of Venus, ẏ is to saye, in the degree fro the heed of Capricorne, and thus haue I the degrees betwyxe my two prickes, than layde I downe softly my compace, and set the degree of ẏ longitude vpõ the orizont, thã toke I and waxed my labell in maner of a payre of tables, to receiue distinctly ẏ pricke of my compace, than toke I thys foresayd labell, and layd it fixe ouer the degree of my longitude, thã toke I vp my compace & the pointe of A, in ẏ waxe of my label, as I coude gesse ouer the eclyptike lyne in the ende of the longitude, I sette the pointe ouer endelonge on the labell, vpon the space of the latytude inwarde and on the zodiake, ẏ is to say northward fro the ecliptyke: Thã layde I downe my compace, and loked well in the way vpõ the eclyptyke of A, and F, than turned I my reete tyl that the pricke of F, sate vpon the orizont: Than sawe I well that the bodye of Venus in her latytude of degrees septẽtrionals, ascendeth in the ende of degree fro the heed of Capricorne. And note that in thys maner thou myghtest werche wyth any latitude septemtrionall in al signes: But sothly the latitude meridional of a planet in Capricorne maye not be take, bycause of the lytle space betwyxt the eclyptyke and the bordure of the astrolabye, & sykerlye in all other sygnes it maye be take. Also the degree perauenture of Jupiter or of anye other planet was in the fyrste degree of Pisces in longitude, and his latitude was degrees meridionall. Than toke I the poynte of A, and set it in the fyrst degre of Pisces on the ecliptyke, than sette I the poynt downwarde of F, in the same signe, because that the latiude was South degrees, that is to saye, fro the heed of Pisces, & thus haue I degrees betwyxe bothe prickes. Than sette I the degree of the longitude vpon the orizont, than toke I my labell and layde hym fixe vpõ the degree of longitude, than sette I the poynte of A, on my labell euẽ ouer the ecliptyke lyne in the ende of the degree of the longitude, & I sette the poynte of F, endelonge on my label the space of degrees of the latitude outwarde fro the zodiake, that is to say, southwarde fro the ecliptyke toward the bordure and than tourned I my reete tyll the poynte of F, sate vpon the orizont, than saw I well that the bodye of Jupiter in hys latytude of degrees meridionall, ascendeth with the degre of Pisces in horescopo. And in this maner thou mayst wyrch wyth any latitude as I sayd fyrste, saue in capricorne. And thou wylte plye thys crafte wyth the arysinge of the mone, loke thou recken well the course of houre by houre, for she dwelleth in a degree of her longitude but a lytle whyle, as thou woste well: but neuertheleſſe, yf thou legen wel her bery meuyng by the tables, or after her

her course houre by houre, thou shalt do well ynough.

Umbra recta.

If thou wylt wyrche with Umbra recta, yf thou myghte come to the base of the towre, in thys maner shalt thou wyrch: Take the altitude of the towre wyth both hooles, so that the rule lye euē on a point. Ensample, as thus. I se him through the point of 4, than mete I ẏ space betwyxe me and the toure, and I fynde it 20 foote, than beholde I howe 4 is to 12, and I fynde it is the thyrde parte of 12. Ryghte so the space betwixe the and the toure is the thyrde parte of the altitude of the toure: thā thyse 20 foote is the highest of the toure, w̄ the addicion of thyne owne bodye fro thyne eye. If the rule fall on 5, than is 5 tymes 12 the hyghest of the toure.

Umbra versa.

If thou maist not come to the base of the toure, & thou fixe hym thorowe the nombre of 1, sette there a pricke at thy fote, thā go nere the toure, and se hym through at the poynte of 2, and set there another prycke, and than beholde howe 1 hath hym to 12, and thou shalt fynde that he hathe hym 12 sythes, than beholde how 2 haue hym to 12, and thou shalt fynd it 6 sythes, & therfore the space betwixe 2 pryckes is 6 tymes thyne altitude. And note that at the fyrste altitude of 1 thou settest a prycke, and afterwarde whan thou seest hym through at 2, there ẏ settest a prycke thā thou fyndest bytwene 80 fote, than thou shalte fynde that 10 is the 8 parte of 80, than is a foote the altytude of the toure, but yf it fall vpon another pointe, as thus. It falleth on 6 at the seconde taking it, whan it falleth on 4, than shalte thou fynde that 6 is the seconde parte of 12, and 4 is the thyrde part of 12 by the thyrde parte, ẏ is to saye, the space betwyxe 2 pryckes, twyse the heyght of the toure, and if the difference were 3, thā wolde it be thre times the height. Et sic de singulis Another maner wyrchyng by vmbra recta. If thou mayste not come by the base of the toure, wyrche in thys wyse: Set thy rule vpon 1 tyll thou se the altitude, and set at thy fote a pricke, and than set thy rule vpō 2, & so do in the same maner: than loke what is the difference betwyxe 1 and 2, and thou shalte fynde that it is one. Than mesure that space betwyxe the two pryckes, and that is the 12 parte of the altitude of the toure, and so of al other. 7

Umbra recta.

If thy rule fall vpon the 8 pointe on the ryght shadow, thā make the fygure of 8 than loke howe muche space of fote is betwyxe the and the toure, and multiply that by 12, and whan thou hast multyplyed it by the same nombre, than deuyde it by the nombre of 8, and kepe the residewe, and adde therto thy heyght vnto thyne eye, to the residue, and that shall be the very heyght of the toure. And thus mayste thou worche on the same syde from one to 12. &c. Umbra recta.

Another maner of working vpō the same side. Loke vpon what poynt thy rule falleth whā thou seest the toppe of the tour thorow the two holes, and thā mete the space from thy foote to the base of the toure, and ryghte as the nombre of the poynte hathe hym selfe to 12, ryghte so the mesure betwyxe the and the toure, hath him selfe to the heyght of the same tour. Ensample as thus. I sette case thy rule fal vpon 8, than is 8 two thyrde partes of 12, so is the space two thyrde partes of the toure.

Umbra versa.

To knowe the heyghte of the pointes of Umbra versa. If thy rule fall vpon 3 whā thou seest the toppe of the tour, set a pricke there thy fote stōdeth and go nere tyll thou mayste se the same toppe at the poynt of 4, and sette there another prycke, than mete howe many foote is betwyxe the two pryckes, and the heyght vp to thyne eye, and that shall be the heyght of the tour. And note that thre is the 4 parte of 12, and 4 is the 3 part of 12. Now passeth 4 the nōbre of 3 by distaunce of 1, therfore

fore the same space with thy heyght to thine eye, is the height of the toure. And yf it were so that there were two or thre distaunces in the nombres, so shulde the mesure betwixte the pryckes be twyse or thryse the heyght of the toure.

Umbra recta.

O knowe the heyght yf thou mayst not come to the base of the thinge, sette thy rule vpon what poynte thou wylte, so that thou mayste se the toppe of the thing through the two holes, and make a marke there as thy foote stōdeth, & go nere or farther, tyl thou mayst se it through another point, & make ther another marke, & loke what differēce is betwixt the two poyntes in the scale, and ryghte as that difference hath hym to 12, ryghte so the spaces betwyxt the two markes, hath hym to the heyght of the thynge. Ensample. I set the case ý thou seest it thorowe at the poynte of 4, and after at the poynt of 3. Now passeth the nombre of 4 the nombre of 3 the distaunce of 1, and ryght as thys difference of one hath hym selfe to 12, ryght so the mesure betwixt bothe the markes, hathe hym to the heyght of the same thynge, puttynge therto the height of thy selfe to thyne eye. And thus mayst thou werke from 1 to 12.

Umbra versa.

Urthermore, yf thou wylte knowe in vmbra versa, by the craste of vmbra recta, I suppose to take thine altitude at the poynte of 4 and makeste a marke, and than thou goest nere tyll thou haste it at the poynte of 3 and makest there another marke than muste thou deuide 144 by 4, the nombre that cometh therof shall be 36, and after druyde 144 by 3, & the nōbre ý cometh therof is 48, thā loke what difference is betwixt 36 and 48, and that shalt thou fynde 12, and ryght as 12 hath hym to 12, so the space betwixt the two pryckes, hath him to the altitude of the thynge.

Here endeth the conclusions of the Astrolabie.

The complaynt of the blacke knyght.

N May whan Flora the freshe lusty Quene
The soyle hath cladde, in grene, reed, & whyghte
And Phebus gan to shed his stremes shene
Amydde the bulle, wyth all the beames bryghte
And Lucifer, to chace awaye the nyght
Ayen the morowe oure orizont hath take
To byd al louers out of her slepe awake

And hertes heuy for to comforte
From dreryheed, of heuy nyghtes sorowe
Nature bade hem ryse, and hem disporte
Ayen the goodly glad grey morowe
And hope also, with sayntJohan to borow
Bade in dispite of daunger and dispayre
For to take the holsome lusty ayre

And wyth a syghe I gan for to abreyde
Out of my slomber, and sodaynly vp sterte
As he (alas) that nyghe for sorowe deyde
My syckenesse sate aye so nye my herte
But for to fynde socour of my smerte
Or at the leste some release of my peyne
That me so sore halte in euery veyne

I rose anone, and thought I wolde gone
Into the wodde, to here the bydes synge
whan that the mysty vapoure was agone
And clere and fayre was the morowyng
The dewe also lyke syluer in shynyng
Upon the leaues, as any baume swete
Tyl fyry Tytan wyth his persaunt hete

Had dryed vp the lusty lycour newe
Upon the herbes in the grene mede
And that the floures of manye diuers hewe
Upon her stalkes gonne for to sprede
And for to splaye out her leaues in brede
Agayne the sunne, golde burned in his spere
That down to hem cast he his beames clere

And

And by a ryuer forth I gan costey
Of water clere, as byrell or crystall
Tyll at the laste I founde a lytell wey
Towarde a parke, enclosed wyth a wall
In compace rounde, and by a gate small
Who so that wolde, frely myght gone
In to thys parke, walled wyth grene stone

And in I went to here the byrdes songe
Whych on the braūches, both in plaine & vale
So loude sange, that all the woode ronge
Lyke as it shulde shyuer in peces smale
And as me thought, that the nyghtyngale
With so great might, her voyce gan out wrest
Ryght as her herte for loue wolde brest

The soyle was plaine, smothe, & wōder softe
All ouerspread wyth tappettes that Nature
Had made her selfe: couered eke alofte
Wyth bowes grene, the floures for to cure
That in her beautye they may longe endure
From all assaute of Phebus feruent fere
Whych in hys sphere so hote shone and clere

The eyre attempre, and the smoth wynde
Of zepherus, amonge the blosomes whyte
So holsome was, and so norishing by kynde
That smale buddes, & rounde blosomes lyte
In maner gan of her brethe delyte
To yeue vs hope there frute shall take
Ayenst Autumpne redy for to shake

I sawe the Daphene closed vnder rynde
Grene Laurer, and the holsome Pyne
The Myrre also, that wepeth euer of kynde
The Cedres hye, vpryght as a lyne
The Fylberte eke, that lowe doth enclyne
Her bowes grene, to the erthe adoun
Unto her knyght called Demophoun

There sawe I eke the freshe hauthorne
In whyte motley, that so swote doth smel
Alche, fyre, & oke, wyth many a yonge acorne
And many a tree mo then I can tell
And me before I sawe a lytell well
That had hys course, as I gan beholde
Under an hyll, wyth quycke streames colde

The graueil golde, the water pure as glasse
The bankes rounde, the well enuyronynge
And softe as veluet the yonge grasse
That therupon lustely came spryngynge
The sute of trees about compasynge
Her shado we caste, closyng the wel rounde
And al the herbes growyng on the grounde

The water was so holsome, and so vertuous
Thorowe might of herbes growyng besyde
Not lyke the welle where as Narcisus
Yslayne was, thorowe vengeance of Cupyde
Where so couertly he dyd hyde
The grayne of dethe vpon eche brinke
That deth mote folowe, who ỳ euer drinke

Ne lyke the pytte of the Pegace
Under Pernaso where poetes slepte
Nor lyke the welle of pure chastyte
Whiche that Diane with her nymphes kepte
Whan she naked in to the water lepte
That slowe Acteon with her hondes fel
Onely for he came so nyghe the wel

But this welle that I here reherse
So holsome was, that it wolde aswage
Bollen hertes, and the venym peerce
Of pensyfeheed, with al the cruel rage
And ouermore refresshe the vysage
Of hem that were in any weryneſſe
Of great labour, or fallen in distresse

And I that had thorowe daunger & disdayne
So drie a thrust, thought I wolde assay
To taste a draught of this welle or twayne
Wy bytter langour if it might alaye
And on the banke anon downe I laye
And with myn heed, vnto the welle I raught
And of the water dranke I a good draught

Wherof me thought I was refresshed wele
Of the brennyng that sate so nye my herte
That verily anon I gan to fele
An huge parte released of my smerte
And therwithal anon vp I sterte
And thought I wolde walke and se more
Forthe in the parke, and in the holtes hore

And throngh a launde as I yed a pace
And gan aboute faste to beholde
I founde anon a delectable place
That was beset with trees yonge and olde
Whose names here for me shal not be tolde
Amydde of whiche stoode an herber grene

That bedded was, with colours new & clene

Thys herber was full of floures gende
Into the whych, as I beholde gan
Betwyxe an hulfere and a wodbende
As I was ware, I sawe where lay a man
In blacke, and whyte coloure pale and wan
And wonder deedly also of hys hewe
Of hurtes grene, and fresche woundes newe

And ouermore dystrayned wyth sycknesse
Besyde all thys he was full greuously
For vpon hym he had an hote accesse
That daye by daye hym choke full pytously
So that for constraynynge of hys malady
And hetly wo, thus lyenge all alone
It was a dethe for to here hym grone

Wherof astonyed, my fote I gan wythdrawe
Greatly wondrynge what it myght be
That he so laye, and had no felawe
Ne that I coude no wyght wyth hym se
Wherof I had routh, and eke pyte
And gan anone, so softely as I coude
Amonge the bushes priuely me to shroude

Yf that I myght in any wyse aspye
What was the cause of hys deedly wo
Or why that he so pytously gan crye
On hys fortune, and on vre also
Wyth all my myght I layde an eere to
Euery worde to marke what he sayd
Out of hys swough amonge as he abrayde

But first, yf I shulde make mencion
Of hys person, and playnly hym dyscryue
He was in sothe, wythout excepcion
To speake of manhode, one the best on lyue
There maye no man ayen trouth stryue
For of hys tyme, and of hys age also
He proued was, there men shulde haue ado

For one the best therto of brede and length
So well ymade by good proporcion
Yf he had be in hys delyuer strength
But thought and sycknesse were occasyon
That he thus laye in lamentacion
Grufke on the grounde, in place desolate
Sole by hym selfe, awhaped and amate

And for me semeth that it is syttyng
Hys wordes al to put in remembraunce
To me that herde all hys complaynyng
And all the grounde of hys wofull chaunce
Yf there wythall I may you do pleasaunce
I woll to you so as I can anone
Lyke as he sayd, reherce euerychone

But who shall helpe me nowe to complayne
Or who shall nowe my style gye or lede
O Niobe, let nowe thy teeres rayne
Into my penne, and helpe eke in nede
Thou wofull Mirre, ẏ kelest myn hert blede
Of pytous wo, and myne hande eke quake
When that I wryte, for thys mannes sake

For vnto wo accordeth complaynynge
And dolefull chere vnto heuynesse
To sorowe also, syghynge and wepyng
And pytous mournynge vnto drerynesse
And who that shall wryte of dystresse
In party nedeth to knowe felyngly
Cause and roote of all such malady

But I alas, that am of wytte but dull
And haue no knowynge of suche matere
For to dyscryue, and wryte at the full
The wofull cõplaynte, wych ẏ ye shal here
But euen lyke as doth a skryuenere
That can nomore, what that he shall wryte
But as hys mayster besyde dothe endyte

Ryght so fare I, that of no sentement
Saye ryght nought in conclusyon
But as I herde when I was present
Thys man complayne, wyth a pytous soun
For euen lyke wythout addicioun
Or dysencrease, eyther more or lesse
For to reherce anone I woll me dresse

And yf that any nowe be in thys place
That fele in loue brennynge or feruence
Or hyndred were to hys ladyes grace
Wyth false tonges, that wyth pestilence
Slee trewe men, that neuer dyd offence
In worde nor dede, ne in her entent
Yf any suche be here nowe present

Let hym of routh laye to audience
Wyth dolefull chere, and sobre countenaunce
To here thys man, by full hye sentence
Hys mortall wo, and hys perturbaunce
Complaynynge, nowe lyenge in a traunce
Wyth lokes vpcaste, and rufull chere

The

Theffecte of whych was as ye shall here.

The thouzt oppzessed w̃ inward syghes soze
The paynful lyke, the body languyshynge
The wofull goste, the herte rent and toze
The pytous chere pale in complaynynge
The deedly face, lyke ashes in shynynge
The salte teares that from myne eyen fall
Parcell declare, grounde of my paynes all

whose herte is grounde to blede in heuynesse
The thought resceyte of wo, & of complaynt
The brest is chest of dole and dzerynesse
The body eke so feble and so faynte
wyth hote and colde myne axes is so maynte
That nowe I chyuer, foz defaute of heate
And hote as glede, nowe sodayniy I sweate

Now hote as fyze, nowe colde as ashes deed
Now hote foz cold, now cold foz hete agayne
Nowe colde as yse, nowe as coles reed
Foz hete I bzenne, & thus betwyxe twayne
I posted am, and al forcast in payne
So that my hete playnly as I fele
Of greuous colde is cause euery dele

Thys is the cold of inward hye dysdayne
Colde of dyspyte, and colde of cruell hate
Thys is the cold ẏ euer doth hys besy payne
Ayenst trouth to fyght and debate
Thys is the colde that the fyze abate
Of trewe meanynge, alas the harde whyle
Thys is the colde that woll me begyle

Foz euer the better that in trouth I mente
wyth all my myght faythfully to serue
wyth herte and all to be diligente
The lesse thanke, alas I can deserue
Thus foz my trouth daunger doth me sterue
Foz one that shulde my deth of mercy let
Hath made despyte new hys swerde to whet

Agaynst me, and hys arowes to fyle
To take vengeaunce of wylfull cruelte
And tonges false through her sleightly wyle
Han gonne awarre, that wyll not stynted be
And false enuy, wzath and enuyte
Haue conspyzed agaynst all ryght and lawe
Of her malyce that trouth shalbe slawe

And male bouche, gan fyzst the tale tell
To sclaundze trouth of indignacion
And false repozte so loude range the bell
That myslbyleue and false suspection
Haue trouth brought to his dampnacion
So that alas, wzongfully he dyeth
And falsnesse nowe hys place occupyeth

And entred is in to trouthes londe
And hath therof the full possessyon
O ryghtful god that fyzst the trouth fonde
Howe may thou suffre such oppzessyon
That falshode shulde haue iurisdiction
In trouthes ryght to slee hym gyltlesse
In hys fraunchyse he maye not lyue in pees

Falsly accused, and of hys fone foziuged
wythout answere, whyle he was absent
He dampned was, and may not be excused
Foz cruelte sate in iugement
Of hastynesse wythout auysement
And badde Dysdayne do execute anone
Hys iugement in pzesence of hys fone

Attourney maye none admytted bene
To excuse trouth, ne a wozde to speke
To fayth oz othe the iuge lyst not sene
There is no gayne, but he wyll be wzeke
O lozde of trouth to the I call and clepe
Howe may thou se thus in thy pzesence
wythout mercy murdzed innocence

Nowe god that arte of trouth souerayne
And seest howe I lye foz trouth bounde
So soze knytte in loues fyzye chayne
Euẽ at ẏ deth thzugh gyzte w̃ many a woũd
That lykely are neuer foz to sounde
And foz my trouth am dampned to the dethe
And not abyde, but dzawe alonge the bzethe

Consyder and se in thyne eternall ryght
Howe ẏ myne herte pzofessed whylom was
Foz to be trewe wyth all my ful myght
Onely to one, the whych nowe alas
Of volunte wythout any trespas
Myne accusours hath taken vnto grace
And cherysheth hem, my deth foz to purchace

what meaneth thys? what is this wõder bze
Of purueyaunce yf I shall it tall
Of god of loue, that false hem so assure
And trew alas, downe of the whele ben fall
And yet in soth, thys is the wozst of all
that falshed wzõgfully of troth hath ẏ name

And troth aiẽward of falshed bereth ý blame

Thys blynde chaũce, thys stormy auẽture
In loue hath moste hys experience
For who ý doth wyth trouth moste his cure
Shall for hys mede fynde moste offence
That serueth loue wyth all hys diligence
For who can fayne vnder lowlyhede
Ne fayleth not to fynde grace and spede

Fol I loued one, full longe syth agone
wyth all myne herte, body and full myght
And to be deed my herte can not gone
From hys heste but holde that he hath hyght
Though I be banysched out of her syght
And by her mouth dampned that I shal dey
Unto my behest, yet I wyll euer obey

For euer syth that the worlde began
who so lyst loke, and in story rede
He shall aye fynde that the trewe man
was put abacke where as the falshede
ý furthered was, for loue taketh none hede
To slee the trew, and hath of hem no charge
where as the false goeth frely at her large

I take recorde of Palamydes
The trewe man, the noble worthy knyght
That euer loued, and of hys payne no relees
Notwithstãdyng his mãhode & hys myght
Loue vnto hym dyd full great vnryght
For aye the bet he dyd in chyualrye
The more he was hyndred by enuye

And aye the better he dyd in euery place
Through hys knyghthode and busy payne
The ferther was he from hys ladyes grace
For to her mercy myght he neuer attayne
And to hys deth he coude it not refrayne
For no daungere, but aye obey and serue
As he beste coude, playnly tyll he sterue

what was the fyne also of Hercules
For all hys conquest and hys worthynesse
That was of strength alone peerles
For lyke as bokes of hym lyst expresse
He sette pyllers through hys hye prowesse
Awaye at Gaddes for to sygnifye
That no mã myght hym passe in chyualrye

The whych pyllers ferre beyonde Inde
Be set of golde, for a remembraunce
And for all that was he set behynde
wyth hem that loue lyst feebly auaunce
For hym set last vpon a daunce
Agaynst whome helpe may no stryke
For all hys trouth he loste hys lyke

Phebus also for all hys pe rsaunt lyght
when that he wente here in earth the lowe
Unto the herte wyth Venus lyght
ý wounded was through Cupides bowe
And yet hys lady lyst hym not to knowe
Though for her loue hys herte dyd blede
She let hym go, and toke of hym no hede

what shall I saye of yonge Piramus
Of trewe Tristram, for al hys hye renowne
Of Achylles, or of Antonius
Of Arcite, or of hym Palamowne
what was the ende of her passyoune
But after sorowe deth, and then her graue
Lo here the guerdon that these louers haue

But false Jason wyth hys doublenesse
That was vntrewe at Calkos to Medee
And Theseus, rote of vnkyndnesse
And wyth these two eke the false Enee
Lo thus the false aye in one degre
Had in loue her lust and all her wyll
And saue falshode, there was none other skyll

Of Thebes eke the false Arcyte
And Demephoon eke for his slouthe
They had her lust & al that myght delyte
For al her falshode and great vntrouthe
Thus euer loue alas, and that is routhe
His false lieges forthereth what he may
And sleeth the trewe vngoodly day by day

For trewe Adon was slayne with the bore
Amydde the forest in the grene shade
For Venus loue he felte al the sore
But Vulcanus wiht her no mercy made
The foule chorle had many nyghtes glade
where Mars her knyght and her man
To fynde mercy comforte none he can

Also the yonge freshe Ypomedes
So lusty fre as of his courage
That for to serue with al his herte he ches
Athalans so fayre of her vysage
But loue alas quitte hym so his wage
with cruell daungere playnly at the last

That

That wyth the deth guerdonlesse he past

Lo here the lyne of loues seruyse
Lo how that loue can hys seruauntes quyte
Lo howe he can hys faythfull men dyspyse
To slee the trewe men, and false to respyte
Lo howe he doth the swerde of sorowe byte
In hertes, such as moost hys lust obey
To saue the false and do the trewe dey

For fayth nor othe, worde, ne assuraunce
Trewe meanynge, awayte, or busynesse
Styll porte, ne faythfull attendaunce
Manhode ne myght in armes worthynesse
Pursute of worshyp nor hye prowesse
In straunge lande rydynge ne trauayle
Ful lytell or nought in loue doth auayle

Peryll of deth, nor in see ne lande
Hunger ne thurste, sorowe ne sycknesse
Ne great empryses for to take on hande
Shedynge of bloode, ne manfull hardynesse
Ne ofte woundynge at sautes by dystresse
Nor in partynge of lyke, nor deth also
Al is for nought, loue taketh no hede therto

But lesynges wyth her flaterye
Through her falshed, & with her doublenesse
wyth tales newe, and many fayned lye
By false semblaunt and coũtrefete hũblesse
Under colour depaynte wyth stedfastnesse
wyth fraude couered vnder a pytous face
Accepte be nowe rathest vnto grace

And can hym selfe nowe best magnifye
wyth fayned porte and presumpcion
They haunte her cause wyth false surquidre
Under meanynge of double entencion
To thynke one in her opinion
And saye another, to set hym selfe aloste
And hynder trouth, as it is sene full ofte

The which thynge, I bye nowe al to dere
Thanked be Venus, and the God Cupide
As it is sene by myne oppressed chere
And by hys arowes that stycken in my syde
That saue deth, I nothynge abyde
Fro daye to daye, alas the harde whyle
when euer his darte that hym lyst to kyle

My wofull herte for to ryue a two
For faute of mercy, and lacke of pyte
Of her that causeth all my payne and wo
And lyst not ones of grace for to se
Unto my trouth through her cruelte
And moste of al I me complayne
That she hath ioye to laugh at my payne

And wylfully hath my deth sworne
All gyltlesse, and wote no cause why
Saue for the trouth that I had aforne
To her alone to serue faythfully
O god of loue, vnto the I cry
And to thy blende double deyte
Of thys great wronge I complayne me

And vnto thy stormy wylfull variaunce
Yment wyth chaũge and great vnstablenesse
Now vp now down, so rẽnyng is thy chaũce
That the to trust may be no sekernesse
I wyte it nothynge but thy doublenesse
And who that is an archer and is blynde
Marketh nothynge but shoteth by wynde

And for that he hath no dyscrecion
wythout aduyse he let hys arowe go
For lacke of syght, and also of reason
In hys shotynge it happeth ofte so
To hurte hys frende rather then hys fo
So doth thys god wyth hys sharpe stone
The trewe sleeth, and letteth the false gone

And of hys woundyng, thys ẏ worst of al
when he hurteth doth to so cruell wreche
And maketh the sycke for to crye and call
Unto hys foe for to be hys leche
And harde it is for a man to seche
Upon the poynte of dethe in ieopardye
Unto hys foe to fynde remedye

Thus fareth it nowe euen by me
That to my foe ẏ gaue myne herte a woũde
Note aske grace, mercy, and pyte
And namely there where none may be foũde
For nowe my sore my leche wyll confounde
And god of kynde so hath set myne vse
My lyues foe to haue my wounde in cure

Alas the whyle now that I was borne
Or that I euer sawe the bryght sonne
For nowe I se that full longe aforne
Or I was borne, my destenyy was sponne
By Parcas systerne to slee me yf they conne
For they my dethe shopen or my sherte

Onely for trouth I may it not asserte

The myghty goddesse also of nature
That vnder god hath the gouernaunce
Of worldly thynges cõmytted to her cure
Dysposed haue throgh her wyse purueiaũce
To gyue my lady so moche suffysaunce
Of all vertues, and therwythall puruyde
To murdre trouth, hath take daũger to gyde

For bounte, beaute, shappe, and semelyhed
Prudence, wyt, passyngly fayrnesse
Benygne porte, glad chere wyth lowlyhed
Of womanhede ryght plenteous largenesse
Nature dyd in her fully impresse
when she her wrought, & alther last disdayne
To hinder trouth she made her chãberlayne

when mystrust also, and false suspection
wyth mysbyleue she made for to be
Cheke of counsayle to thys conclusyon
For to exyle trouth, and eke pyte
Out of her court to make mercy flee
So ý dyspyte nowe holdeth forth her reyne
Through hasty byleue of tales ý men feyne

And thus I am for my trouth, alas
Murdred & slayne, w̃ wordes sharpe & kene
Gyltlesse god wote of all trespas
And lye and blede vpon this colde grene
Nowe mercy swete, mercy my lyues quene
And to your grace of mercy yet I preye
In your seruyce that your man maye deye

But yf so be that I shall dye algate
And that I shall none other mercy haue
Yet of my deth let thys ben the date
that by your wyl I was brought to my graue
Or hastely, yf that you lyst me saue
My sharpe woundes that ake so and blede
Of mercy charme, and also of womanhede

For other charme playnly is there none
But onely mercy, to helpe in thys case
For though my woundes blede euer in one
My lyke, my deth, standeth in your grace
And though my gylte be nothynge, alas
I aske mercy in all my best entente
Redy to dye, yf that ye assente.

For there agaynst shall I neuer stryue
In worde ne werke, playnly I ne may
For leuer I haue then to be alyue
To dye sothly, and it be to her paye
Yea though it be thys same daye
Or when that euer her lyst to deuyse
Suffyseth me to dye in your seruyse

And god ý knowest ý thoght of euery wyght
Ryght as it is, in euery thynge thou mayst se
Yet er I dye, wyth all my full myght
Lowly I praye to graunt vnto me
That ye goodly, fayre, fresche and fre
whych onely slee me for defaute of rothe
Or that I dye, ye maye knowe my trouth

For that in soth suffiseth me
And she it knowe in euery circumstaunce
And after I am wel payde that she
If that her lyst of deth to do vengeaunce
Unto me that am vnder her ligeaunce
It sytte me not her dome to dysobeye
But at her luste wylfully to deye

wythout grutchynge or rebellyon
In wyll or worde, holy I assent
Or any maner contradiction
Fully to be at her commaundement
And yf I dye, in my testament
My herte I sende, and my spirite also
what so euer she lyste wyth hem to do

And alder laste to her womanhede
And to her mercy, me I recomaunde
That lye nowe here betwyxte hope & drede
Abydynge playnly what she lyst cõmaunde
For vtterly thys nys no demaunde
welcome to me whyle me lasteth brethe
Ryght at her choyse where it be lyke or dethe

In this mater more what might I sayne
Syth in her hande, and in her wyll is all
Bothe lyfe & deth, my ioye and al my payne
And fynally my heste holde I shall
Tyl my spirite by desteny fatall
when that her lyst fro my body wende
Haue here my trouth, & thus I make an ende

And with that worde he gan sygh as sore
Lyke as hys herte ryue wolde at wayne
And helde hys peace, & spake no worde more
But for to se hys wo and mortall payne
The teres gonne fro myne eyen rayne
Full pytoully for very inwarde rothe

That

That I him saw, so long wishing for trouth

And all thys whyle my selfe I kepte close
Amonge the bowes, and my self gonne hyde
Tyll at the last the wofull man arose
And to a lodge wente there besyde
where all the Day, hys custome was tabyde
Sole to complayne of hys paynes kene
From yere to yere vnder the bowes grene

And for bycause that it drewe to the nyght
And that the sonne his arke diurnall
ypassed was, so that his persaunt light
Hys bright bemes and hys stremes all
were in the waues of the water fall
Under the bordure of our occyan
Hys chare of golde, hys course so swyftly ran

And whyle the twylyght & the rowes rede
Of Phebus lyght were deaurat alyte
A penne I toke, and gan me fast spede
The wofull playnte of thys man to wryte
worde by worde as he dyd endyte
Lyke as I herde and coude hem to reporte
I haue here set, your hertes to disporte

If ought be mysse, laye the wyte on me
For I am worthy for to beare the blame
If any thynge mysse reported be
To make this dytte for to seme lame (same
Through myne vncōning, but for to sayn the
Lyke as this mā his complaynt dyd expresse
I aske mercy and forgyuenesse

And as I wrote, me thought I sawe a ferre
Ferre in the west lusteiy appere
Esperus the goodly bryght sterre
So glad, so fayre, so persaunt eke of chere
I meane Venus wyth her bemes clere
That heuy hertes onely to releue
Is wonte of custome for to shewe at eue

And I as fast fell adowne on my kne
And euen thus to her gan I to prey
O lady Venus so fayre vpon to se
Let not this man for hys trouthe deye
For that ioy thou haddest whan thou leye
w̄ Mars thy knight, whan Vulcanus fonde
And with a chayne vnuysyble you bonde.

Togyder bothe twaye in the same whyle
That all the courte aboue celestyall
At your shame gan laughe and smyle
Ah, fayre lady wylly fonde at all
Comforte to carefull, o goddes immortall
Be helpynge nowe, and do thy dilygence
To let the stremes of thyne influence

Descende down, in fortheryng of the trouth
Namely of hem that lye in sorowe bounde
Shewe now thy mizt & on her wo haue routh
Er false daunger sle hem and confounde
And specially let thy myght be founde
For to socoure what so that thou maye
The trewe man that in the herber lay

And all trewe forther for hys sake
O glad sterre, O lady Venus myne
And cause hys lady hym to grace take
Her herte of stele to mercy so enclyne
Er that thy bemes go vp to declyne
And er that thou nowe go fro vs adowne
For that loue thou haddest to Adowne

And whan she was gone to her rest
I rose anone, and home to bed wente
For wery me thought it for the best
Prayenge thus in all my best entente
That all trewe, that be wyth daunger shente
wyth mercy may in release of her payne
Recured be, er Maye come efte agayne

And for that I ne may no lenger wake
Farewell ye louers all that be trewe
Prayenge to god, and thus my leue I take
That er the sonne to morowe be rissen newe
And er he haue ayen rosen hewe
That eche of you may haue suche a grace
Hys owne lady in armes to embrace

I meane thus, in all honeste
wythout more ye may togyder speke
what so ye lyst at good lyberte
That eche may to other her herte breke
On ialousyes onely to be wreke
That hath so longe of his malyce and enuye
werred trouthe with hys tyranny.

Lenuoye.

Prynceſſe pleaſeth it to your benygnyte
Thys lytell dyte to haue in mynde
Of womanhode also for to se
Your man may your mercy fynde
And pyte eke, that long hath be behynde
Let hym agayne be prouoked to grace

For by my trouthe it is agaynst kynde
False daunger to occuppe hys place

Go lytell quayre vnto my lyues quene
And my very hertes souerayne
And be ryght glad, for she shall the sene
Suche is thy grace, but I alas in payne
Am lefte behynde, & not to whom to playne
For mercy, ruthe, grace, and eke pyte
Exiled be, that I may not attayne
Recure to kynde of myne aduersyte.

¶ Explicit.

¶ A preyse of women.

All tho that lyste of women euyll to speke
And sayn of hem worse than they deserue
I pray to god that her neckes to breke
Or on some euyll dethe mote tho ianglers sterue
For euery man were holden hem to serue
And do hem worshyp, honour, and seruyce
In euery maner that they best coude deuyse

For we ought fyrst to thynke on what manere
they brig vs forth, & what payn they endure
Fyrst in our byrth, and syth fro yere to yere
Howe busely they done theyr busy cure
To kepe vs fro euery myslauenture
In our youth whan we haue no myght
Our selfe to kepe, neyther by daye nor nyght

Alas, howe may we say on hem but wele
Of whom we were fostred and yboze
And ben al our succoure, & euer trew as stele
And for our sake full ofte they suffre sore
wythout women were all our ioye lore
wherfore we ought all women to obey
In all goodnesse, I can no more say

This is well knowen, and hath ben or thys
That women ben cause of al lyghtnesse
Of knighthode, norture, eschewyng al malis
Encrease of worshyp, and of al worthynesse
Therto curteys and meke, and grounde of all goodnesse
Glad and mery, and trewe in euery wyse
That any gentyl herte can thynke or deuyse

And though any wold trust to your vntruth
And to your fayre wordes wold aught assent
In good fayth me thynketh it were gret ruth
That other women shold for her gylt be shēt
That neuer knew ne wist nought of her entēt
Ne lyste not to here ÿ fayre wordes ye write
wyche ye you payne fro day to day tendyte

But who may be ware of your tales vntrew
That ye so busyly paynt and endyte
For ye wyll swere that ye neuer knewe
Ne sawe the woman, neyther moche ne lyte
Saue onely her to whom ye had delyte
As for to serue of all that euer ye sey
And for her loue muste ye nedes dey

Thā wyl ye swere that ye knew neuer before
what loue was ne his dredfull obseruaunce
But nowe ye fele that he can wounde sore
wherfore ye put you in to her gouernaunce
whō loue hath ordeyned you to serue & do ple
w̄ all your myght your lytel lyues space (sauce
wyche endeth sone, but yf she do you grace

And than to bedde wyll ye soone drawe
And sone sicke ye wyll you than fayne
And swere fast your lady hath you slawe
And brought you sodeynly in so hygh a payn
That fro your deth may no mā you restrayn
wyth a daungerous loke of her eyen two
That to your dethe must ye nedes go

Thus wyl ye morne, thus wyll ye syghe sore
As though your herte anon i two wold brest
And swere fast that ye may lyue no more
Myne owne lady, that myght yf ye lest
Bryngе myne herte somdele in to rest
As yf you lyst mercy on me to haue
Thus your vntrouth wyll euer mercy craue

Thus wol ye playne, tho ye nothyng smerte
These innocent creatures for to begyle
And swere to hem, so wounded is your herte
For her loue, that ye may lyue no wyhyle
Scarsly so longe as one might go a myle
So hyeth dethe, to bryngе you to an ende

But yf

But yf your soueryn lady lyst you to amede

And yf for routh she cōforte you in any wyse
For pyte of your false othes sere
So ý innocent weneth ý it be as you deuyse
And weneth your herte be as she may here
Thus for to cōfort, & somwhat do you chere
Than woll these ianglers deme of her ful yl
And sayne that ye haue her fully at your wyl

Lo howe redy her tonges ben, and prest
To speke harme of women causelesse
Alas, why might ye not as wel say the best
As for to deme hem thus gyltlesse
In your herte ywis there is no gentylnesse
that of your own gylte, lyst thus womē fame
Now by my trouth, me thynk ye be to blame

For of women cometh this worldly wele
wherfore we ought to worship hē euermore
And though it mishapone, we ought for to hele
For it is all through our false lore
That day and night, we payne vs euermore
wyth many an othe, these women to begyle
wyth false tales, and many a wycked wyle

And yf falchede shulde be reckened and tolde
In women, iwys full trouthe were
Not as in men, by a thousande folde
Fro all vyces iwys they stande clere
In any thyng that euer I coude of here
But yf entysyng of these men it make
That hem to flatteren connen neuer slake

I wold fayne wete wher euer ye coude here
without mens tising, what womē dyd amys
For ther ye may get hē, ye lye fro yere to yere
And many a gabbynge ye make to hem iwys
For I coude neuer here, ne knowen er thys
where euer ye coude fynde in any place
That euer women besought you of grace

There ye you payne, with al your ful might
wyth all your herte, and all your besynesse
To pleasen hem, bothe by day and nyght
Prayeng hem of her grace and gentylnesse
To haue pyte vpon your great distresse
And ý they wolde on your payne haue routh
And slee you not, sens ye meane but trouth

Thus may ye se that they ben fauteleſſe
And innocent to all your werkes slye
And all your craftes that touche falsnesse
They know hem not, ne may hem not espye
So sweare ye, that ye must nedes dye
But yf they wolde of her womanheed
Upon you rewe, er that ye be deed

And than your lady, and your hertes quene
ye call hem, and therwyth ye sygh sore
And say, my lady I trowe that it be sene
In what plyte that I haue lyued full yore
But nowe I hope that ye woll no more
In these paynes suffre me for to dwell
For of all goodnesse, iwys ye be the well

Lo whiche a paynted processe can ye make
These harmlesse creatures for to begyle
And whan they slepe, ye payne you to wake
And to bethink you on many a wycked wyle
But ye shal se the day ý ye shal curse ý whyle
That ye so besily dyd your entent
Hem to begyle, that falchede neuer ment

For this ye knowe wel, though I wolde lye
In women is all trouthe and stedfastnesse
For in good faythe, I neuer of hem sye
But moche worshyp, bounte, and gentilnesse
Right commyng, fayre, and ful of mekenesse
Good and glad, and lowly you ensure
Is thys goodly angelyke creature

And yf it happe a man be in disease
She dothe her busynesse, and her full payne
wyth all her might, him to comforte & please
If fro hys disease she might hym restrayne
In worde ne dede iwys she wol not fayne
But with al her might, she doth her besinesse
To brynge hym out of hys heuynesse

Lo what gentylnesse these women haue
If we coude knowe it for our rudenesse
Howe besy they be vs to kepe and saue
Bothe in heale, and also in sycknesse
And alway ryght sory for our distresse
In euery maner, thus shewe they routhe
That in hem is all goodnesse and trouthe

And syth we fynd in hem gētilnesse & trouth
worshyp, bounte, and kyndenesse euermore
Let neuer this gētilesse, through your slouth
In her kynde trouthe be aught forlore
That in woman is, and hath ben ful yore
For in reuerence of the heuens quene
we ought

we ought to worschyp all women that bene

For of all creatures ẏ euer were get & borne
This wote ye well, a woman was the best
By her was recouered ẏ blysse ẏ we had lorn
And through ẏ woman shal we come to rest
And ben ysaued, yf that our selfe lest
wherfore me thynketh, yf that we had grace
we oughten honour women in euery place.

Therfore I rede, that to our lyues ende
Fro thys tyme forth, whyle ẏ we haue space
That we haue trespaced, pursue to amende
Prayenge our lady, well of all grace
To bryngе vs vnto that blyssfull place
There as she & all good womē shal be in fere
In heuen aboue, amonge the angels clere.

Explicit.

The house of Fame.

GOd tourne vs euerye dreme to good
For it is wōder thyng by the rood
To my wytte, what causeth sweuenes
On the morowe or on euenes
And why the effecte fo loweth of some
And of some it shall neuer come
why that it is an auysion
And why thys a reuelacyon
why thys a dreme, why that a sweuen
And nat to euery man lyche euen
why this a fantome, why that oracles
I not: but who so of these myracles
The causes knowe bette than I
Dekyne he, for I certaynly
Ne can hem nat, ne neuer thynke
To busy my wytte for to swynke
To knowe of her signifycations
The gendres, ne distynctions
Of the tymes of hem, ne the causes
Or why this is more than that is
Or yeue folkes complexions
Make hem dreme of reflexions
Or els thus, as other sayne
For the great feblenesse of her brayne
By abstynence, or by sycknesse
Pryson, stryke, or great distresse
Or els by dysordynaunce
Or naturall accustomaunce
That some men be to curyous
In studye, or melancolyous
Or thus: so inly full of drede
That no man may hym bote rede
Or els that deuocion
Of some, and contemplacyon
Causen suche dremes ofte
Or that the cruell lyke vnsofte
Of hem that loues leden
Ofte hopen moche or dreden
That purely her impressyons
Causen hem to haue visyons
Or yf spyrites han the myght
To make folke to dreame on nyght
Or yf the soule of proper kynde
Be so perfyte as men fynde
That it wote what is to come
And that he warneth all and some
Of euerych of her auentures
By auysyons, or by fygures
But that our flesshe hath no myght
To vnderstande it a ryght
For it is warned to derkely
But why the cause is, not wote I
well worthe of thys thynge clerkes
That treaten of that, and of other werkes
For I of none opynyon
Nyll as nowe make mencyon
But only that the holye Rood
Tourne vs euery dreame to good
For neuer sythe I was borne
Ne no man els me before
Yette I trowe stedfastly
So wonderfull a dreame as I.

The tenthe day nowe of Decembre
The whyche, as I can remembre
I woll you tellen euery dele
But at my begynnyng trusteth wele
I woll make inuocation
wyth a deuoute specyall deuocyon
Unto the god of slepe anone
That dwelleth in a caue of stone
Upon a streme that cometh fro Lete

That is a

That is a fludde of hell vnswete
Besyde a fulke, that men clepe Cymery
There slepeth aye this god vnmery
wyth hys slepy thousande sonnis
That alway to slepe her won is
And to thys god that I of rede
Praye I, that he woll me spede
Wy sweuen for to tell a ryght
If euery dreme stande in hys myght
And he that mouer is of all
That is and was, and euer shall
So gyue hem ioye that it here
Or all that they dreme to yere
And for to stande al in grace
Of her loues, or in what place
That hem were leuest for to stonde
And shelde hem frome pouerte and shonde
And frome euery vnhappe and disease
And sende hem that may hem please
That taketh well and scorneth nought
Ne it misdeme in her thought
Through malycious entencion
And who so through presumpcion
Or hate or scorne, or through enuy
Dispyte or iape, or felony
Wyldeme it, pray I Jesus good
Dreme he barefote or dreme he shood
That euery harme that any man
Hath had sythe the worlde began
Befall hym therof or he sterue
And graunt that he may it deserue
Lo, wyth ryght suche a conclusyon
As had of hys auisyon
Cresus, that was kyng of Lyde
That hygh vpon a gybet dyde
This prayer shall he haue of me
I am no bette in charyte.

Owe herken, as I haue
you sayde
What that I mette or I
abrayde
Of Decembre the tenthe
day
Whan it was nyght, to
slepe I lay
Right as I was wonte to doone
And fyll a slepe wonder soone
As he that was wery forgo
On pylgrimage myles two
To the corps of saynt Leonarde
To maken lythe, that erst was harde
But as I slepte me mette I was
wythin a temple ymade of glas
In whyche there were mo ymages
Of golde, standyng in sondrie stages
In mo ryche tabernacles
And wyth perre mo pynnacles
And mo curyous portratures
And queynt maner of fygures
Of golde worke, than I sawe euer
But certaynly I nyst neuer
where that it was, but well wyst I
It was of Venus redely
This temple, for in purtreture
I sawe anone ryght her fygure
Naked fletyng in a see
And also on her heed parde
Her rose garlande whyte and rede
And her combe to kembe her hede
Her douues, and dan Cupido
Her blynde sonne, and Vulcano
That in hys face was full browne
But as I romed vp and downe
I founde that on the wall there was
Thus written on a table of bras
I woll nowe synge yf that I can
The armes, and also the man
That fyrst came through hys destyne
Fugityke fro Troye the countre
In to Itayle, wyth full moche pyne
Unto the strondes of Lauyne
And tho began the storie anone
As I shall tellen you echone
Fyrst sawe I the distruction
Of Troye, through the greke Synon
wyth hys false vntrewe forswerynges
And wyth hys chere and hys lesynges
Made a horse, brought in to Troy
By whyche Troyans loste all her ioy
And after thys was graued alas
Howe Ilyons castell assayled was
And wone, and kyng Priamus slayne
And Polytes hys sonne certayne
Dispytously of dan Pyrrus
And next that sawe I howe Venus
whan that she sawe the castell brende
Downe frome heuen she gan discende
And bade her sonne Eneas to flye
And howe he fledde, and howe that he
Escaped was frome all the prees
And toke hys father, olde Anchyses
And bare hym on hys backe away

Tryeng

Cryeng alas and welaway
The whyche Anchyses in hys hande
Bare tho the goddes of the lande
Thylke that vnbrenned were
Than sawe I next all in fere
Howe Crusa, dan Eneas wyfe
whom that he loued all hys lyfe
And her yonge sonne Julo
And eke Alkanyus also
Fledden eke, wyth drery chere
That it was pyte for to here
And in a forest as they went
At a tournyng of a went
Howe Crusa was yloste, alas
That rede nat I, howe that it was
Howe he her sought, and howe her goste
Bade hym flye the grekes hoste
And sayd he muste in to Itayle
As was hys destyne, sauns fayle
That it was pyte for to here
whan her spyrite gan appere
The wordes that she to hym sayde
And for to kepe her sonne hym prayde
There sawe I grauen eke howe he
Hys father eke, and hys meyne
wyth hys shyppes gan to sayle
Towarde the countre of Itayle
As streyght as they myghten go
There sawe I eke the cruell Juno
That arte dan Jupyters wyfe
That haste yhated all thy lyfe
All the Troyan bloode
Ren and crye as thou were woode
On Eolus, the god of wyndes
To blowen out of all kyndes
So loude, that he shulde drenche
Lorde, lady, grome, and wenche
Of all the Troyans nacyon
wythout any of her sauacion
There sawe I suche tempest aryse
That euery herte myght agryse
To se it paynted on the wall
There sawe I eke grauen wyth all
Venus, howe ye my lady dere
weppynge wyth full wofull chere
Prayenge Jupyter on hye
To saue and kepe that nauye
Of that Trogian Eneas
Sythe that he her sonne was
There sawe I Joues Venus kysse
And graunted was of the tempest lysse
There sawe I howe the tempest stente
And howe wyth all pyne he wente
And pryuely toke a ryuage
In to the countre of Cartage
And on the morowe howe that he
And a knyght that hyght Achate
Metten wyth Venus that day
Goyng in a queynte aray
As she had be an huntereſſe
wyth wynde blowyng vpon her tresse
And howe Eneas began to playne
whan he knewe her of hys payne
And howe hys shyppes dreynt were
Or els yloſt, he nyst where
Howe she gan hym comforte tho
And bade hym to Cartage go
And there he shulde hys folke fynde
That in the see were lefte behynde
And shortly of thys thyng to pace
Shye made Eneas so in grace
Of Dydo, quene of that countre
That shortly for to tellen she
Became hys loue, and let hym do
All that weddyng longeth to
what shulde I speke it more quaynte
Or payne me my wordes to paynte
To speke of loue, it woll nat be
I can nat of that faculte
And eke to tellen of the manere
Howe they fyrst acquaynted were
It were a longe processe to tell
And ouer longe for you to dwell
There sawe I graue howe Eneas
Tolde to Dydo euery caas
That hym was tyde vpon the see
And efte grauen was howe that she
Made of hym shortly at a worde
Her lyfe, her loue, her lust, her lorde
And dyd to hym all reuerence
And layde on hym all the dispence
That any woman myght do
wenyng it had all be so
As he her swore, and hereby demed
That he was good, for he suche semed
Alas what harme dothe apparence
whan it is false in existence
For he to her a traytour was
wherfore she slowe her selfe alas
Lo, howe a woman dothe amys
To loue hym that vnknowen is
For by Christ, lo thus it fareth
It is nat all golde that glareth
For also brouke I well myne heed

There

There may be vnder goodlyheed
Couered many a shreude vyce
Therfore be no wyght so nyce
To take a loue onely for chere
Or speche or for frendly manere
For this shall euery woman kynde
That some man of his pure kynde
wol shewen outwarde the fayrest
Tyl he haue caught that what him lest
And than woll he causes fynde
And swere howe she is vnkynde
Or false or prinny, or double was
Al thys saye I by Eneas
And Dydo, and her nyce lest
That loued al to soone a gest
wherfore I wol saye o prouerbe
That he that fully knoweth the herbe
Maye safely laye it to hys eye
wythoutyn drede thys is no lye
But let vs speke of Eneas
Howe he betrayed her, alas
And lefte her full vnkyndely
So whan she sawe al vtterly
That he wolde her of Trouth fayle
And wenden from her into Itayle
She gan to wrynge her handes two
Alas (quod she) that me is wo
Alas, is euery man thus trewe
That euery yere wol haue a newe
If it so longe tyme endure
Or els thre parauenture
And thus of one he woll haue fame
In magnifyeng of hys owne name
Another for frendshyp sayth he
And yet there shal the thyrde be
That is taken for delyte
Lo, or els for synguler profyte
In such wordes gan complayne
Dydo of her great payne
As me mette dremyng redyly
None other authour allege wol I
Alas (quod she) my swete herte
Haue pyte on my sorowes smerte
And slee me not, go not away
O wokful Dydo, welawaye
(Quod she) vnto her selfe tho
O Eneas what wol ye do
O that your loue ne your bonde
That ye swore with your ryght honde
Me my cruel deth (quod she)
Maye holde you styl here wyth me
O haue ye of my deth no pite
Iwys myne owne dere herte ye
Knowe full wel that neuer yet
As farre as euer I had wyt
Agylte you, in thought ne in dede
O, haue ye men such goodlyhede
In speche, and neuer a dele of trouth
Alas that euer had routh
Any woman on a false man
Nowe I se wel, and tel can
we wretched women can no arte
For certayne, for the more parte
Thus we bene serued euerychone
Howe sore that ye men can grone
Anone as we haue you receyued
Certaynly we bene disceyued
For though your loue lest a season
wayte vpon the conclusyon
And eke howe ye determyne
And for the more parte defyne
O welawaye that I was borne
For through you my name is lorne
And myne actes redde and songe
Ouer al thys lande in euery tonge
O wycked fame, for there nys
Nothynge so swyfte lo as she is
O soth is, euery thynge is wyst
Though it be couerde with the myst
Eke though I myght duren euer
That I haue done recouer I neuer
That it ne shall be sayd, alas
I shamed was through Eneas
And that I shal thus iuged be
Lo ryght as she hath done, nowe she
wol done ekte sones hardely
Thus saye the people priuely
But that is done nys not to done
But all her complaynt ne her mone
Certayne auayled her not a stre
And whan she wyst sothly, he
was forth into his shyp agone
She into chambre went anone
And called on her suster Anue
And gan her to complayne thanne
And sayde, that she cause was
That she fyrst loued him, alas
And fyrst counsayled her therto
But what, whan thys was sayd and do
She rofte her seluen to the herte
And dyed through the woundes smerte
But al the maner howe she deyde
And al the wordes howe she seyde
who so to knowe it hath purpose

Rede Virgyle in Eneydos
Or the pystles of Ouyde
what that she wrote, or that she dyde
And nere it to longe to endyte
By god I wolde it here wryte
But welawaye, the harme and routh
That hath betydde for such vntrouth
As men maye ofte in bokes rede
And aldaye sene it yet in dede
That for to thynken it tene is
Lo Demophon, duke of Athenys
Howe he forswore him falsely
And trayed Phyllis wyckedly
That kynges doughter was of Thrace
And falsely gan his terme pace
And whan she wyst that he was false
She honge her selfe ryght by the halse
For he had done her suche vntrouth
Lo, was not thys a wo and routh
Eke loke howe false and recheles
was to Briseyda Achilles
And Parys to Oenone
And Jason to Hipsyphile
And efte Jason to Medea
And Hercules to Dyanira
For he lefte her for Jolee
That made him take his deth parde
Howe false was eke Theseus
That as the storye telleth vs
Howe he betrayed Adriane
The dyuel be his soules bane
For had he laughed or ylouered
He must haue bene al deuoured
If Adriane ne had be
And for she had of him pyte
She made hym fro the deth escape
And he made her a full false iape
For after thys wythin a whyle
He lefte her slepynge in an yle
Deserte alone ryght in the see
And stale awaye and let her be
And toke her suster Phedra tho
wyth him, and gan to shyp go
And yet he had sworne to her
On al that euer he coulde swere
That so she saued him his lyfe
He wolde taken her to his wyfe
For she desyred nothynge elles
In certayne, as the boke vs telles
But for to excuse thys Eneas
Fullyche of al his greate trespas
The boke sayth saunz fayle
The goddes bade him go to Itayle
And leauen Affriques regioun
And fayre Dydo and her towne
Tho sawe I graue howe to Itayle
Dan Eneas gan for to fayle
And howe the tempest al began
And howe he lost his stereman
whiche that the sterne, or he to kepe
Smote ouer the borde as he slepe
And also saugh I howe Sybyle
And Eneas besyde an yle
To hel wente for to se
His father Anchises the fre
And howe he there founde Palymurus
And also Dido, and Deiphebus
And euerych tourment eke in hel
Sawe he, whych longe is for to tel
whych paynes who so lyste knowe
He must rede many a rowe
In Virgyle or in Claudian
Or Daunt, that it tellen can
Tho sawe I eke al the aryuayle
That Eneas had made in Itayle
And wyth kinge Latyn his trete
And all the batayls that he
was at hym selfe, and his knyghtes
Or he had al ywon hys ryghtes
And howe he Turnus refte hys lyfe
And wan Lauyna to hys wyfe
And al the merueylous sygnals
Of the goddes celestials
Howe maugre Juno, Eneas
For al her sleyght and her compas
Atcheued all hys auenture
For Jupiter toke on him cure
At the prayer of Venus
whiche I praye alwaye saue vs
And vs aye, of our sorowes lyght
whan I had sene al thys syght
In thys noble temple thus
Hey lorde thought I, that madest vs
Yet sawe I neuer suche noblesse
Of ymages, nor suche rychesse
As I se grauen in this church
But naught wote I who did hem worche
Ne where I am, ne in what countre
But nowe wyll I out gone and se
Ryght at the wyket yf I can
Sene ought where steryng any man
That maye me tellen where I am
whan I out of the dore cam
I fast about me beheldc

Than

Than sawe I but a large felde
As farre as euer I myght se
wythout towne, house, or tre
Or bushe, or grasse, or eared lande
For all the felde was but a sande
As small as men may se at eye
In the deserte of Lyby
Ne no maner creature
That is yformed by nature
Ne sawe I, me to rede or wysse
O Christ thought I, that art in blysse
From fanton and illusyoun
Me saue, and with deuocioun
Myne eyen to the heauen I cast
Tho was I ware, lo at the last
That fast by the sunne on hye
As kenne myght I wyth myne eye
Me thought I sawe an Egle fore
But that it semed muche more
Than I had any Egle yseyne
Thys is as soth as deth certeyne
It was of golde and shone so bryght
That neuer sawe men suche a syght
But yf the heuen had ywonne
Al newe of god another sunne
So shone the Egles fethers bryght
And somwhat downwarde gan it lyght

Explicit liber primus.

Owe herken euerye maner man
That Englyshe vnderstand can
And lysteth of my dreame to here
For now at erst shal ye lere
So sely and so dredefull a visyon
That I saye neyther Scipion
Ne kynge Nabugodonosore
Pharao, Turnus, ne Alcanore
Ne metten such a dreame as thys
Nowe fayre blyssful, O Cipris
So be my fauour at this tyme
That ye me tendyte, and ryme
Helpeth, that in Pernaso dwell
Besyde Elycon the clere well
O thought, that wrote all that I met
And in the treasorye it set
Of my brayne, nowe shall men se
If any vertue in the be
To tell all my dreme a ryght
Nowe kyth thy engyn and thy myght
Thys Egle of which I haue you tolde
That with fethers shone al of golde
Whiche that so hye gan to sore
I gan beholde more and more
To sene her beaute and the wonder
But neuer was that dynte of thonder
Ne that thynge that men call foudre
That smyte somtyme a towre to poudre
And in hys swyfte commyng brende
That so swyfte gan downwarde discende
As thys foule whan it beheld
That I a rowme was in the felde
And wyth his grym pawes stronge
Wythin his sharpe nayles longe
Me flyeng at a swappe he hente
And wyth his sours agayne vp wente
Me caryeng in his clawes starke
As lyghtly as I had bene a larke
Howe hye I can not tellen yowe
For I came vp, I nyst neuer howe
For so astonyed and asweued
was euery vertue in me heued
What wyth his sours and my dreed
That all my felynge gan to deed
For why, it was a great affray
Thus I longe in his clawes lay
Tyl at last he to me spake
In mannes voyce, and sayd awake
And be not agast so for shame
And callen me tho by my name
And for I shulde better abrayde
Me to awake, thus he sayde
Right in the same voice and steuyn
That vseth one that I can neuyn
And with that voice soth to sayne
My mynde came to me agayne
For it was goodly sayd to me
So nas it neuer wonte to be
And here withall I gan to stere
As he me in his fete bere
Tyl that he felt that I had heate
And felte eke tho myne herte beate
And tho gan he me to disporte
And wyth gentyll wordes me comforte
And sayd twyse, saynt Mary
Thou arte a noyous thynge to cary
And nothynge nedeth it perde
For also wyse god helpe me
As thou no harme shalte haue of this
And thys case that betydde the is
Is for thy lore and for thy prowe

Lette se, darst thou loke yet nowe
Be ful ensured boldely
I am thy feende, and therwith I
Gan for to wonder in my mynde
O god (quod I) that madest al kynde
Shal I none otherwyse dye
Whether Joue wyll me stellyfye
Or what thynge may this signifye
I am neyther Enocke ne Helye
Ne Romulus, ne Ganemede
That were bore vp as men rede
To heuen with dan Jupiter
And made the goddes boteler
Lo, this was tho my fantasye
But he that bare gan espy
That I so thought, and sayde this
Thou demest of thy selfe amys
For Joue is not there aboute
I dare the put ful out of doute
To make of the yet a sterre
But er I bere the moche ferre
I wyl the tel what I am
And whyther thou shalte, and why I cam
To do this, so that thou take
Good herte, and not for fere quake
Gladly (quod I) nowe wel (quod he)
First, I that in my fete haue the
Of whom thou hast feare and wonder
I am dwellyng wyth the god of thonder
whych men callen Jupiter
That doth me flyen ful ofte fer
To do al hys commaundement
And for thys cause he hathe me sent
To the: Herke nowe by thy trouth
Certayne he hath of the routh
That thou hast so truely
Longe serued ententyfely
Hys blynde neuewe Cupido
And fayre Venus also
wythout guerdon euer yet
And netheles hast set thy wyt
Although in thy heed full lytle is
To make bokes, songes, and ditees
In ryme, or els in cadence
As thou best canst in reuerence
Of loue, and of hys seruauntes eke
That haue his seruyce sought, and seke
And paynest the to prayse his arte
Although thou haddest neuer parte
wherfore also god me blesse
Louis halte it great humblesse
And vertue eke, that thou wylt make
A nyght full ofte thyne heed to ake
In thy studye so thou wrytest
And euermore of loue endytest
In honour of him and prayseynges
And in hys folkes furtherynges
And in her matter al deuysest
And not hym ne his folke dispisest
Although thou mayst go in the daunce
Of hem, that hym lyst not auaunce
wherfore as I sayd ywys
Jupiter consydereth wel thys
And also beauseyre, of other thynges
That is, thou hast no tydynges
Of loues folke yf they be glade
Ne of nothynge els that god made
And not onely fro farre countre
That no tydynges comen to the
Not of thy very neyghbours
That dwellen almoost at thy dores
Thou herest neyther that ne thys
For whan thy labour al done is
And hast made all thy rekenynges
In stede of rest and of newe thynges
Thou goest home to thyne house anone
And also dombe as a stone
Thou sytest at another boke
Tyl fully dased is thy loke
And lyuyst thus as an Hermyte
Although thyne abstinence is lyte
And therfore Louis, through hys grace
wyl that I bere the to a place
whiche that hyght the house of Fame
And to do the sporte and game
In some recompensatioun
Of thy labour and deuotioun
That thou hast had, lo causeles
To god Cupido the recheles
And thus thys god through hys meryte
wyl wyth some maner thynge the quyte
So that thou wylte be of good chere
For trust well that thou shalt here
whan we be comen there as I saye
Mo wonder thynges dare I laye
And of loues folke mo tydynges
Both sothfawes and leasynges
And mo loues newe begon
And longe serued tyl loue is won
And mo louers casuelly
That bene betydde, no man wote why
But as a blynde man starteth an Hare
And more iolyte and welfare
whyle they fynde loue of stele

As

As thynke men, and ouer all wele
Mo discordes and mo ialousyes
Mo murmures, and mo nouelryes
And also mo dissimulacions
And eke feyned reperations
And mo berdes in two houres
wythout rasour or sysoures
ymade, than graynes be of sandes
And eke mo holdyng in mo handes
And also mo renouelaunces
Of olde forleten acqueyntaunces
Mo louedayes, and mo accordes
Than on instrumentes bene cordes
And eke of loue mo exchaunges
Than euer corne were in graunges
Unneth mayst thou trowen thys
(Quod he) no so me helpe god as wys
(Quod I) No why (quod he) for it
were impossible to my wyt
Though fame had all the pyes
In al a realme and al espyes
Howe that yet he shulde here al thys
Or they espyen, O yes yes
(Quod he) to me, that can I preue
By reason, worthy for to leue
So that thou gyue thyne aduertence
To vnderstande my sentence
Fyrst shal thou here where she dwelleth
Ryght so as thyne owne boke telleth
Her palays standeth as I shall say
Ryght euen amyddes of the way
Bytwene heuen, erth, and see
That what so euer in all these thre
Is spoken in prynne or apperte
The way therto is so ouerte
And stante eke in so iuste a place
That euery sowne mote to it pace
Or what so cometh from any tonge
Be it rowned, redde, or songe
Or spoken in surete or drede
Certayne it mote thyther nede
Nowe herken wel, for why I wyl
Tellen the a proper skyl
And a worthy demonstration
In myne ymaginacyon
Geffray, thou wottest wel thys
That euery kyndly thynge that is
Hath a kyndly stede there he
Maye best in it conserued be
Unto whiche place euery thynge
Through his kyndly enclynynge
Meueth for to come to
whan that it is awaye therfro
As thus. Lo howe thou mayst al day se
Take any thynge that heuy be
As stone or leed, or thyng of weyght
And bere it neuer so hye on heyght
Let go thyne hande, it falleth downe
Ryght so say I by fyre or sowne
Or smoke, or other thynges lyght
Alwaye they seke vpwarde on heyght
Lyght thyngs vp, & downwarde charge
whyle euerych of hem be at large
And for thys cause, thou mayst well se
That euery ryuer vnto the see
Enclyned is to go by kynde
And by these skylles as I fynde
Haue fysches dwellyng in flode and see
And trees eke on the erth be
Thus euery thynge by hys reason
Hath his owne proper mansion
To whiche he seketh to repeyre
There as it shulde not appeyre
Lo, thys sentence is knowen couth
Of euery philosophers mouth
As Aristotle, and dan Platone
And other clerkes many one
And to confirme my reasoun
Thou wost wel that speche is sowne
Or els no man might it here
Nowe herke what I wyl the lere
Sowne is not but eyre ybroken
And euery speche that is spoken
Loude or prynne, foule or fayre
In hys substaunce is but eyre
For as flame is but lyghted smoke
Ryght so is sowne eyre ybroke
But thys maye be in many wyse
Of whych I wyl the deuyse
As sowne cometh of pype or harpe
For whan a pype is blowen sharpe
The eyre is twyst wyth violence
And rent: Lo, thys is my sentence
Eke, whan men harpe strynges smyte
whether it be muche or lyte
Lo, wyth the stroke the eyre to breketh
And ryght so breketh it whan men speketh
Thus wost thou well what thing is speche
Nowe henceforth, I wyl the teche
Howe euery speche, voyce or sowne
Throughe his multiplycacyowne
Thoughe it were pyped of a mouse
Mote nedes come to Fames house
I prove it thus, take hede nowe

By experience, for yf that thou
Threwe in a water nowe a stone
Well wost thou it wyl make anone
A lytle roundle as a cercle
Parauenture, as brode as a couercle
And ryght anone thou shalte se well
That whele cercle wyl cause another whele
And that the thyrde, and so forthe brother
Euery cercle causynge other
Broder than hym selfe was
And thus fro roundel to compas
Eche aboute other goynge
Causeth of others sterynge
And multeplyeng euermo
Tyl it be so farre go
That it at bothe brynkes be
Al thoughe thou may it not se
Aboue, yet gothe it alway vnder
Though thou thynke it a greate wonder
And who so saythe of trouthe I vary
Bydde hym proue the contrary
And right thus euery worde ywys
That loud or pryue yspoken is
Moueth first an eyre aboute
And of his mouynge out of doute
Another eyre anone is moued
As I haue of the water proued
That euery cercle causeth other
Right so of eyre my leue brother
Euerych eyre in other stereth
More and more, and speche vp bereth
Or voyce or noyse, worde or sowne
Aye through multiplicatiowne
Tyl it be at the house of fame
Take it on ernest or in game
nowe haue I tolde, yf thou haue mynde
Howe speche or sowne, of pure kynde
Enclyned was vpwarde to meue
Thys mayst thou fele well by preue
And that some stede ywys
That euery thynge enclyned to is
Hath hys kyndlyche stede
That seweth it wythout drede
That kyndly the mancyoun
Of euery speche of euery soun
Be it eyther foule or fayre
Hath hys kynde place in eyre
And syth that euery thynge ywys
Out of hys kynde place ywys
Moueth thyder for to go
If it awaye be therfro
As I haue before proued the
It seweth euery soune perde
Moueth kyndly to pace
As vp into his kynde place
And thys place of which I tell
There as fame lyst to dwell
Is sette a myddes of these thre
Heuen, erth, and eke the see
As moost conseruatyfe the soun
Than is thys the conclusyoun (:)(:)
That euery speche of euery man
As I the tell fyrst began
Meueth vp on heyght to pace
Kyndly to Fames place
Tel me this nowe faythfully
Haue I not proued thus symply
wythout any subtylte (:)(:)
Of speche, or great prolixite
Of termes of Philosophie
Of fygures of Poetrie
Or colours of rethoryke
Perde it ought the to lyke
For harde langage, and harde matere
Is encombrous for to here
At ones, wost thou not well thys
And I answered and sayd yes
Ha ha (quod he) lo so I can
Leudly vnto a leude man
Speke and shewe hym suche skylles
That he maye shake hem by the bylles
So palpable they shulden be
But tell me thys nowe praye I the
Howe thynketh the my conclusyon
A good persuasyon
(Quod I) it is and lyke to be
Ryght so as thou hast proued me
By god (quod he) and as I leue
Thou shalte haue yet or it be eue
Of euery worde of thys sentence
A prove, by experience
And wyth thyne eares heren well
Toppe and tayle, and euery dell
That euery worde that spoken is
Cometh into Fames house ywys
As I haue sayde what wylte thou more
And wyth thys worde vpper to sore
He began, and sayde by saynt Jame
Nowe wyll we speke all of game
Howe farest thou nowe (quod he) to me
well (quod I) nowe se (quod he)
By thy trouth yonde adowne
where that thou knowest any towne
Or house, or any other thynge

And

And whan thou hast of aught knowynge
Loke that thou warne me
And I anone shall tel the
Howe farre that thou arte nowe therfro
And I adowne gan to loken tho
And beheldé feldes and playns
Nowe hylles, and nowe mountayns
Nowe valeys, and nowe forestes
And nowe vnneth great beestes
Nowe ryuers, nowe Citees
Nowe townes, nowe great trees
Nowe shippes saylyng in the see
But thus soone in a whyle he
was flowen fro the grounde so hye
That al the worlde as to myne eye
No more semed than a pricke
Or els was the eyre so thycke
That I might it not deserne
with that he spake to me so yerne
And sayde: Seest thou any token
Or aught, that in this worlde is ofspoken
I sayde nay, no wonder is
(Quod he) For neuer halfe so hye as this
Nas Alexander of Macedon
kyng: Ne of Rome dan Scipion
That sawe in dreme at poynt deuyse
Heuen and erth, hel and paradyse
Ne eke the wretche Dedalus
Ne his chylde nyce Icharus
That flewe so hye, that the hete
His wynges molte, and he fel wete
In mydde the see, and there he dreynte
For whom was made a great complaynte
Nowe tourne vpwarde (quod he) thy face
And beholde this large space
This eyre, but loke that thou ne be
Adrad of hem that thou shalt se
For in this region certeyne
Dwelleth many a cytezeyne
Of whiche speketh dan Plato
These ben the eyrysche beestes lo
And tho sawe I al the menye
Bothe gone and also flye
Lo (quod he) caste vp thyne eye
Seyonder lo, the Galaxye
The whiche men clepe the mylky way
For it is whyte: And some perfay
Callen it watlynge strete
That ones was brente with the hete
whan the sonnes sonne the reade
That hyte Pheton wolde leade
A gate his fathers carte, and gye
The carte horse gan well espye
That he coude no gouernaunce
And gan for to lepe and praunce
And beare hym vp and now downe
Tyll he sawe the Scorpiowne
which that in heuen a sygne is yet
And he for feare lost his wyt
Of that, and let the reynes gone
Of his horse, and they anone
Sone vp to mount, and downe discende
Tyll both eyre and erth brende
Tyll Jupiter lo, at the last
Hym slewe, and fro the carte cast
Lo, is it not a great myschaunce
To let a foole haue gouernaunce
Of thynges that he can not demayne
And with this worde soth for to sayne
He gan alway vpper to sore
And gladed me than more and more
So fayth fully to me spake he
Tho gan I to loke vnder me
And beheldé the eyrysh beestes
Cloudes, mystes, and tempestes
Snowes, hayles, raynes and wyndes
And than gendryng in her kyndes
All the waye through which I came
O God (quod I) that made Adam
Moche is thy myght and nobles
And tho thought I vpon Boece
That wryteth, a thought may flye so hye
with fethers of philosophye
To passen euerychè element
And whan he hath so farre ywent
Than may be sene behynde his bake
Cloude and erth, and all that of I spake
Tho gan I were in a were
And sayde, I wot wel I am here
But whether in body or in ghost
I not ywys, but god thou woost
For more clere entendement
Nas me neuer yet ysent
And than thought I on Marcyan
And eke of Anteclaudian
That soth was her description
Of all the heauens regyon
As farre as that I sawe the preue
And therfore I can hem leue
with that the Egle gan to crye
Let be (quod he) thy fantasye
wylt thou lere of sterres ought
Nay certaynly (quod I) ryght nought
And why (quod he) for I am olde

Or els wolde I the haue tolde
(Quod he) the starres names lo
And all the heuens sygnes to
And which they be: No force (q I)
Yes parde (quod he) wost thou why
For whan thou redest poetrye
How the goddes can stellyfy
Byrde, fysh, or hym, or her
As the Rauyn and other
Or Ariones harpe fyne
Castor, Polexe, or Delphyne
Or Athalantes doughters seuen
How all these are set in heuen
For though thou haue hem oft in hande
Yet nost thou nat where they stande
No force (quod I) it is no nede
As well I leue so god me spede
Hem that wryten of this matere
As though I knewe her places here
And eke thy seluen here so bryght
It shoulde shenden all my syght
To loke on hem that maye wel be
(Quod he) and so forthe bare he me
A whyle, and tho began to crye
That neuer herde I thynge so hye
Holde vp thyne heed, for all is well
Saynct Julyan lo, bonne hostel
Se here the house of Fame, lo
Nayest thou not here that I do
what (quod I) the great sowne
(Quod he) that rombleth vp and downe
In Fames house full of tydynges
Both of fayre speche and chydynges
And of false and soth compowned
Herken well it is not rowned
Hearest thou not the great swough
Yes perde (quod I) well ynough
And what sowne is it lyke (quod he)
Peter, lyke the beatyng of the see
(Quod I) agaynst the roches holowe
whan tempestes done her shyppes swalow
And that a man stande out of dout
A myle thence, and here it route
Or els lyke the humblyng
After the clappe of a thundrynge
whan Jouis hath the eyre ybets
But it doth me for feare swete
Nay, drede the not therof (quod he)
It is nothyng that wyll byten the
Thou shalt haue no harme truly
And with that worde both he and I
As nygh the place aryued were
As men myght cast with a spere
I nyst how, but in a strete
He set me fayre on my fete
And sayde: walke forth a pace
And tell thyne aduenture and case
That thou shalt fynde in fames place
Now (quod I) whyle we haue space
To speke, or that I go fro the
For the loue of god tell me
In soth, that I wyll of the lere
Yf this noyse that I here
Be as I haue herde the tell
Of folke that downe in erth dwell
And cõmeth here in the same wyse
As I the herde or this deuyse
And that here lyues body nys
In all that house that yonder is
That maketh all this loude fare
No (quod he) by saynct Clare
And also wysse god rede me
But o thynge I wyl warne the
Of the which thou wylt haue wonder
Lo, to the house of Fame yonder
Thou wost how cõmeth euery speche
It nedeth not the erte to teche
But vnderstande now ryght well this
whan any speche ycomen is
Vp to the palays anon ryght
It weyeth lyke the same wyght
which that the worde in erth spake
Be he clothed in red or blake
And hath so very his lykenesse
And spake the worde that thou wylt gesse
That it the same body be
Man or womon, he or she
And is not this a wonder thynge
Yes (quod I tho) by heuen kynge
And with this worde, farewel (q he)
And here wyll I abyde the
And god of heuen sende the grace
Some good to lerne in this place
And I of hym toke leaue anone
And gan forth to the palayes gone.

¶ Explicit liber secundus.

God

God of scyence and of lyght
Apollo, throughe thy great myght
Thys lytle last booke now thou gye
Not that I wyll for maystrye
Here art potentiall be shewde
But for the ryme is lyght and lewde
Yet make it somwhat agreable
Though some verse fayle in a syllable
And that I do no diligence
To shewe craft, but sentence
And yf deuyne vertue thou
wylt helpe me to shewe nowe
That in my heed ymarked is
Lo, that is for to meanen this
The house of Fame for to discryue
Thou shalt se me go as blyue
Unto the next laurer I se
And kysse it, for it is thy tree (r)
Now entre in my brest anone
whan I was from the Egle gone
I gan beholde vpon this place
And certayne or I forther pace
I woll you all the shappe deuyse
Of house and cytie, and all the wyse
How I gan to this place approche
That stode vpon so hye a roche
Hyer standeth none in Spayne
But vp I clambe with moche payne
And though to clymbe greued me
Yet I ententyfe was to se
And for to poozen wondre lowe
Yf I coude anywyse yknowe
what maner stone this roche was
For it was lyke a lymed glas
But that it shone full more clere
But of what congeled matere
It was, I nyst redely (r)
But at the last espyed I
And fonde that it was euery dele
A roche of yse, and not of stele
Thought I by saynt Thomas of Kent
This were a feble foundement
To buylden on a place hye
He ought hym lytle to glorifye
That heron buylte, god so me saue
Tho sawe I all the hall ygraue
with famous folkes names fele
That had bene in moche wele
And her fames wyde yblowe
But well vneth myght I knowe
Any letters for to rede
Her names by, for out of drede
They weren almoost of thawed so
That of the letters one or two
were molte away of euery name
So vnfamous was were her fame.
But men say, what maye euer last
Tho gan I in myne hert cast
That they were molte away for hete
And not away with stormes bete,
For on that other syde I sey
Of this hyll, that northwarde ley
How it was wrytten ful of names
Of folke that had afore great fames
Of olde tyme, and yet they were
As fresh as men had wrytten hem there
The selfe day, or that houre
That I on hem gan to poure
But well I wyst what it made
It was conserued with the shade
All the wrytyng that I sye
Of a Castell that so stode on hye
And stode eke in so colde a place
That heate myght it not deface
Tho gan I on this hyll to gone
And founde on the coppe a wone
That all the men that ben on lyue
Ne han the connyng to discryue
The beautie of that yike place
Ne coude cast no compace
Suche an other for to make
That myght of beautie be his make
Ne so wondrely ywrought
That it astonyeth yet my thought
And maketh all my wyt to swynke
On this castell for to thynke
So that the great beautie
The cast, craft, and curiositie
Ne can I not to you deuyse
My wyt, ne may me not suffyse
But natheleſſe all the substaunce
I haue yet in my remembraunce
For why, me thought by saynct Gyle
Al was of stone of Beryle
Both the castell and the toure
And eke the hall, and euery boure
without peces or ioynynges
But many subtell compassynges
As babeuries and pynnacles

ymagiries

Ymageries and tabernacles
I sawe, and full eke of wyndowes
As flakes fallen in great snowes
And eke in eche of the pynacles
weren sondrye habytacles
In which stoden all withouten
Full the castell all abouten
Of all maner of mynstrales
And iestours that tellen tales
Both of wepyng and of game
And of all that longeth vnto fame
There herde I play on an harpe
That sowned both well and sharpe
Hym Orpheus full craftely
And on this syde fast by
Satte the harper Orion
And Gacides Chirion
And other harpers many one
And the Briton Glaskyrione
And final harpers with her glees
Sat vnder them in dyuers sees
And gon on hem vpwarde to gape
And countrefayted hem as an ape
Or as a crafte countrefayte kynde
Tho sawe I standen hem behynde
Afarre from hem, all by hem selue
Many a thousande tymes twelue
That made loude mynstralsyes
In cornuse and shaimyes
And many an other pype
That craftely began to pype
Both in douced and in rede
That bene at feestes with the brede
And many a floyte and lytlynge horne
And pypes made of greene corne
As haue these lytle herde gromes
That kepen beestes in the bromes
Ther sawe I than dan Cytherus
And of Athenes dan Proserus
And Mercia that lost her skynne
Both in face, body, and chynne
For that she wolde enuyen so
To pypen bette than Apollo
There sawe I eke famous olde and yonge
Pypers of all the dutche tonge
To lerne loue daunces, sprynges
Reyes, and the straunge thynges
Tho sawe I in an other place
Standyng in a large space
Of hem that maken blody soun
In trumpe, beme, and claryoun
For in fyght and blood sheddynges
Is vsed gladly clarionynges
There herde I trumpe Messenus
Of whom that speketh Virgilius
There herde I Joab trumpe also
Theodomas and other mo
And all that vsed clarion
In Casteloygne, and Aragon
That in her tymes famous were
To lernen sawe I trumpen there
There sawe I syt in other sees
Playing vpon other sondry glees
which that I can not neuen
Yo than starres ben in heuen
Of which I nyl as now not ryme
For ease of you, and losse of tyme
For tyme ylost, this knowe ye
By no way maye recouered be
There sawe I playing iuggelours
Magyciens and tragitours
And Phetonysses charmeresses
Olde wytches, sorceresses
That vsen exorsisacions
And eke subfumigacions
And clerkes eke which conne well
All this magyke naturell
That craftely do her ententes
To maken in certayne ascendentes
Ymages lo, through which magyke
To maken a man ben hole or seke
There sawe I the quene Medea
And Cyrces eke, and Caliophia
There sawe I Hermes Ballenus
Lymote, and eke Symon Magus
There sawe I, and knewe by name
That by suche arte done, men haue fame
There sawe I Coll tragetour
Upon a table of Sycamour
Playe an vncouth thyng to tell
I sawe hym cary a wynde mell
Under a walnote shale
what shulde I make lenger tale
Of al the people that I sey
I coude not tell tyll domisdey
whan I had all this folke beholde
And founde me lose and not holde
And I amused a longe whyle
Upon this wall of Beryle
That shone lyghter than a glas
And made well more than it was
As kynde thyng of fame is
And than anon after this
I gan forth romen tyll I fonde

The

The castell yate on my ryght honde
which so wel corven was
That neuer suche another nas
And yet it was by auenture
ywrought by great and subtyll cure
It nedeth not you more to tellen
To make you to longe dwellen
Of these yates florythynges
Ne of compaces, ne of karuynges
Ne how the hackyng in masonryes
As corbettes and ymageryes
But Lorde so fayre it was to shewe
For it was all with golde behewe
But in I went, and that anone
There met I crying many one
A larges a larges, holde vp well
God saue the lady of this pell
Our owne gentle lady Fame
And hem that wyllen to haue a name
Of vs, thus herde I cryen all
And fast comen out of the hall
And shoke nobles and starlynges
And crowned were as kynges
with crownes wrought full of losynges
And many rybans, and many frynges
were on her clothes truly
Tho at the last espyed I
That purseuauntes and heraudes
That cryen ryche folkes laudes
It weren, all and euery man
Of hem, as I you tell can
Had on hym throwe a vesture
which men clepe a cote armure
Embroudred wonderly ryche
As though they were not ylyche
But nought wyl I, so mote I thryue
Be about to discryue
All these armes that there weren
That they thus on her cotes weren
For it to me were impossyble
Men myght make of hem a byble
Twenty fote thycke as I trowe
For certayne whoso couldeknowe
Wyght there all the armes sene
Of famous folke that had been
In Afferike, Europe, and Asye
Syth fyrst began cheualrye
Lo, how shulde I now tell all this
Ne of the hall eke what nede is
To tellen you that euery wall
Of it, and rofe, and flore withall
was plated halfe a fote thycke
Of golde, and that nas not wycke
But for to proue in all wyse
As fyne as ducket in Venyse
Of which to lyte all in my pouche is
And they were set as thycke of ouches
Fyne, of the fynest stones fayre
That men reden in the lapidayre
Or as grasses growen in a mede
But it were all to longe to rede
The names, and therfore I pace
But in this lustye and ryche place
That Fames hall called was
Full moche prees of folke there nas
Ne croudyng, for to moche prees
But all on hye aboue a dees
Satte in a see imperial
That made was of a Ruby royall
which that a carbuncle is ycalled
I sawe perpetually ystalled
A femynine creature
That neuer formed by nature
was suche an other thyng I say
For altherfyrst, soth to say
Me thought that she was so lyte
That the length of a cubyte
was lenger than she semed be
But thus soone a in whyle she
Her selfe tho wondderly streyght
That with her fete she therth reyght
And with her heed she touched heuen
There as shyneth the sterres seuen
And therto yet, as to my wyt
I sawe a great wonder yet
Upon her eyen to beholde
But certaynly I hem neuer tolde
For as fele eyen had she
As fethers vpon foules be
Or weren on the beestes foure
That gods trone can honour
As wryteth John in the Apocalyps
Her heere that was owndy and cryps
As burned golde it shone to se
And soth to tellen also she
Had also fele vp standyng eares
And tonges, as on beest ben heeres
And on her sete woxen sawe I
Partriche wynges redely
But lorde the perry and the rychesse
I sawe syttynge on the goddesse
And the heuenly melody
Of songes full of armony
I herde about her trone ysonge

That all the pallayes wall ronge
So songe the myghty Muse the
That cleped is Caliope
And her seuen systerne eke
That in her faces semen meke
And euermore eternally
The songe of Fame tho herde I
Heryed be thou and thy name
Goddes of renoun and of fame
Tho was I ware at the last
As I myne eyen gan vp cast
That this ylke noble queene
On her shulders gan sustene
Both the armes and the name
Of tho that had large fame
Alysandre and Hercules
That with a sherte his lyke dyd lese
And this founde I syttyng this goddesse
In noble honour and rychesse
Of which I stynt a whyle nowe
Other thyng to tellen you
Tho sawe I stande on thother syde
Streyght downe to the dores wyde
From the dees many a pyllere
Of metall, that shone not full clere
But though they were of no rychesse
Yet were they made for great noblesse
And in hem great sentence
And folke of hye and digne reuerence
Of which to tell wyll I sonde
Vpon a pyller sawe I stonde
Alderfyrst there I sye
Vpon a pyller stonde on hye
That was of lede and of yron fyne
Hym of the secte saturnyne
The Ebrayke Josephus the olde
That of Jewes gestes tolde
And he bare on his shulders hye
The fame vp of the Jurye
And by hym stoden other seuen
wyse and worthy for to neuen
To helpen hym bere vp the charge
It was so heuy and so large
And for they wryten of batayles
As well as of other maruayles
Therfore was lo this pyllere
Of which I you tell here
Of leed and yron both ywys
For yron Marces metall is
which that god of battayle
And the leed withouten fayle
Is lo, the metall of Saturne
That hath full large whele to turne
To stande forth on eyther rowe
Of hem, which I coude knowe
Though I by ordre hem not tell
To make you to longe to dwell
Thest of which I gan rede
There sawe I stande out of drede
Vpon an yron pyller stronge
That paynted was al endlonge
with Tygres bloud in euery place
The Tholason that hyght Stace
That bare of Thebes vp the name
Vpon his shulders, and the fame
Also of Cruell Achylles
And by hym stode withouten lees
Full wonder hygh vpon a pyller
Of yron, he the great Omer
And with hym Dares and Titus
Before, and eke he Lollius
And Guydo eke de Colempnis
And englysh Galfride eke ywys
And eche of these as I haue ioy
was busy to beare vp Troy
So heuy therof was the fame
That for to beare it was no game
But yet I gan full well espye
Betwene hem was a lytle enuy
One sayde, that Omer made lyes
Feynyng in his poetryes
And was to the grekes fauourable
Therfore helde he it but fable
Tho sawe I stande on a pyllere
That was of tynned yron clere
The latyn poete Virgyle
That hath bore vp a longe whyle
The fame of Pius Eneas
And next hym on a pyller was
Of copper, Venus clerke Ouyde
That hath sowen wonders wyde
The great god of loues fame
And there he bare vp well his name
Vpon this pyller al so hye
As I myght se it with myne eye
For why this hall whereof I rede
was wore on heyght, length, and brede
wel more by a thousande dele
Than it was erst, that sawe I wele
Tho sawe I on a pyller by
Of yron wrought full sternely
The great poete dan Lucan
That on his shulders bare vp than
As hye as that I myght se

The

The fame of Julyus and Pompee
And by hym stoden all these clerkes
That wryte of Romes mighty werkes
That yf I wolde her names tell
All to longe must I dwell
And nexte hym on a pyller stode
Of Sulphure, lyche as he were wode
Dan Claudian, sothe for to tell
That bare vp all the fame of Hell
Of Pluto, and of Proserpyne
That quene is of the derke pyne
What shulde I more tell of thys
The hall was all full ywis
Of hem that wryten olde iestes
As ben on trees rokes nestes
But it a full confuse matere
Were all these iestes for to here
That they of wryte, and howe they hyght
But whyle that I beheldе thys syght
I herde a noyse approchen blyue
That fareth as bees done in an hyue
Agaynst her tyme of out flyenge
Ryght suche a maner murmurynge
For all the worlde it semed me
Tho gan I loke aboute and se
That there come entrynge in to the hall
A ryght great company wythall
And that of sondry regyons
Of all kyns condicyons
That dwell in erthe vnder the moone
Poore and ryche, and also soone
As they were come in to the hall
They gan on knees downe to fall
Before thys ylke noble quene
And sayd, graunt vs lady shene
Eche of vs of thy grace abone
And some of hem she graunted soone
And some she warned well and fayre
And some she graunted the contrayre
Of her askynge vtterly
But thys I say you trewly
What her grace was I nyst
For of these folke full well I wyst
They had good fame eche deserued
All though they were dyuersly serued
Ryght as her syster dame Fortune
Is wonte to serue in commune
Nowe herken howe she gan to paye
Hem that gan her of grace praye
And yet lo, all thys company
Seyden sothe, and not a lye
Madame sayde they, we be
Folke that here besechen the
That thou graunt vs nowe good fame
And let our workes haue good name
In full recompensacioun
Of good worke, gyue vs good renoun
I warne it you (q she) anone
Ye gete of me good fame none
By god, and therfore go your way
Alas (q they) and welaway
Tell vs what your cause may be
For me lyste it not (q she)
No wyght shall speke of you ywis
Good ne harme, ne that ne this
And wyth that worde she gan to cal
Her messenger that was in hal
And bad that he shulde fast gone
Vpon payne to be blynde anone
For Eolus the god of wynde
In Trace there ye shall hym fynde
And byd hym brynge his clarioun
That is full dyuers of hys sowne
And it is cleped clere Laude
Wyth whiche he wont is to heraude
Hem that me lyst ypraysed be
And also byd hym howe that he
Brynge eke hys other claryoun
That hyght Sclaundre in euery towne
wyth whyche he wont is to diffame
Hem that me lyst and do hem shame
This messenger gan fast to gone
And founde where in a caue of stone
In a countre that heght Trace
Thys Eolus wyth harde grace
Held the wyndes in distresse
And gan hem vnder hym to presse
That they gone as the beres rore
He bounde and pressed hem so sore
Thys messenger gan fast crye
Ryse vp (q he) and fast the hye
Tyll thou at my lady be
And take thy clarions eke wyth the
And spede the fast, and he anone
Toke to one that hyght Tritone
Hys clarions to beren tho
And let a certayne wynde go
That blewe so hydously and hye
That it ne lefte not a skye
In all the welken longe and brode
Thys Eolus no where abode
Tyll he was come to Fames fete
And eke the man that Triton hete
And there he stode as styll as stone

And here wythall there came anone
Another huge company
Of good folke and gan to crye
Lady, graunt vs nowe good fame
And let our workes haue that name
Nowe in honour of gentylnesse
And also god your soule blesse
For we han well deserued it
Therfore is ryght that we be quyt
As thryue I (q she) ye shall fayle
Good workes shall you not auayle
To haue of me good fame as nowe
But wote ye what, I graunt yowe
That ye shall haue a shrewde name
And wycked loos, and worse fame
Thoughe ye good loos haue well deserued
Nowe gothe your way for ye ben serued
And thou dan Eolus (q she)
Take forthe thy trumpe anone let se
That is ycleped Sclaundre lyght
And blowe her loos, that euery wyght
Speke of hem harme and shrewdnesse
In stede of good and worthynesse
For thou shalte trumpe all the contrayre
Of that they haue done, well or fayre
Alas thought I what auentures
Haue these sory creatures
That they amonge all the prees
Shulde thus be shamed gyltles
But what, it must nedes be
What dyd this Eolus, but he
Toke out hys blacke trumpe of bras
That fouler than the deuyll was
And gan this trumpe for to blowe
As all the worlde sholde ouerthrowe
Throughout euery regioun
Wente this foule trumpes soun
As swyfte as a pellet out of a gonne
Whan fyre is in the pouder ronne
And suche a smoke gan out wende
Out of the foule trumpes ende
Blacke, blo, grenysche, swartysche rede
As dothe where that men melte lede
Lo, all on hye from tewell
And therto one thynge sawe I well
That the ferther that it ranne
The greter wexen it began
As dothe the ryuer frome a well
And it stanke as the pyt of hell
Alas, thus was her shame yrange
And gyltlesse on euery tonge
Tho came the thyrde company
And gone vp to the dees to hye
And downe on knees they fell anon
And sayden, we ben euerychon
Folke that han full trewly
Deserued fame ryghtfully
And prayde you it myght be knowe
Ryght as it is, and forthe blowe
I graunt (q she) for nowe me lyste
That your good workes shall be wyst
And yet ye shall haue better loos
Ryght in dispyte of all your foos
Than worthy is, and that anone
Lette nowe (q she) thy trumpe gone
Thou Eolus, that is so blake
And out thyne other trumpe take
That hyght Laude, and blowe it so
That through the wolde her fame go
All easely and nat to fast
That it be knowen at the last
Full gladly lady myne he sayde
And out hys trumpe of golde he brayde
Anone, and sette it to hys mouthe
And blewe it eest, west, and southe
And northe, as loude as any thonder
That euery wyght hath of it wonder
So brode it ran or that it stent
And certes all the brethe that went
Out of hys trumpes mouthe smelde
As men a potte full of baume helde
Amonge a basket full of roses
This fauour dyd he to her loses
And ryght wyth this I gan espy
There came the fourth company
But certayne they were wonder fewe
And gonne to standen on a rewe
And sayden, certes lady bright
We haue done well wyth all oure myght
But we ne kepe to haue fame
Hyde our workes and our name
For goddes loue, for certes we
Haue surely done it for bounte
And for no maner other thyng
I graunt you all your askyng
(q she) let your workes be deed
Wyth that aboute I tourned my heed
And sawe anon the fyfte route
That to thys lady gan loute
And downe on knees anone to fall
And to her tho besoughten all
To hyden her good werkes eke
And sayd, they yeue nat a leke
For no fame, ne suche renoun

For they

For they for contemplacioun
And goddes loue had it wrought
Ne of fame wolde they nought
What(q̃ she)and be ye woode
And wene ye for to do good
And for to haue of that no fame
Haue ye dispyte to haue my name
Nay ye shall lyen euerychone
Blowe thy trumpe and that anone
(q̃ she)thou Eolus I hote
And rynge these folkes workes by note
That all the worlde may of it here
And he gan blowe her loos so clere
In hys golden clarioun
That through the worlde went the soun
All so kyndly,and eke so softe
That theyr fame was blowe a lofte
Tho came the syxt companye
And gan fast to Fame crye
Ryght verily in thys manere
They sayden,mercy lady dere
To tell certayne as it is
we haue done neyther that ne thys
But ydell all our lyfe hath be
But natheleſſe yet pray we
That we may haue as good a fame
And great renome and knowen name
As they that haue do noble iestes
And acheued all her questes
As well of loue as other thyng
All was vs neuer broche ne ryng
Ne els what fro women sent
Ne ones in her herte yment
To maken vs onely frendly chere
But mought temen vs on bere
Yet let vs to the people seme
Suche as the worlde may of vs deme
That women louen vs for woode
It shall do vs as moche good
And to our herte as moche auayle
The counterpeyse,ease,and trauayle
As we had wone wyth labour
For that is dere bought honoure
At regarde of our great ease
And yet ye muste vs more please
Let vs be holde eke therto
worthy,wyse,and good also
And ryche,and happy vnto loue
For goddes loue that sytteth aboue
Though we may nat the body haue
Of women,yet so god me saue
Lette men glewe on vs the name
Suffyseth that we haue the fame
I graunt(q̃ she)by my trouthe
Nowe Eolus wythouten slouthe
Take out thy trumpe of golde(q̃ she)
And blowe as they haue asked me
That euery man wene hem at ease
Though they go in full badde lease
Thys Eolus gan it so blowe
That through the worlde it was yknowe
Tho came the seuenth route anone
And fyll on knees euerychone
And sayd,lady graunt vs soone
The same thyng,the same boone
That this next folke haue done
Fye on you(q̃ she)euerychone
Ye masty swyne,ye ydel wretches
Full of roten slowe tet ches
what false theues,where ye wolde
Ben famed good,and nothyng nolde
Deserue why,ne neuer thought
Men rather you to hangen ought
For ye be lyke the slepy catte
That wolde haue fysh:but wost thou what?
He woll nothyng wete hys clawes
Yuell thrifte come to your iawes
And on myne yf I it graunt
Or do fauour you to auaunt
Thou Eolus,thou kyng of Trace
Go blowe this folke a sory grace
(q̃ she)anone,and wost thou howe
As I shall tell the ryght nowe
Say these ben they that wolde honour
Haue,and do no kyns labour
Ne do no good,and yet haue laude
And that men wende that beelle Isaude
Ne coude hem nat of loue werne
And yet she that grynt at querne
Is al to good to ease her herte
This Eolus anon vp sterte
And with his blacke clarion
He gan to blasen out a soun
As lounde as belleth wynde in hel
And eke therwith sothe to tel
This sowne was so ful of iapes
As euer mowes were in apes
And that went al the worlde aboute
That euery wight gan on hem shoute
And for to laugh as they were wode
Suche game founde they in her hode
Tho came another company
That had ydone the trechery
The harme and great wickednesse

That any herte couden gesse
And prayed her to haue good fame
And that she nolde do hem no shame
But gyue hem loos and good renoun
And do it blowe in claryoun
Nay wys(quod she) it were a vyce
Al be there in me no iustyce
Ne lyst nat to do it nowe
Ne this I nyl graunt it you
Tho came there leapyng in a route
And gan clappen al aboute
Euery man vpon the crowne
That al the hall gan tosowne
And sayd, lady lete and dere
we ben suche folkys as ye may here
To tel al the tale a ryght
we ben shrewes euery wyght
And haue delyte in wickednesse
As good folke haue in goodnesse
And ioye to beknowen shrewes
And ful of vyce and wicked thewes
wherfore we praye you on a rowe
That our fame be suche yknowe
In al thing ryght as it is
I graunt it you (quod she) ywys
But what arte thou that sayest this tale
That weaest on thy hose a pale
And on thy typpet suche a bell
Madame(q̃ he) sothe to tell
I am that yke shrewe ywis
That brent the temple of Isydis
In Athenes, lo that cyte
And wherfore dyddest thou so(q̃ she)
By my trouthe(q̃ he) madame
I wolde fayne haue had a name
As other folke had in the towne
Although they were of great renowne
For her vertue and her thewes
Thought I, as great fame haue shrewes
(Though it be naught) for shreudnesse
As good folke haue for goodnesse
And sythen I may nat haue that one
That other nyll I nat forgone
As for to get a fame here
The temple sette I all on fyre
Nowe don our loos be blowe swythe
As wyly be thou euer blythe
Gladly(q̃ she) thou Eolus
Herest thou not what they prayen vs
Madame yes, full well(q̃ he)
And I wyll trumpen it parde
And toke hys blacke trumpe fast
And gan to puffen and to blaste
Tyll it was at the worldes ende
Wyth that I gan aboute wende
For one that stode ryght at my bake
Ye thought full goodly to me spake
And sayd, frende what is thy name
Arte thou come hyder to haue fame
Nay for sothe frende(q̃ I)
I come nat hyther grant mercy
For no suche cause by my heed
Suffyseth me, as I were deed
That no wyght haue my name in honde
I wote my selfe best howe I stonde
For what I drie, or what I thynke
I woll my selfe all it drynke
Certayne for the more parte
As ferforthe as I can myne arte
what doest thou here than(q̃ he)
(q̃ I) that woll I tell the
The cause why I stande here
Some newe tydynges for to lere
Some newe thyng I not what
Tydinges eyther thys or that
Of loue, or suche thynges glade
For certaynly he that me made
To come hyder, sayd to me
I shulde bothe here and se
In this place wonder thynges
But these be no suche tidynges
As I ment of: No(q̃ he)
And I answerde, no parde
For well I wote euer yet
Sythe that fyrst I had wyt
That some folke han desyred fame
Diuersly, and loos and name
But certaynly I nyst howe
Ne where that Fame dwelled or nowe
Ne eke of her discripcion
Ne also her condycion
Ne the order of her dome
knewe I nat tyll I hyder come
Why than be lo these tydynges
That thou nowe hyther bryngest
That thou haste herde(q̃ he) to me
But nowe no force, for well I se
what thou desyrest for to lere
Come forthe and stande no lenger here
And I woll the wythout drede
In to suche another place lede
There thou shalt here many one
Tho gan I forthe wyth hym gone
Out of the castell sothe to sey

Tho

Tho sawe I stande in a valey
Under the castell faste by
An house, that domus Dedaly
That Laborintus ycleped is
Was made so wonderly iwys
Ne halfe so queyntly ywrought
And euermo, as swyfte as thought
Thys queynt house aboute went
That neuermo it styll stent
And there came out so great a noyse
That had it stonde vpon Dyse
Yen myght haue herde it easely
To Rome, I trowe sikerly
And the noyse whyche that I herde
For all the worlde ryght so it ferde
As dothe the routyng of the stone
That fro thengyn is letyn gone
And all thys house of whyche I rede
Was made of twygges falowe rede
And grene eke, and some were whyte
Suche as men to these cages twhyte
Or maken of these panyers
Or els hutches or dossers
That for the swough and for the twygges
Thys house was also full of gygges
And also full eke of chyrkynges
And of many other workynges
And eke this house hath of entrees
As many as leues ben on trees
In sommer whan they ben grene
And on the roke yet men may sene
A thousande holes, and well mo
To letten the sowne out go
And by day in euery tyde
Ben all the dores open wyde
And by nyght eche one vnchette
Ne porte is there none to lette
No maner tidynges in to pace
Ne neuer rest is in that place
That it nys fylled full of tidynges
Eyther loude or of whysperynges
And euer all the houses angles
Is full of rownynges and of iangles
Of werres, of peace, of maryages
Of restes, and of labour of vyages
Of abode of dethe, and of lyfe
Of loue, of hate, accorde, of stryfe
Of losse, of lore, and of wynnynges
Of heale, of sycknesse, or of lesynges
Of fayre wether, and eke of tempestes
Of qualme of folke, and of beestes
Of dyuers transmutacions
Of estates, and eke of regyons
Of trust, of dred, of ialousy
Of wytte, of wennyng, of foly
Of plentie, and of great famyne
Of chepe, of derthe, and of ruyne
Of good or misgouernment
Of fyre, and of dyuers accydent
And lo, this house of whyche I write
Syker be ye it nas nat lyte
For it was sixtie myle of length
Al was the tymbre of no strength
Yet it is founded to endure
Whyle that it lyst to Auenture
That is the mother of tydinges
As the see of welles and spryngeſ
And it was shapen lyke a cage
Certes (quod I) in al myn age
Ne sawe I suche an house as this
And as I wondred me ywis
Upon this house, tho ware was I
Howe myne Egle faste by
Was perched hye vpon a stone
And I gan streight to hym gone
And sayd thus, I pray the
That thou a whyle abyde me
For goddes loue, and let me sene
What wonders in that place bene
For yet peraunter I may lere
Some good therin, or somwhat here
That lefe me were, or that I went
Peter, that is nowe myn entent
(Quod he to me) therfore I dwel
But certayne one thyng I the tel
That but I bringe the therin
Ne shal thou neuer conne the gyn
To come in to it, out of doute
So faste it whyrleth lo aboute
But sythe that I Joues of his grace
As I haue sayd, wyl the solace
Finally with these thynges
Uncouthe syghtes and tidynges
To passe with thyne heuynesse
Suche routhe hath he of thy distresse
That thou suffredest debonairly
And woste thy seluen vtterly
Desperate of al blysse
Sythe that fortune hath made a myssse
The swote of al thyn hertes rest
Languyssche, and eke in poynte to brest
But he through his myghtie meryte
Wyl do the ease, al be it lyte
And gaue in expresse commaundement

To whyche I am obedyent
To forther the wyth all my myght
And wysse and teche the a rygh
where thou mayste moste tidynges here
Thou shalte here many one lere
Wyth thys worde he rygh anone
Hent me vp bytwene hys tone
And at a wyndowe in me brought
That in thys house was, as me thought
And there wythall me thought it stent
And nothyng it aboute went
And me sette in the floore adoun
But suche a great congregacioun
Of folke, as I sawe rome aboute
Some wythin and some wythout
Nas neuer sene, ne shall be efte
That certes in thys worlde nys lefte
So many formed by nature
Ne deed so many a creature
That well vnneth in that place
Had I a foote brede of space
And euery wyght that I sawe there
Rowned euerych in others eere
A newe tydynge prynely
Or els it tolde all openly
Rygh thus, and sayde: Nost nat thou
That is be tydde, lo rygh nowe
No (q he) tel me what
And than he tolde hym thys and that
And swore therto, that it was sothe
Thus hath he sayde, and thus he dothe
And thys shall be, and thus herde I say
That shall be founde, that dare I laye
That all the folke that is on lyue
Ne haue the connyng to discryue
Tho thynges that I herde there
what a loude, and what in eere
But all the wonder moste was thys
whan one had herde a thyng ywis
He came streyght to another wyght
And gan hym tellen anon rygh
The same that hym was tolde
Or it a furlonge way was olde
And gan somwhat for to eche
To thys tydyng in thys speche
More than euer it spoken was
And nat so sone departed nas
Tho fro hym that he ne mette
Wyth the thyrde, and er he lette
Any stounde, he tolde hym alse
were the tydynges sothe or false
Yet wolde he tell it natheles
And euer mo wyth more encrees
Than it was erst: thus northe and southe
went euery tydyng, fro mouthe to mouthe
And that encreasyng euermo
As fyre is wonte to quycken and go
Frome a sparcle sprongen amys
Tyll all a cyte brent vp is
And whan that was full vp sprongen
And waxen more on euerye tonge
Than euer it was, and went anone
Up to a wydowe out to gone
Or but it myght out there passe
It gan out crepe at some creuasse
And flewe forthe faste for the nones
And somtyme I sawe there at ones
A leasynge, and a sadde sothe sawe
That gonnen of auenture drawe
Out of a wyndowe for to pace
And whan they metten in that place
They were a checked bothe two
And neyther of hem myght out go
For eche other they gonne so croude
Tyll eche of hem gan cryen loude
Let me gon fyrst, nay but let me
And here I woll ensuren the
Wyth nones that thou wolte do so
That I shall neuer fro the go
But be thyne owne sworne brother
we woll meddle vs eche in other
That no man be he neuer so wrothe
Shall haue one two, but bothe
At ones, all besyde hys leue
Come we amorowe or on eue
Be we cryde or styll yrowned
Thus sawe I false and sothe compowned
Togyder flye for o tydynge
Thus out at holes gonne wrynge
Euerye tydynge streyght to Fame
And she gan yeue eche hys name
After her dysposycion
And yeue hem eke duracion
Some to were and wane soone
As dothe the fayre whyte moone
And let hem gone, there myght I seen
Wynged wonders faste flyen
Twenty thousande in a route
As Eolus hem blewe aboute
And lorde thys house in all tymes
was full of shypmen and pylgrymes
wyth scryppes brette full of leasynges
Entremelled wyth tidynges
And eke alone by hem selue

O many thousande tymes twelue
Sawe I eke of these pardoners
Currours, and eke messangers
wyth boxes crommed full of lyes
As euer vessell was wyth lyes
And as I alther fastest wente
Aboute, and dyd all myne entent
Ye for to playen and for to lere
And eke a tydynge for to here
That I had herde of some countre
That shall not nowe be tolde for me
For it no nede is redely
Folke can synge it bet then I
For all mote out late or rathe
All the sheues in the rathe
I herde a great noyse wythall
In a corner of the hall
There men of loue tydynges tolde
And I gan thyderwarde beholde
For I sawe rennynge euery wyght
As faste as that they hadden myght
And eueryche cryde, what thynge is that
And some sayd I not neuer what
And when they were all on an hepe
Tho behynde gonne vp lepe
And clamben vp on other faste
And vp the noyse on hyghen caste
And treden faste on others heles
And stampe as men done after eles
At the laste I sawe a man
wyych that I naught ne can
But he semed for to be
A man of great authorite
And therwythall I abrayde
Out of my slepe halfe afrayde
Remembrynge well what I had sene
And howe hye and ferre I had bene
In my goost, and had great wonder
Of that the god of thonder
Had let me knowen, and began to wryte
Lyke as ye haue herde me endyte
wherfore to studye and rede alwaye
I purpose to do daye by daye
Thus in dreamynge and in game
Endeth thys lytell boke of Fame

Here foloweth the Testa-
ment of Loue.

The testament of loue.

Many men there bene, that wyth eeres openly spread, so moche swalowen the deliciousnesse of iestes and of ryme, by queynte knyttynge coloures, that of the goodnesse or of the badnesse of the sentence take they lytell hede or els none. Sothelye dull wytte & a thoughtfull soule, so sore haue myned & grasked in my spirites, that suche crafte of endytynge woll not ben of myne acquaynt aunce. And for rude wordes & boystous percen the herte of the herer to the inrest poynte and planten there the sentence of thynges, so that wyth lytell helpe it is able to spryngе. Thys boke that nothynge hath of the greate floode of wyt, ne of semelych colours, is doluen wyth rude wordes and boystous, and so drawe togyther to maken the catchers herof ben the more redy to hent sentence.

Some men there ben that peynten wyth colours ryche, and some wyth vers, as wyth red ynke, and some wyth coles and chalke: & yet is there good matere to the leude people of thilke chalky purtreiture, as hem thinketh for the tyme, and afterwarde the syght of the better colours yeuen to hem more ioy for the first leudnesse. So sothly thys leude cloudye occupacion is not to prayse, but by the leude: for comenly leude, leudnesse cõmendeth. Eke it shal yeue sight that other precious thinges shalbe the more in reuerence. In latyn and french hath many soueraine wyttes had gret delyte to endyte, and haue many noble thynges fulfylde, but certes there ben some ý speken theyr poysy mater in frenche, of whyche speche the frenche men haue as good a fantasye as we haue in hearyng of french mennes englyshe. And many termes there ben in englyshe, whych vnneth we englyshmen connen declare the knowlegynge: Howe shulde then a frenche man borne, such termes conne iumpere in hys mater, but as the iaye chatereth englyshe. Ryght so truly the vnderstandynge of englyshmen woll not stretche to the priuy termes in frenche, what so euer we bosten of straunge langage. Let then clerkes endyten in latyn, for they haue the propertye of sciẽce And the knowynge in that facultye: and lette frenchmen in theyr frenche also endytẽ theyr queynt termes, for it is kyndly to theyr mouthes, and let vs shewe our fantasyes in suche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge. And although thys boke be lytel thanke wor thy for the leudnesse in trauayle, yet such wry tynges exciten men to thylke thynges ý bene necessarie: for euery mã therby maye as by a perpetual myrrour sene the vyces or vertues of other, in which thynge lyghtly may be cõceyued to eschewe peryls, and necessaries to catche, after as auẽtures haue fallen to other people or persons. Certes ý soueraynst thing of desyre and moste creature reasonable, haue or els shulde haue ful appetyte to theyr perfection: vnresonable beestes mowen not, syth reason hath in hem no werkynge. Then reasonable that wol not, is comparysoned to vnresonable, and made lyke hem. Forsothe the moste soueraynе and fynall perfection of mã is in knowynge of a soth, wythouten any entent dysceyuable, and in loue of one very god, that is inchaungeable, that is to knowe and loue hys creatour. ¶ Nowe principally the meane to brynge in knowlegyng and louyng hys creatour, is the consyderacion of thinges made by the creatour wherthrough be thylke thynges that bene made vnderstãdynge here to our wyttes, arne the vnsene priuytees of god made to vs sightful & knowing, in our cõtemplacion & vnderstandyng. These thinges then forsoth moch bryngen vs to ý ful knowlegynge sothe, and to the parfyte loue of the maker of heauenly thynges. Lo Dauid sayeth: thou haste delyted me in makynge, as who sayeth, to haue delite in ý tune how god hath lent me in cõsyderation of thy makynge. wherof Aristotle in the boke de Animalibus sayeth to naturel philosophers: It is a great lykynge in loue of knowynge theyr creatour and also in knowynge of causes in kyndelye thynges consydred. Forsothe the formes of kyndly thynges & ý shap, a great kyndly loue mẽ shulde haue to the werkman ý hem made The crafte of a werkman is shewed in the werke. Herefore truly the philosophers with a lyuely studye many noble thynges, ryghte precious and worthy to memory wrytten, & by a

by a great swet ande trauayle to vs leften of causes the properties in natures of thynges. To whyche therfore Phylosophers it was more ioye, more lykynge, more herty lust in kyndly vertues & maters of reason ý perfection by busy study to knowe, thē to haue had al the treasure, al the rychesse, al ý bayngloryý the passed Emperours, prynces, or kynges hadden. Therfore ý names of hem in ý boke of perpetual memory in vertue & peace arne wrytten, and in the contrary, that is to sayne in stire ý foule pytte of helle arne thilke pressed that suche goodnesse hated. And bycause thys boke shall be of loue, and the pryme causes of sterynge in that doynge with passyons and dyseases for wantynge of desyre, I wyll that this boke be cleped ý Testamēt of loue.

But now thou reder, who is thylke ý wyl not in scorne laughe, to here a dwerfe or els halfe a man, say he wyll rende out the swerd of Hercules handes, & also he shulde set Hercules gades a myle yet ferther, and ouer that he had power of strength to pul vp the spere, that Alisander ý noble myght neuer wegge.

And that passyng al thynge to ben master of Fraunce by myght, there as the noble gracious Edwarde the thyrde for all hys greate prowes in vyctories ne myght al yet cōquere

Certes I wote wel, ther shalbe made more scorne & iape of me, that I so vnworthely clothed altogether in the cloudy cloude of vncōnynge wyl puttē me in prees to speke of loue or els of the causes in that mater, sythen all ý greatest clerkes han had ynough to done, and as who sayth gathered vp clene tofore hem & wyth theyr sharpe sythes of connynge all mowen and made therof great rekes and noble, full of all plentyes to fede me and many another. Enuye forsothe cōmendeth nought hys reason, ý he hath in hayne, be it neuer so trusty. And although these noble repers, as good workmen and worthy theyr hyer, hane al drawe and bounde vp in ý sheues, & made many shockes, yet haue I ensample to gather the smale crōmes, and fullē my walet of tho that fallen from the borde amongt the smale houndes, notwythstandynge the trauayle of the almoygner, ý hath drawe vp in the cloth al the remyssayles, as trenchours, and the reyke to bere to the almesse. Yet also haue I leue of ý noble husbonde Boece, although I be a straunger of connynge to come after his doctrine, and these great workmē, and glene my handfuls of the shedynge after theyr handes & if me fayle ought of my ful, to encrease my porcion with that I shal drawe by prynytyes out of the shocke, a slye seruaunt in hys owne helpe is often moche cōmēded, knowyng of trouth in causes of thiges, was more hardyer in the fyrst sechers, and so sayth Aristotle, & lyghter in vs ý hath folowed after. For theyr passyng study han fresched our wyttes, and our vnderstandynge han excyted in cosyderacion of trouth by sharpnesse of theyr reasons. Utterly these thinges be no dremes ne iapes, to throwe to hogges, it is lykelyche meate for chyldren of trouth, and as they me betyden whē I pylgrimaged out of my kyth in wynter, when the wether out of measure was boystous, & the wylde wynde Borias as hys kynde asketh wyth dryenge coldes, maked the wawes of the Occian see so to aryse vnkyndely ouer the cōmune bankes that it was in poynte to spyl al the earth.

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¶ Thus endeth the prologue, and here after foloweth the fyrst boke of the Testament of Loue.

Las Fortune alas, I that somtyme in delycious houres was wont to enioy blyssful stoundes, am nowe drye by vnhappy heuynes to bewayle my sondry yuels in tene. Trewlye I leaue, in myne herte is wryte of perdurable letters al the entencions of lamentacion that now ben ynempned, for any maner dysease outwarde in sobbynge maner, sheweth sorowfull yeryngе from wythin. Thus from my comforte I gynne to spylle, syth she that shulde me solace, is ferre fro my presence. Certes her absence is to me an hell, my sternyng deth thus in wo it myneth, ỳ endelesse care is throughe out myne herte clēched, blysse of my ioye, that ofte my murthed is turned into galle, to thynke on thynge that maye not at my wyll in armes me hent. Myrth is chaunged into tene, when swynke is there continually, that reste was wonte to soiourne and haue dwellynge place. Thus wytlesse thoughtfull, syghtlesse lokinge, I endure my penaunce in this derke prysone, caytisned fro frendschyp and acquaintaunce, and forsaken of all ỳ any worde dare speke. Straunge hath by waye of intrucyon made hys home, there me shuld be, yf reason were herde as he shulde. Neuerthelater yet hertely lady precious Margarit, haue mynd on thy seruaunt, and thynke on hys dysease howe lyghtles he lyueth, sythe the beames brēnende in loue of thyne eyen arne so be wēt that worldes and cloudes atwene vs tweye woll not suffre my thoughtes of hem to be enlumyned. Thynke that one vertue of a Margarite precious is amonges many other the sorowful to cōfort, yet well of that me sorowfull to comforte is my luste to haue nought els at thys tyme, dede ne dethe, ne no maner trauayle hath no power myne herte so moche to fade, as shulde to here of a twynckelynge in your dysease. Ah, god forbyde that, but yet lette me dey, lette me sterue wythouten any measure of penaunce, rather then myne herte ly thynkynge comforte in ought were dyseased. What maye my seruyce aueyle in absence of her, that my seruyce shuld accepte: is thys not endlesse sorowe to thynke: Yes, yes god wote, myne hert breaketh nygh a sonder howe shulde the groūde wythout kyndly noriture bryngen forth any frutes: howe shulde a shyppe withouten a sterne in the greate see be gouerned: Howe shulde I withouten my blysse, my herte, my desyre, my ioye, my goodnesse, endure in thys contrarious prison, that thynke euery houre in ỳ day an hūdred wynter: Wel may nowe Eue sayne to me Adam, in sorowe fallen from welth, dryuē art thou out of paradyse, wyth sweate thy sustenaūce to be swynke. Depe in thys pynynge pytte with wo I lygge ystocked, with chaynes lynked of care & of tene. It is so hye from thens I lye and ỳ cōmune erth, there ne is cable in no lande maked, that myght stretche to me to drawe me in to blysse, ne steyers to stey on is none, so that wythout recouer endlesse here to endure I wote wel I purueyd. O, where arte thou nowe fredschyp, that somtyme with laughande chere, madest both face and countenaunce to me wardes: truely now art thou went out of towne, but euer me thynketh he weareth hys old clothes, & that ỳ soule in the whych the lyfe of frendschyppe was in, is drawen out from hys other spirites. Nowe then farewell frendschip, and farewel felawes, me thynketh ye al han taken your leaue: no force of you all at ones. But lady of loue ye wote what I mene, yet thinke on thy seruaūt, that for thy loue spylleth, all thynges haue I forsake to folowen thyne hestes: rewarde me wō a thought, though ye do nought els. Remembraunce of loue lyeth so sore vnder my breste, that other thought cometh not in my mynde but gladnesse to thynke on youre goodnesse & youre merye chere, frendes and sorowe to thynke on youre wreche and your daunger, from whych Chryst me saue. My great ioye it is to haue in meditacion the bounties, the vertues. The nobley in yon prynted: sorowe and hell comen at ones, to suppose that I be beyned: thus wyth care, sorowe, and tene am I shapte myne ende wō dethe to make. Now good goodlye thynke on thys. O wretched foole that I am fallen into so lowe, the heate of my brēnyng tene hath me al defased: howe shulde ye lady sette pryse on so foule fylthe: My connynge is thynne, my wytte is exiled, lyke to a foole naturel am I comparysoned. Trewly lady but your mercy the more were I wote well al my labour were in ydel: your mercy then passeth ryght. God graunt that

propoſicion

proposycyon to be bestyed in me, so that by truste of good hope, I mowe come to the hauen of ease, and sythe it is impossyble, the colours of your qualyties to chaunge: & forsoth I wote well wemme ne spotte maye not abyde, there so noble vertue haboudeth, so that the defasynge to you is verely ymagynable, as countenaunce of goodnesse wyth encreasynge vertue, is so in you knytte to abyde by necessary maner, yet yf the ryuers myght fal, whych is ayenst kynde, I wol wel myn hert ne shulde therfore naught flytte by the leste poynt of gemetrye, so sadlye is it sonded, that away from your seruyce in loue maye he not departe. O loue, when shall I ben pleased? O charite, when shall I ben eased? O good goodly, when shall the dyce turne? O full of vertue do the chaunce of comforte vpwarde to fal. O loue, when wolt thou thynke on thy seruaunt? I can nomore but here out caste of al welfare, abyde the daye of my dethe, or els to se the syght that myght all my wellyng sorowes voyde, and of the floode make an ebbe These dyseases mowen wel by duresse of sorowe, make my lyfe to vnbodye, and so for to dye: but certes ye ladye in a full perfection of loue ben so knytte wyth my soule, that dethe may not thylke knotte vnbynde ne departe, so that ye and my soule together is endelesse, in blysse shulde dwel, and there shal my soule at the full ben eased, that he may haue your presence to shewe thentēt of his desyres: Ah dere god, that shall be a great ioye. Nowe erthely goddesse take regarde of thy seruaūt, though I be feble, for thou arte wont to prayse them better, that wold conne serue in loue, al be he full mener then kynges or princes, that woll not haue that vertue in mynde. Nowe precyous Margaryte, that wyth thy noble vertue haste drawen me into loue fyrst, me wenyng therof to haue blisse, as galle and aloes are so moch sprynge, that sauour of swetnesse may I not attaste. Alas that your benigne eyen, in whych that mercy semeth to haue al hys norture, nyll by no waye tourne the clerenesse of mercy to me wardes. Alas that youre brennande vertues, shynynge amonges all folke, and enlumynynge all other people by habundaūce of encreasing, sheweth to me but smok & no lyght. These thynges to thinke in myne hert maketh euery day weping in myne eyen to renne. These lyggen on my backe so sore, that importable burthen me semeth on my backe to be charged, it maketh me backwarde to meue, when my steppes by comune course euen forth pretende: These thynges also on ryghtsyde & lyfte, haue me so enuolued wyth care, that wāhope of helpe is throughout me ronne, trewly and leue that graceleſſe is my fortune, whych that euer sheweth it mewardes by a cloudy dysease, already to make stormes of tene, and the blysfull syde halte styl awayward, & woll it not suffre to mewardes to turne: nofore, yet wol I not ben cōquered

O, alas that your nobley so moch amonge all other creatures cōmended by folowynge streme by al maner vertues, but ther ben wōderful, I not which that let the flode to come into my soule, wherfore purely mated wyth sorowe thorough sought, my selfe I crye on your goodnesse to haue pyte on thys caytyfe, that in the inrest degre of sorowe and dysease is lefte, & wythout your goodly wyll frō any helpe and recouery. These sorowes maye I not sustene, but yf my sorowe shulde be tolde and to you wardes shewed, although moche space is bytwene vs twaine, yet me thynketh that by suche ioleynynge wordes, my dysease gynneth ebbe. Trewly me thynketh that the sowne of my lamentacious weppyng, is right now flowe into your presence, & there cryeth after mercy & grace, to whyche thyng me semeth the lyst none answere to yeue, but with a deynous chere ye cōmaunden it to auoyde, but god forbyd that any worde shulde of you sprynge to haue so lytel routh. Parde pyte & mercy in euery Margarite is closed by kynde amōges many other vertues, by qualites of comforte, but comfort is to me ryght naught worth, wythouten mercy & pyte of you alone whych thynges hastely god me graūt for his mercye.

Ehersynge these thinges and many other, wythout tyme or moment of rest me semed for anguysche of dysease, that altogether I was rauished, I can not tell howe, but holy all my passyons & felynges weren loste, as it semed for the tyme, and sodaynly a maner of drede lyght in me all at ones, nought such feare as folke haue of an enemy that were myghty, & wolde hem greue or done hem dysease: For I trowe thys is wel knowe to many persones

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that otherwhyle yf a man be in hys soueraynes presence, a maner of ferdnesse crepeth in hys herte, not for harme, but of goodly subiection namely as men reden that aungels ben aferde of our sauyour in heuen. And pardy there ne is, ne may no passyō of disease be, but it is to meane that angels ben adrade, not by frendes of drede, sythē they ben perfytly blysfed, as affection of wōderfulnesse & by seruice of obedience, such ferde also han these louers in presence of theyr loues, & subiectes afore ne theyr soueraynes: Ryght so wyth ferdenesse myne herte was caught. And I sodaynly astonyed, there entred into the place there I was lodged a ladye, the semelyest and moost goodly to my syght, that euer to forne apered to any creature, and truly in the blustryng of her loke, she yaue gladnesse and comforte sodaynlye to all my wyttes, and ryghte so she dothe to euery wyght that cometh in her presence. And for she was so goodlye (as me thought) myne herte beganne somdele to be enbolded, and werte a lytel hardy to speake, but yet wyth a quakynge voyce, as I durste, I salued her, and enquyred what she was, and why she so worthy to syghte, dayned to entre in to so foule a doūgeon, and namelye a prysson, wythout leaue of my kepers. For certes althoughe the vertue of dedes of mercye stretchen to bysyten the poore prisoners, and hem after that faculties ben had to comfort, me semed that I was so ferre fallē into myserye and wretched hyd caytyfnesse, that me shulde no precious thynge nyghe: and also that for my sorowe euery wyght shulde ben heauy, and wyshe my recouery. But when thys lady had somdele aperceyued, as wel by my wordes as by my chere, what thought be syed me wythin, wyth a good womanly cōtenaunce she sayd these wordes.

O my nory, wenyst thou that my maner be, to forget my frendes or my seruauntes-naye (quod she) it is my full entente to bysyte and comforte al my frendshyppes and alyes, as well in tyme of perturbation, as of moost propertye of blysse, in me shall vnkyndnesse neuer be founden. And also sythen I haue so fewe especyal trewe nowe in these dayes, wherfore I maye well at more leysar come to hem that me deseruen, and yf my comynge maye in any thynge auayle, wete wel I woll come often.

Now good lady (quod I) that art so fayre on to loke, reynynge honny by thy wordes, blysse of paradyse arne thy lokynges, ioy and comforte are thy mouynges. What is thy name? how is it that in you is so mokel werkynge vertues enpyght, as me semeth, and in none other creature, that euer sawe I wyth myne eyen? My dyscyple (q̄ she) me wōdreth of thy wordes and on the, ȳ for a lytel disease haste forgeten my name: woste thou not well that I am Loue, that first the brought to thy seruyce? O good lady (quod I) is thys worshyp to the or to thyne excellence for to come into so foule a place? Parde somtyme tho I was in prosperite, and wyth foreyne goodes enuolued, I had mokel to done to drawe the to myne hostel, & yet many wernynges thou madest er thou lyste fullye to grannt, thyne home to make at my dwellyng place: & nowe thou comest goodly by thyne owne byse, to comforte me wyth wordes, and so there thoroughe I gynne remembre on passed gladnesse. Trewly ladye I ne wotte whether I shal say welcome or none, sythen thy comyng wol as moch do me tene and sorowe, as gladnesse and myrthe: se why. For that me comforeth to thinke on passed gladnesse, that me anoyeth efte to be in doynge. Thus thy comynge bothe gladdeth and teneth, and that is cause of moche sorowe: Lo ladye, howe then I am comforted by your commyng, and with that I gan in teeres to dystylle, and tenderlye wepe. Nowe certes (quod loue) I se well (and that me ouerthynketh) that wytte in the fayleth, and arte in poynte to dote. Trewly (quod I) that haue ye maked, and that euer woll I rue. Wottest thou nat wel (quod she) that euery shepeherde ought by reson to seke hys sperkelande shepe that arne ronne in to wyldernesse, amonge buschs and peryls, and hem to theyr pasture ayen bringe and take on hem priuy besy cure of kepynge? and tho the vnconnyng shepe scattred wolde ben loste, rennyng to wyldernesse, and to desertes drawe, or eis wolden put hem selfe to the swalowynge wolfe, yet shal the shepherd by busynesse and trauayle so put hym forth, that he shall nat let hem be loste by no waye. A good shepeherd putteth rather hys lyfe to ben loste for hys shepe. But for thou shalte not wene me beynge of werse condicyon, truly for euerych of my folke, and for all tho that

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to mewarde be knyt in any condicion, I wil rather dye than suffre hem through errour to ben spylt. For me lyst, and it me lyketh, of all myne a sheperdesse to be cleped. wottest thou not well I fayled neuer wyght, but he me refused, and wolde neylygently go with vnkyndnesse: and yet parde haue I manye such holp and releued, and they haue oft me begyled, but euer at the ende it discendeth in theyr owne neckes. Hast thou not radde how kynde I was to Paris, Priamus son of Troye: How Iason me falsed for all hys false behest: how Cesars sonke, I left it for no tene tyll he was trone di my blysse, for his seruyce. what (q̃ she) most of all maked I not a louedaye betwene God and mankynde, and chese a mayde to be nompere, to put the quarell at ende: Lo, how I haue trauayled to haue thanke on all sydes, and yet lyst me not to rest, & I myght kynde on whō I shulde werche, but truly myne owne dysciple, bycause I haue the founde at all assayes in thy wyll to ben readye, mye hestes to haue followed, and hast ben true to that margaryte peerle, that ones I the shewed, and she alway ayenwarde hath made but daungerous cheare, I am come in propre person to put the out of errours and make the glad by wayes of reason, so that sorowe ne dysease shall nomore hereafter the amaystrye. wherethrough I hope thou shalte lyghtlye come to the grace, that thou longe hast desyred, of thilke iewel. Hast thou not herde many ensamples, howe I haue comforted and releued the scholers of my lore: who hathe worthyed kynges in the felde: who hath honoured ladyes in boure by a perpetual myrroure of theyr trouthe in my seruyce: who hath caused worthye folke to voyde bryce & shame: who hath holde cyties and realmes in prosperitie: yf the lyste cleape ayen thyne olde remēbraunce, thou coudest euery poynt of this declare in especyall, and saye that I thy maystresse haue be cause, causyng these thynges and many mo other. Nowe ywys madame (quod I) al these thinges I know well my selfe, and that thyne excellence passeth the vnderstandynge of vs beestes, and that nomans wyt erthly may comprehende thy vertues. well than (q̃ she) for I se the in disease and sorow, I wote wel thou art one of myne nories, I maye not suffre the so to make sorow thyne owne selfe to shende: but I my selfe come to be thy fere, thyne heauye charge to make to seme the lesse, for woo is hym that is alone: And to the sory to bē moned by a sorowfull wyght it is greate gladnesse. Right so with my sycke frendes I am sycke, and with sorye, I can not els but sorowe make, tyll whan I haue hem releued in suche wyse that gladnesse in a maner of countrepaysyng shal restore as mokel in ioy as the passed heuynesse before dyd in tene. And also (q̃ she) whan anye of my seruaunte ben alone in solitary place, I haue yet euer busyed me to be with hem, in comfort of theyr hertes, and taught hem to make songes of playnte and of blysse, and to endyten letters of rethorycke in queynt vnderstādynges, & to bethynke hem in what wyse they mygt best theyr ladyes in good seruice plese and also to lerne maner in countenaunce, in wordes & in bearynge, and to ben meke and lowlye to euery wyght, his name & fame to encrease, and to yeue great yeftes and large that his renome may spryngen, but the ther of haue I excused for thy losse and thy great costages, wherthrough thou art nedy, arne nothynge to me vnknowen, but I hope to god somtyme it shall ben amended, as thus as I sayde. In nortuoure haue I taught al myne, and in curtesie made hem expert their ladyes hertes to wyn, and yf any wolde endeynous or proude or be enuious, or of wretches acquayntaunce, hasteliche haue I such voyded out of my schole: for all vyces trulye I hate: vertues and worthynesse in all my power I auaunce. Ah worthye creature (q̃ I) and by iuste cause the name of goddesse dignely ye mowe beare: In the lyth ȳ grace through which any creature in this worlde hath any goodnesse, truly all maner of blysse and precyousnesse in vertue out of the spryngen and wellen, as brokes and ryuers proceden from theyr spryngs, and lyke as all waters by kynde drawen to the see, so all kyndly thynges thresten by full appetyte of desyre to draw after thy steppes, and to thy presence approche, as to theyr kyndely perfectiō: How dare than beestes in this world ought forfayte ayenste thy deuyne purueyaunce: Also ladye ye knowen all the priuye thoughtes, in hertes no counsayle may ben hydde from your knowynge.

wherfore I wot well lady that ye knowe youre selfe that I in my conscyence am, and haue ben wyllyng to your seruyce, al coulde I neuer do as I shulde, yet forsothe fayned I neuer to loue otherwise thã was in myne herte: and yf I coulde haue made cheare to one, and ythought an other, as many other done all daye afore myne eyen, I trowe it wolde not me haue bayled. Certes quod she haddest thou so done, I wold not now haue the here vysited. Ye wete wel lady eke (quod I) that I haue not played racket, nettyll in, docke out, and with the wethercock waued and truly there ye me sette, by accorde of my conscience, I wolde not flye, tyll ye and reason by aperte strength made myne herte to tourne. In good faythe (quod she) I haue knowe the euer of tho condicions, and sythẽ thou woldest (in as moche as in the was) a made me pryuy of thy counsayle, and iuge of thy conscience, though I forsoke it in tho dayes, tyl I sawe better my tyme, wold neuer god that I shulde now fayle, but euer I wyll be ready wytnessynge thy soth in what place that euer I shall, ayenste all tho that wol the contrary susteyne: And for as moch as to me is nought vnknowen ne hydde of thy pryuy hert, but al hast thou tho thinges made to me open at the full, that hath caused my commynge into this prison to voyde the webbes of thyne eyen, to make the clerly to se the erroures thou hast bene in, and bycause that men bene of dyuers condicyons, some adradde to saye a soth, and some for a sothe anon readye to fyght, and also that I maye not my selfe bene in place to withsaye thylke men that of the speaken, otherwyse than the sothe, I woll and I charge the in vertue of obedyence, that thou to me owest, to wryten my wordes, and set hem in wrytynges that they mowe as my wytnessyng ben noted amonge the people. For bookes wrytten neyther dreden, ne shame, ne stryue conne, but only shewen the entent of the writer, and yeue remembraunce to the hearer: and yf anye woll in thy presence saye anye thynge to tho wryters, loke boldlye, truste on Mars to answer at the full. For certes I shall hym enfourme of all the trouthe in thy loue, with thy conscience, so that of his help thou shalt not barye at thy nede.

I trowe the strongeste and the best that may be founde, woll not transuers thy wordes, whereof than woldest thou drede.

Greatlye was I tho gladed of these wordes, and as who saith weren somdele lyght in hert both for the auctoritie of wytnesse & also for syckernesse of helpe of the forsayd behest, and sayd. Trulye ladye now am I well gladded through cõfort of your wordes: be it now lykynge vnto your nobleyeto shewe whiche folke defame your seruauntes, syth your seruyce ought aboue all other thynges to bene commended. Yet (quod she) I se well thy soule is not all out of the amased cloude, the were better to here thynge ẏ the myght lyght out of thyne heuy charge, and after knowynge of thyne owne heelpe, than to styr swete wordes & suche reasons to here: for in a thoughtfull soule (and namelye suche one as thou arte) woll not yet suche thynges synken. Come of therfore and let me sene thyne heuye charge, that I maye the lyghtlyer for thy comforte purueye.

Now certes ladye (quod I) the moost cõfort I myght haue, were vtterly to wete me be sure in herte of that Margaryte, I serue and so I thynke to done wyth all myghtes whyle my lyfe dureth. Thã (quod she) mayest thou thereafter, in suche wyse that myspleasaunce ne entre. In good fayth (quod I) there shall no myspleasaunce be caused through trespasse on my syde. And I do the to wetẽ (q̃ she) I set neuer yet persõ to serue in no place (but yf he caused the contrary in defaultes and trespasses) that he ne spedde of hys seruyce. Myne owne earthlye ladye (quod I tho) and yet remembre to your worthynesse how longe sythen by many reuolvynge of yeres, in tyme whan Octobre hys leue gynneth take, and Nouembre sheweth him to sight, whã bernes ben full of goodes as is the nut on enery halke, and than good lande tyllers gynne shape for the erth, with great trauayle to bryng forth more corne to mannes sustenaunce, ayenst the nexte yeres folowynge. In such tyme of plentie, he that hath an home, and is wyse, lyst not to wan-

der

der marvayles to seche, but he be constrayned or excited: oft the loth thynge is done by excitacyon of other mennes opinion, which wolden fayne haue myne abydynge, take in hert of lust, to trauayle and se the wynding of the erth in that tyme of wynter, by woodes that large stretes werne in, by smal pathes that swyne and hogges haden made, as lanes with ladles theyr maste to seche, I walked thynkynge aloone a wonder greate whyle, and the greate beestes that the wood haunten and adorneth all maner forestes, and heerdes gone to wylde: than er I was ware I neyghed to a see banke, & for ferde of the beestes shypcraft I cryed: For lady I trowe ye wete well your selfe nothynge is werse than the beestes that shulden bē tame yf they catche her wyldenesse, and gyn ayen ware ramage: thus forsothe was I aferde, and to shyppe me hyed. Than were there ynowe to latch myne handes and drawe me to shyppe, of which many I knewe well the names. Syght was the fyrst, lust was another, thought was the thyrde, and wyll eke was there a maylster: these broughten me wō in boorde of this shyppe of trauayle. So whan the sayle was spread, and this shyppe gan to moue, the wynde and water gan for to ryse, and ouerthwartly to turne ȳ welken the wawes semeden as they kyst togyther, but often vnder colour of kyssyng is mokell olde hate priuily closed and kept. The storm so straungely and in deuouryng maner gan so fast vs assayle, that I supposed the date of my deth shulde haue made there his gynnyng, now vp now downe, nowe vnder the wawe and nowe abouen, was my shyppe a great whyle. And so by mokel duresse of wethers and of stormes, and with greate auowynge pylgremages I was dryuen to an yle, where vtterly I wende fyrste to haue be rescowed, but truly at the fyrst gynnynge, it semed me so perylous the hauen to catche, that but thorowe grace I hadde bene comforted, of lyke I was full dispayred. Truly, ladye yf ye be remembred aryght of all maner thynges, your selfe came hastely to sene vs see driuen, and to weten what we weren but fyrste ye were deynous of cheare, after whyche ye goone better alyght, and euer as me thought ye lyued in greate drede of disease, it semed so by your chere.

And whan I was certifyed of your name the lenger I looked in you, the more I you goddly dradde, and euer myne herte on you opened the more, and so in a lytle tyme my shyppe was out of mynde. But ladye as ye me lad, I was ware both of beestes and of fysshes a great nōbre throngynge togyther: among which a muskell in a blewe shel had enclosed a Margaryte perle, the moost precyous and best that euer toforne came in my syght, and ye tolden youre selfe that ylke iewell in his kynde was so good and so vertuous, that her better shulde I neuer fynde, all sought I therafter to the worldes ende, and wyth that I helde my peace a greate whyle: and euer sythē I haue me bethought on the man that sought the precious Margarytes, and whan he had founden one to his lykyng, he solde all his good to bye that iewell: ȳ wys thought I, & yet so I thynke, now haue I founden the iewelle that myne hert desyreth, wherto shulde I sech ferther truly now woll I stynte, and on this Margaryte I set me for euer. Nowe than also sythen I wyst well it was your wyl that I shoulde to suche a seruyce me take, and so to desyre that thynge of whiche I neuer haue blysse, there lyueth none, but he hath disease your myght than that brought me to suche seruyce, that to me is cause of sorowe and of ioye, I wondre of your worde that ye sayne to bryngen men into ioye, and parde ye wet well that defaulte ne trespasse maye not reasonably bene put to mewardes, as farre as my conscience knoweth. But of my disease me lyste nowe a whyle to speake, and to enforme you in what maner of blysse ye haue me thronge. For truly I wene that al gladnesse, all ioye, and all myrth is beshet vnder locke, and the keye throwen in suche place ȳ it may not be founde, my brennyng wo hath altred all my hewe. whan I shoulde slepe, I walowe and I thynke, & me disporte. Thus cōbred, I seme that all folke had me mased. Also ladye myne, desyre hath longe dured, some spekynge to haue, or els at ȳ leest haue ben ennoysed with syght: and for wanting of these thinges, my mouth wolde & he durst pleyne right sore, sythen euyls for my goodnesse arne manyfolde to me yolden. I wonder lady truly, saue euerwore your reuerēce, how ye mowe for shame such thinges suffre

on youre seruaunte to be so multyplyed: wherfore knelyng with a lowe hert I praye you to rue on this caytyfe, that of nothynge now may serue. Good ladye yf ye lyst nowe your helpe to me shewe, that am of your priuyest seruauntes at al assayes in this tyme, and vnder your wynges of protection. No helpe to mewardes is shapen, how shal thā straungers in any wyse after succour loke, whan I that am so priuy, yet of helpe I do fayle. Further may I not, but thus in this prison abyde: what bondes and chaynes me holden, lady ye se wel your selfe. A renyant forfiuged hath not halfe the care. But thus syghyng and sobbynge I wayle here alone, and nere it for cōfort of your presence, ryght here wold I sterue. And yet alytle am I gladed, ý so goodly suche grace and none happe haue I hent, gracyously to fynde the precyous Margarete, that (all other lefte) meune shulde bye, yf they shulde therfore sel all her substaunce. wo is me that so manye let games and purpose brekers bene maked wayters suche prysoners as I am, euermore to ouerloke and to hyndre, and for suche lettoures, it is harde any suche iewell to wyn. Is this lady an honour to thy deytie. me thynketh by ryght, suche people shoulde haue no maystry, ne ben ouerlokers ouer none of thy seruauntes. Truly were it leful vnto you, to all the goddes wolde I playne, that ye rule youre deuyne purueyaunce amonges youre seruauntes nothyng as ye shulde. Also lady my moeble is insuffysaunt to countreuayle the pryce of this iewell, or els to make thes chaunge: eke no wyght is worthy suche perles to weare, but kynges or princes, or elles theyr peres: this iewel for vertue wolde adorne & make fayre al a realme, the nobley of vertue is so moche that her goodnesse ouer all is cōmended. who is it ý wold not wayle but he myght suche rychesse haue at his wyl the vertue therof out of this prison may me delyuer, & nought els. And yf I be not there throw holpen, I se my selfe withouten recouery: Althoughe I myght hence voyde, yet wolde I not, I wold abyde the day that desteny hath me ordained, which I suppose is without amendement, so sore is myne herte bounden, that I may thynken none other.

Thus strayte (lady,) hath syr Daunger laced me in stockes, I leue it be not your wyl; and for I se you taken so lytle hede, as me thynketh, & woll not maken by your myght the vertue in mercy of that Margaret on me for to stretch so as ye mow wel, in case that you lyst: my blysse and my myrth are felde, sykness and sorowe ben alway redy, ý cope of tene is wounde about all my bodye, that stondyng is me best, vneth may I lygge for pure mysease sorowe, and yet all this is lytel ynough to be the ernest siluer, in forward of this bargayne for treble folde, so mockell must I suffre, er tyme come of myne ease. For he is worthy no welth, that may no wo suffre. And certes I am heuye to thynke on these thynges, but who shall yeue me water ynough to drynke, lest myne eyen drye for rēnynge streames of teares. who shall waylē with me myne owne happy heuynesse. who shall counsayle me nowe in my lykyng tene, and in my goodly harse. I not. For euer the more I brenne, the more I couete, the more that I sorowe, the more thyrst I in gladnes who shal than yeue me a contrarious drink to stanch the thyrst of my blyssful bytternes. Lo thus I brenne and I drenche, I shyuer and I swet, to this reuersed euyl was neuer yet ordeyned salue, for soth all lyches ben vncomyng, saue the Margaryte aloone, anye suche remedye to purueye

And ẇ these wordes I brast out to wepe, that euery tere of myne eyen for greatnesse semed they borren oute of ý ball of my syght, and that all the water had ben out run. Thā thought me, that loue gan a lytle to heauye for miscomfort of my chere, and gan sobrely and in easye maner speake, well aduysynge what she sayde. Comenly the wyse speaken easelye and softe for manye skylles: One is, theyr wordes are the better beleued, and also in easye speakyng, auysement men maye catche, what to put forth, and what to holden in. And also the auctoritie of easye wordes is the more, and eke they yeuen themore vnderstandyng to other intention of the mater. Ryght so this lady easely and in a softe maner gan saye these wordes.

¶ Meruayle (q̃ she) great it is, that by no maner of semblaunt, as farre as I can espy thou lyste not to haue anye recoure, but euer

thou

thou playnest and sorowest, and wayes of remedye for foolysh wylfulnesse the lyst not to seche: but enquyre of thy next frēdes that is thyne in wyt, and me that haue ben thy maystresse, and the recoure and fyne of thy disease, or of disease is gladnesse and Joye, with a ful vessel so helded, that it quencheth the felyng of the fyrst tenes. But thou that were wonte not onely these thinges remembre in thyne herte, but also fooles thereof to enfourmen, in adnullynge of theyr errours, and distroying of theyr darke opinions, and in comforte of theyr seare thoughtes: nowe canst thou not bene comforte of thyne owne soul, in thynkyng of these thinges. O where hast thou ben so longe commensal, that hast so mykell eeten of the pottages of forzetful nesse: and dronken so of ignorauncе, that the olde soukyng which thou hadest of me, arne a maystred and lorne fro all maner of knowynge. O this is a worthy parson to helpe other, that can not counsayle hym selfe. And with these wordes for pure & stronge shame I wore all reed.

And she than seing me so astonyed by dyuers stoundes, sodaynly (which thyng kynd hateth) gan delyciously me comforte wyth sugred wordes, puttyng me in ful hope that I shulde the Margarete getten, yf I folowed her heestes, and gan with a fayre cloth to wypen the teares that hyngen on my chekes: and than sayde I in this wyse. Nowe well of wyldome and of all welth, withouten the may nothyng be lerned, thou bearest the keyes of all pryuye thynges. In vayne trauayle men to catche any stedfyyp, but yf ye lady fyrst the locke vnshet, ye lady learne vs the wayes and the by pathes to heauen: ye lady maken al the heuenly bodyes goodly and benigly to do her course, that gouernen vs beestes here on erth. Ye armen youre seruauntes ayenst all debates, with impercyable harneys, ye letten in her hertes insuperable bloud of hardynesse, ye leden hem to the parfyte good. Yet all thynge desyreth, ye werne no man of helpe that wele done your lore, graunt me now a lytle of your grace, al my sorowes to cease. Myne owne seruaunte (q̃ she) truly thou syttest nye myne herte and thy bad chere gan sorryly me greue: but a nonge thy playnyng wordes me thought thou allegest thynges to be lettyng of thyne helpyng, and thy grace to hyndre, wherthorowe me thynketh that wanhoope is crope through thyne herte: God forbyd that nyse vnthryfty thought shulde come in thy mynd thy wyttes to trouble, sythen euery thyng in cōmyng is contingente, wherefore make no more thy proposition by an impossyble. But nowe I praye the reherse me ayen tho thynges, that thy mistrust causen, and thilke thinges I thynke by reason to destroyen, & put full hope in thyne hert. what vnderstandest thou ther (q̃ she) by that thou saydest many lette games are thyne ouerlokers. And also by that, thy moeble is insuffysaunte, I not what thou therof meanest

Truly (quod I) by the fyrste, I saye that iangelers euermore arne speakynge rather of euyll than of good, for euerye age of man rather enclyneth to wyckednesse, than anye goodnesse to auaunce. Also false wordes spryngen so wyde, by the steryng of false lyinge tonges, that fame als swyftly flyeth to her eares, and sayeth many wycked tales, & as soone shall falsenesse ben leued as truthe, for all his great sothnesse. Nowe by ỳ other (quod I) me thynketh thylke iewel so precious, that to no suche wretch as I am, wold vertue thereof extende, and also I am to feble in worldly ioyes, any suche iewell to cōtreuayle. For suche people that worldlye ioyes han at her wyl, ben set at the hyghest degree, and moost in reuerence bene accepted, for false wenynge maketh felicitie therein to be supposed: but suche caytyues as I am euermore ben hyndred. Certes (quod she) take good hede, and I shall by reason to the shewen, that all these thynges mowe not let thy purpose, by the leeste poynte that anye wyght coude prycke.

REmembrest not (quod she) ensample is one of the strōgest maner as for to preue a mans purpose. Than if I now by ensample enduce the to any propositiō, is it not proued by strength. Yes for soth (q̃ I) wel (quod she) raddest thou neuer how Paris of Troy and Heleyne loued together, and yet had they not entrecomuned of speche. Also Acrisyus shette Dane hys doughter in a tour, for surete that no wight shulde of her haue no mastry in my seruyce,

and yet Jupiter by fygnes withoute anye
fpech had all his purpofe ayenft her fathers
wyll. And many fuche mo haue ben knytte
in trouth,and yet fpake they neuer togyder:
for that is a thynge enclofed vnder fecret-
nelle of priuitie, why twe perfonnes entre-
mellen hertes after a fyght. The power in
knowynge of fuche thynges fo preuen,fhall
not all vtterlye be yeuen to you beeftes, for
manye thynges in fuche precyous maters,
ben referued to iudgement of deuine purvey
aunce,for amonge lyuynge people,by mans
confyderation moune they not be determy-
ned. wherefore I faye,all the enuye,all the
ianglynge, that welny people vpon my fer-
uauntes maken efte, is rather caufe of ef-
ployte than of any hyndrynge.why than(q
I)fuffre ye fuche wronge,and moune whan
ye lyft,lyghtlye all fuche euyls abate,me fe-
meth to you it is a greate vnworfhyp. O(q
fhe)holde nowe thy peace, I haue founden
to manye that han bene to me vnkynde,that
truly I wol fuffre euery wyght in that wife
to haue difeafe,and who that contynueth to
the ende well and truly,hem woll I helpen,
and as for one of myne into blyffe to wende
as Parcial doing in Grece.who was pero-
wned,by God not the ftrongeft, but he that
rathelt come and longeft abode and conty-
nued in the iourneye, and fpared not to tra-
uayle as longe as the play left.

But thylke perfon that profred hym now
to my feruyce therin is a whyle,& anon voy-
deth and redy to an other,and fo now one he
thynketh and now an other,and into water
entreth and anon refpyreth,fuch one lift me
not into parkyte blyffe of my feruyce brynge
A tree ofte fet in dyuers places woll not by
kynde endure to brynge forth frutes. Loke
now I praye the,howe myne olde feruaun-
tes of tyme paffed continued in her feruyce,
and folowe thou after theyr fteppes,& than
myght thou not fayle, in cafe thou worch in
this wife.Certes(quod I)it is nothing lich
this worlde to tyme paffed, eke this countre
hath one manet,& an other coũtrie hath,ano
ther.And fo may not a mã alway put to his
eye the falue that he healed with his hele.
For this is foth,betwex two thynges lyche
oft dyuerfitie is requyred.Now(q fhe)that
is foth,diuerfitie of nacion,diuerfitie of law
as was maked by manye reafons, for that
diuerfitie cõmeth in by the contrarious ma-
lyce of wicked people ỳ han enuyous hertes
ayenft other.But trulye my lawe to my fer-
uauntes euer hath ben in generall, whyche
maye not fayle,for ryght as mans lawes ỳ
is ordeyned by many determinacions, may
not be know for good or bad, tyl affay of the
people han proued it,and to what end it dra
weth,and than it fheweth the neceffitie ther
of,or els the impoffibilitie.Ryght fo ỳ lawe
of my feruauntes fo wel hath ben proued in
generall,that hytherto hath it not fayled.

wyfte thou not well, that all the lawe of
kynde is my lawe,and by god ordeyned and
ftablyffhed to dure by kynde reafoun,wher-
fore all lawe by mans wyt purueyed,ought
to be vnderput to lawe of kynde,whiche yet
hath be cõmune to euery kyndly creature, ỳ
my ftatutes and my lawes than ben kyndly
are generall to all peoples. Olde doinges,&
by many turnynges of yeres vfed,and with
the peoples maner proued, mowen not fo
lyghtly ben defafed, but newe doinges con-
trariaunces fuch olde,often caufen difeafes
and breaken many purpofes.Yet faye I not
therefore, that ayen newe myfchefe, menne
fhulde not ordaynen a newe remedy, but al-
way loke it contrary not the olde,no ferther
than the malyce ftretcheth. Than folowetb
it the olde doinges in loue han bene vniuer-
fall,as for moofl exployte forth vfed: wher-
fore I woll not yet, that of my lawes no-
thynge be admulled.

But than to the purpofe, fuche iangelers
and lokers, and wayters of games,yf they
thynke in ought they mowe dere, yet loue
well alwaye,and fet hem at nought, and let
thy portes ben lowe in euery wyghtes pre-
fence, and redy in thyne herte to mayntayne
that thou hafl begonne,and a lytle the fayne
with mekenelle in wordes, and thus wyth
fleyght fhalt thou furmoũt and dequace the
euyll in theyr hertes.And wyfdome yet is to
feme flye otherwhyle there a man wol fight
Thus with fuche thynges, the tonges of e-
uyll fhall ben ftylled: els fully to graunt thy
full meanynge, for fothe euer was and euer
it fhall be,that myne enemyes ben aferde to
truft to anye fyghtynge, and therfore haue
thou no cowardes herte in my feruyce, no-
more than fomtyme thou haddeft in the con
trary,for yf thou drede fuche ianglers, thy

viage

viage to make: vnderstād wel ý he ý dredeth any rayn to sow his cornes, he shal haue thā thynne bernes. Also he ý is aferde of his clothes, let hym dauce naked. who nothing vndertaketh, & namely in my seruyce, nothyng acheueth. After great stormes the wether is often mery and smoth. After much clatering there is mokyll rownynge: thus after ianglynge wordes cometh hyrshte, peace, and be styl. O good lady (quod I than) se now how seuen yere passed and more, haue I graffed & groubed a vyne, & with all the wayes that I conde I soughte to a fed me of the grape, but fruite haue I none founde. Also haue I thys seuen yere serued Laban to a wedded Rachell his doughter, but bicreeyed Lya is brought to my bedde, whiche alway engendreth my tene, and is ful of children in tribulacion & in care: and although the clepinges and kyssynges of Rachell shulde seme to me swete, yet is she so barayn, that gladnesse ne ioye by no way wol sprynge, so that I maye wepe with Rachel, I may not ben counsayled wyth solace, sythen issue of myne hertely desyre is fayled. Nowe than I praye that to me sone fredome and grace, in this eyght yere, this eyghteth mowe to me both by kinrest & masseday after the seuen werkedayes of trauayle, to folowe the christen lawe: and what euer ye do eis, that thylke Margaryte be holden so lady in your priuye chābre, that she in thys case to none other person be committed: Loke than (quod she) thou perseuer in my seruice, in which I haue the groūded, that thylke skorne in thyne enemyes mowe this on thy person be not sothed: lo this man beganne to edesye, but for hys foundemente is badde, to the ende maye he not it bringe. For mekenesse in costenaunce, wyth a manly hert in dedes, and in longe countynaunce, is the conysaunce of my lyuerye, to al my retynue deliuered. What wenyst thou that me lyste auaunce suche personnes as louen the fyrste syttynges at feestes, the hyghest stoles in churches, and in hal, loutinges of peoples in markettes and fayres, vnstedfaste to byde in one place anye whyle togyther, wenynge hys owne wytte more excelient than other, scornynge all maner deuyse but hys owne: Naye naye God wotte, these shul nothyng pertteyne of my blysse. Truly my maner here toforne hathe ben wyrshyppe wyth my blysse, Lyons in the felde, and lambes in chambre, Egles at assaute and maydens in halle, foxes in counsayle, styl in theyr dedes, and theyr protection is graūted redy to ben a brydge, and theyr baner is arered like wolues in the felde. Thus by these wayes shull men ben auaunced: ensample of Dauid that from keppynge of shepe, was drawen vp into the order of kyngly gouernaunce, and Jupiter frō a bole to bene Europes fere, and Julius Cesar from the lowest degre in Rome, to be mayster of all erthly princes, and Eneas from hel, to be kinge of the countre there Rome is nowe stondynge. And so to the I saye, thy grace by bearynge therafter, maye sette the in suche plyghte, that no ianglynge maye greue the lest tucke of thy hēmes, that are theyr ianghes, is noughte to counte at a cresse in thy disauauntage.

Ver (quod she) hath the people in thys worlde desyred to haue had great name in worthynesse, & hated foule to bere anye fame, and that is one of ý obiections thou alegest to be ayen thyn hertely desyre. Ye forsothe (quod I) & that so comenly the people wol lye, and brynge about such enfame. Now (q̄ she) yf men wyth leasynges put on enfame, wenest thy selfe therby ben enpeyred: that wenyng is wronge, se why: for asmuch as they lyen thy merite encreaseth, and make the bene more worthy to hem that knowen of the soth, by what thing thou art apeyred, that in so mokyl thou arte encreased of thy beloued frendes: and sothly a wounde of thy frend to the lasse harme, ye syr, and better than a false kyssyng in disceyuable glosynge af thyne enemye, aboue that than to be wel with thy frende maketh such enfame. Ergo thou art encreased and not apeyred. Lady (quod I) somtyme yet yf a mā be in disease, the estymacyon of the enuyouse people ne loketh nothyng to desertes of menne to the merites of theyr doynges, but only to the aucture of fortune, and therafter they yeuen theyr sentence: and some loken the voluntarye wyll in his herte, and therafter telleth hys iugement, not takynge hede to reasonne to the qualyte of the doynge, as thus. If a mā be riche and fulfylled with worldly

welefulnesse, some commenden it, and saine it is so lente by iuste cause: and he that hath aduersyte, they sayne he is weaked, & hathe deserued thylke anoye. The cōtrary of these thynges some men holden also, & sayne that to the rych, prosperyte is puruayed into his confusyon, and vpon thys mater manye authorites of many and greate wytted clerkes they alegen. And some men sayne, thoughe all good estimacyon forsaken folke that han aduersyte, yet it is meryte & encrease of hys blysse, so that these purposes arne so wonderfull in vnderstandynge, that trewlye for myne aduersytie nowe I not howe the sentence of the indifferent people wyl iugen my fame. Therfore (quod she) yf anye wyghte shulde yeue a trew sentence on such maters, the cause of the disease mayste thou se well, vnderstāde therupon after what ende it drawetb, ý is to sayne, good or badde, so ought it to have his fame or by goodnesse, enfame by badnesse, for euery reasonable person, and namely of a wyse man, his wytte ought not wout reason toforne herde, sodainly in a mater to iuge. After the sawes of the wise, thou shalt not iuge ne deme toforne thou knowe. Lady (q̃ I) ye remembre wel that in moost laude and praysynge of certayne sayntes in holy churche, is to rehersen their conuercyon from badde into good, and that is so rehersed, as by a perpetuall myrroure of remembraunce in worshypping of tho sayntes, and good ensample to other misdoers in amēdement. Howe turned the romayne zedeorcys fro the Romaynes, to be wyth Hanyball ayenst hys kynde nacyon: and afterwardes hym semyng the romaynes to be at the next degree of cōfusyon, turned to hys olde alyes by whose witte after was Hanibal discomfyted. Wherfore to enfourme you Lady the maner why I meane, se nowe in my youth I was drawe to bene assentaunt and in my myghtes helpinge to certayne conuiracions and other greate matters of rulynge of citezins, and thylke thynges ben my drawers in, & exitours to tho maters werne so paynted and coloured, that at the prime face, me semed them noble & glorious to all the people: I than wenynge mykel meryte haue deserued in furtherynge and mayntenaunce of tho thynges, besyed and laboured. wyth all my diligence, in werkynge of thylke maters to the ende. And trewlye lady to tell you the sothe, me roughte, lytell of anye hate of the myghty Senatours in thylke citie, ne of comunes malyce, for two skylles: One was I had comforte to bene in suche plyte, that both profyte were to me and to my frendes. Another was for cōmen profite in cominalty is not but peace and tranquilytie, wyth iust gouernaunce proceden from thylke profyte, sythen by counsayl of myne inwitte, me thought the fyrste paynted thynges, malyce and euell meanynge, wythouten anye good auaylynge to any people, & of tyrannye purposed, and so for pure sorow and of my medlynge and bad infame that I was in ronne, tho teeres lached oute of myne eyen, were thus awaye washe, than the vnder hyd malyce and the rancoure of purposynge enuye fornecaste and ymagined, in distruction of mokyl people, shewed so openly, that had I bene blynde, wyth myne hondes all the circumstaunce I myght well haue feled.

Now than tho personnes that such thynges haue caste to redresse, for wrathe of my fyrste medlynge, shopen me to dwell in this pynande prison, tyll Lachases my threde no lēger wolde twine. And euer I was sought yf me lyst to haue grace of my lyfe, and frenesse of that prison, I shulde openly confesse how peace myght ben enduled to endē al the fyrste rancours. It was fully supposed my knowynge to be ful in tho maters. Than lady I thoughte that euery man that by anye waye of ryght, ryghtfully done, maye helpe any comune help to ben saued, which thyng to kepe aboue all thynges I am holde to mayntayne, and namely in distroyenge of a wronge, all shulde I therthroughe enpeche myne owne fere, yf he were gylty, and to do myslede assentaunt, and mayster ne frende may nought auayle to the soule of hym that in falsnesse dyeth, & also that I nere desyred wrathe of the people, ne indignacyon of the worthy, for nothynge that euer I wrought or dyd, in any doynge my selfe els, but in the mayntenaunce of these foresayd erroures, & in hydinge of the priuytees therof. And that all the peoples hertes holdynge on the erroures syde, weren blynde and of elde so ferforthe begyled, that debate and stryfe they mayntenyed, & in distruction on that other syde, by wyche cause the peace, that moost

in cominaltie shuld be desyred, was in point to be broken and admulled. Also the Citie of London, that is to me so dere and swete, in which I was forth growen, & more kyndly loue I haue to that peace thã to any other in earthe, as euery kyndely creature hathe full appetyte to that place of hys kyndly engendrure, and to wylne reste and peace in that stede to abide: thylke peace shulde thus there haue bene broken, and of all wyse it is commended and desyred. For knowe thynge it is, all men that desyren to comen to the perfyte peace euerlastynge, muste the peace by God commended, both maintayn and kepe. Thys peace by aungelles voice was confirmed, oure God entrynge in thys worlde.

Thys as for hys Testamente he lefte to all hys frendes, whan he retourned to the place from whence he came: thys hys Apostle amonesteth to holden, wythout whyche man perfytely maye haue none insyght. Also this God by hys commynge, made not peace alone betwene heuenly and erthly bodies, but also amonge vs on earth, so he peace confirmed, that in one heade of loue, one bodie we shulde perfourme. Also I remembre me wel how the name of Athenes was rather after the God of peace than of batayle, shewynge that peace mooste is necessarye to the comunalties & cities, I than so styred by all these wayes to forne nempned, declared certeyne pointes in thys wyse. Fyrste ý thylke persones ý hadden me drawen to their purposes, and me not wetyng the priuy entent of their meaning, drawẽ also the feable witted people ý haue none insyght of gubernatyke prudẽce to clamur & to crie on maters ý they styred, and vnder poyntes for comune auauntage, they enbolded the passyke to take in the actyues doynge, and also styred innocentes of connynge to crye after thynges, whyche (quod they) may not stande but we bene executours of tho matters, and auctorite of execucion by comen electiõ to vs be delyuered & that must entre by strength of your maynteynaunce, for we out of suche degree put, oppression of these olde hyndrers shall agayne surmounten and putten you in such subiection, that in endelesse wo ye shull complaine. The gouernementes (quod they) of your citie left in the handes of torcencious citezins shall bryngе in pestilence and distruction to you good men, and therfore let vs haue the comune administration to abate such yuels. Also (quod they) it is worthy the good to cõmende, and the gyltye desertes to chastice. There bene citezins many for ferde of execucyon that shall be doone, for extorcyons by hem committed, bene euer more ayenst these purposes, and all other good meanynges.

Neuer the latter Ladye, trewelye the meanynge vnder these wordes, was fullye to haue apeched the myghty senatours, which hadden heauy herte for the misgouernaunce that they seen. And so lady whan it fell that free election, by great clamour of much people, for greate disease of mysgouernaunce so feruently stoden in her electiõ, that they hem submitted to euerye maner face, rather than haue suffred the maner and the rule of the hated gouernours, not wythstandinge that in the contrary helden much comune meyny that haue no consideration, but onely to voluntary lustes, withouten reason. But than thylke gouernoure so forsaken, faynynge to forne hys vndoynge for misrule in his time, shope to haue letted thylk election, and haue made a newe hym selfe to haue bene chosen, and vnder that mokyll rore haue arered.

These thynges Ladie knowen amonge the princes, & made open to the people, draweth in amendement, that euery degree shal bene ordayned to stande there as he shulde, & that of errours coming, herafter men may lightly to forne hande puruaye remedye, in thys wyse peace and rest to be furthered & holde. Of the whiche thinges lady, thylke persons broughten in answere to forne theyr mooste souerayne iuge, not coarted hy paynyng dures, openlye knowlegeden, and asked therof grace, so that apertly it preueth my wordes bene sothe, without forgyng of leasynges.

But nowe it greueth me to remẽbre these dyuers sentences, in iauglyng of these shepy people: certes me thynketh they oughten to maken ioye that a sothe maye be knowe. For my trouth and my conscience bene wytnesse to me bothe, that thys knowyng sothe haue I sayde for no harme ne malyce of tho personnes, but onely for trouth of my sacramẽt in my leigiaunce, by whych I was charged on my kynges behalfe. But se ye not nowe ladye howe the felonous thoughtes of thys people, and couyns of wycked men, conspy-

ren

ten ayen my sothfast trouth. Se ye not euy-
uery wyghte that to these erronyous opiny-
ons were assentaunt and helpes to the noise
and knewen all these thynges better than I
my seluen, apparaylen to fynden newe fren-
des, and cleapen me false, and studyen howe
they mowen in her mouthes werse plyte
nempne. O God what maye thys be, that
thylke folke whyche ý in tyme of my mayn-
tenaunce, and whan my myghte auayled to
stretche to the forsayde maters, tho me com-
mended, and yaue me name of trouthe, in so
manifolde maners that it was nygh in eue-
ry wyghtes eere, there as any of thylke peo-
ple weren: and on the other side, thylke com-
pany somtyme passed, yeuynge me name of
badde loos. Nowe bothe tho peoples tour-
ned the good into badde, and bad into good
whyche thynge is wonder, that they know-
ynge me sayeng but sothe, arne nowe temp-
ted to reply her olde praysynges, & knowen
me well in al doynges to bene trewe, & saine
openly that I false haue sayde manye thyn-
ges. And they alleged nothynge me to bene
false or vntrewe, saue thylke mater knowle-
ged by the parties hem selfe, and God wote
other mater is none. Ye also Ladye knowe
these thynges for trewe, I auaunte not in
praysing of my selfe, therby shulde I lese the
precioufe secre of my cōscience. But ye se wel
that false opiniō of the people for my trouth
in tellynge out of false cōspyred maters, and
after the iugement of these clerkes, I shulde
not hyd the sothe of no maner person, may-
ster ne other, wherefore I wolde not drede,
were it put in the cōsyderacion of trewe and
of wyse. And for comers hereafter shullen
fullye out of den were, al the sothe knowe of
these thynges in acte, but as they werne I
haue put it in scripture, in perpetuel remem-
braunce of trewe meanynge. For trewly la-
dy me semeth, ý I oughte to beare the name
of trouth, that for the loue of ryghtwysnesse
haue me thus submytten: But nowe than
the false fame whyche that clerkes sayne fly-
eth as faste as doth ý fame of trouth, shal so
wyde sprede, tyll it be brought to the iewell
that I of meane, and so shal I bene hindred
withouten any measure of trouth.

Han gan Loue sadly me
beholde & said in a chan-
ged voyce, lower thā she
had spoken in any tyme.
Fayne wolde I (q̃ she)
that thou were holpen,
but haste thou saide any
thynge whyche ý might
not prouen. Parde (quod I) the personnes,
euery thynge as I haue sayde, han knowle-
ged hem selfe. Yea (q̃ she) but what yf they
haddē nayed, how woldest thou haue main-
teyned it. Sothly (quod I) it is well wyste
bothe amongeste the greateste, and other of
the realme, ý I profered my body so largely
in to prouynge of tho thynges, that Mars
shulde haue iuged the ende: but for sothnesse
of my wordes they durst not to thylke iuge
truste. Nowe certes (quod she) aboue al fa-
mes in this worlde, the name of mercial do-
ynges most pleasen to ladies of my lore, but
sythen thou were redye, and thyne aduersa-
ryes in thy presence refused thylke doynge,
thy fame oughte to be so borne, as yf in dede
it had take to the ende. And therfore euerye
wyght that any droppe of reason hathe, and
hereth of the infame, for these thynges hath
thys answere to saye: trewlye thou saydeste
for thine aduersaries thy wordes affirmed.
And yf thou haddest lyed, yet are they discō-
fited, the prise leaneth on thy syde, so ý fame
shal holde downe infame, he shal bryngeupp
on none halfe. What greueth the thyne ene-
mye to saine their owne shame: as thus: we
arne discōfyted, and yet oure quarel is true.
Shal not they loos of thy frēdes ayenward
dequace thylke enfame, & say they graunted
a sothe wythout a stroke or fyghtynge. Ma-
ny men in batayle ben discomfited, and ouer
come in a ryghtfull quarell, that is Goddes
priuy iugement in heuen: but yet althoughe
the partye be yolden, he maye wyth wordes
saye hys quarell is trewe, and to yelde hym
in the contrary for drede of death, he is com-
pelled: and he that graunteth and no stroke
hath feled, he maye not crepe awaye in thys
wyse, by none excusacyon. Indifferent folke
wyll saye, ye who is trew, who is false, him
selfe knowlegeth tho thynges. Thus in eue-
ry side fame sheweth to the good & no badde
But yet (quod I) some wyl saye I ne shulde
for no dethe haue discouered my maystresse,

and

and so by vnkyndnesse they woll knytte enfame to pursue me aboute: thys enemyes of wyll in manyfolde maner woll seche priuye serpentynes queyntyses, to quenche and distroy by venym of many besinesses the light of truthe, to make hertes to murmure ayenst my personne, to haue me in hayne wythouten anye cause. Nowe (quod she) here me a fewe wordes, and thou shalte fully bene answerde I trowe. Me thynketh (quod she) ryght nowe by thy wordes, that sacrament of swearynge, that is to saye, chargynge by oth was one of the causes to make the to discouer the malicious ymagynacions to forne nempned, euery oth by knytting of copulation muste haue these lawes. That is trewe iudgemente and ryghtwysnesse, in whyche thynge if any of these lacke, the othe is yturned into the name of periurye: than to make a trewe serment, moost nedes these thynges folowe, for ofte tymes a man to saye sothe, but iugemente and iustyce folowe he is forsworne: ensample of Herodes for holdynge of hys serment was dampned.

Also to saye truthe ryghtfullyche but in iugemente otherwhyle is forboden, by that all sothes be not to sayne. Therfore in iugemente in truth and ryghtwysenesse is euery creature bounden vp payne of periurye full knowyng to make, tho it were of hys owne personne for drede of sinne, after that worde better is it to dey thã lyue false, and al wold peruerted people false reporte make in vnkyndnesse, in that entente thy fame to reyse, whan light of truth in these maters is forth sprongen, and openly publyshed amonge cõmens, than shall not such derke enfame dare appere for pure shame of hys falsenesse, as some men there ben that their owne enfame can none otherwyse voyde or els excuse, but by hyndrynge of other mennes fame, which that by none other cause, cleapen other men false, but for with theyr owne falsenesse mowen they not bene auaunsed, or els by false sklaũdryng wordes, other mẽ shendyn their owne trew sklaunder, to make seme the lasse for yf suche men wolden theyr eyen of theyr cõscience reuoluẽ, shulden sene the same sentence they legẽ on other, springe out of their sides, wyth so manye braunches it were impossible to nombre. To whych therfore may it be sayd in that thynge, thys man thou demest, therin thy selfe thou condempnest. But (quod she) vnderstaude not by these wordes ỳ thou wene me say the to be worthy sclaunder, for any mater to fore wrytten, truely I wolde wytnesse the contrary, but I say that the beames of sclaundrynge wordes, maye not be done awaye tyl the daye of dome. For how shulde it nat yet amõges so great plentie of people ben many shrewes, sithen whã no mo but eyght personnes in Noes shyppe were closed, yet one was a shrewe and skorned his father. These thynges (quod she) I trow, shewen that false fame is not to drede ne of wyse personnes to accepte, and namely not of thy Margarite, whose wysedome here after I thynke to declare, wherfore I wotte well such thynge shal not her asterte, than of vnkyndnesse thyne othe hathe the excused at the fulle. But nowe yf thou woldest not greue, me lyst a fewe thynges to shewe. Saye on (quod I) what ye wol, I trowe ye meane but trouth, and my profite in tyme cõmynge. Trewely (quod she) that is sothe, so thou con well kepe these wordes, and in the inrest secre chaumbre of thyne herte, so faste hem close that they neuer flytte, than shalte thou fynde hem auaylyng. Loke now what people hast thou serued, whiche of hem al in tyme of thyne exile euer the refreshed, by the valew of the lest coyned plate that walketh in money. who was sory or made any reuth for thy disease: yf they hadden getten theyr purpose of thy misauenture sette they not an haw. Lo whã thou were enprisonned, how faste they hyed in helpe of thy delyueraunce. I wene of thy deth they yeue but lyte: They loked after no thynge, but after theyr owne lustes. And yf thou lyste saye the sothe, all that meyny that in this brygge the brongh-ten, lokeden rather after thyne helpes, than the to haue releued.

Owen nat yet some of hem money for hys commens: Paydest nat thou for some of her dispences, tyll they were tourned out of Selande: who yaue the euer ought for any rydynge thou madest: yet pardy some of hem token money for thy chambre, and put tho pens in hys purse vnweting of the rẽter.

Lo for whyche a company thou medieste, that neyther the ne hem selfe myghten helpe of vnkyndnesse, nowe they beare the name that thou supposeste of hem for to haue.

What

What myghte thou more hane doone than thou dydeste, but yf thou woldeste in a false quarell haue bene a stynkynge martyr. I wene thou fleddest as longe as thou might, theyr priuytie to consayle, whyche thynge thou heleste lenger than thou shuldest. And thilke that ought the money no penny wold paye, they wende thy retourne had bene an impossible. Howe myghte thou better haue hem proued, but thus in thy nedye diseases. Nowe haste thou ensample for whom thou shalte meddle: trewely thys lore is worthe many goodes.

Fte gaune loue to sterne me these wordes, thynke on my speche, for trewly here after it woll do the lyking, and howe so euer thou se fortune shape her wheele to tourne, thys meditation by no waye reuolue. For certes fortune sheweth her fayrest, whan she thynketh to begyle. And as me thoughte here to forne thou saydeste thy loos in loue, for thy ryghtwesenesse oughte to be rayled, shulde be a lowed in tyme comynge. Thou myghte in loue so the haue, that loos and fame shull so bene rayled, that to thy frendes comforte and sorowe to thyne enemyes endelesse shul endure.

But yf thou were that one shepe amōges the hundred were loste in deserte, and out of the waye had erred, and nowe to the flocke arte restored, the shepeherde hathe in the no ioy, and thou ayen to the forrest tourne. But that ryght as the sorowe and anguysh was greate in the tyme of thyne out way goyng, ryght so ioye and gladnesse shall be doubled to sene the conuerted, & not as Lothes wyfe ayen lokynge, but hoole counsayle wyth the shepe folowyng, and wyth them grasse and herbes gadre. Neuer the later (quod she) I saye not these thinge for no wantrust that I haue in supposynge of the otherwise than I shulde. For trewly I watte well, that nowe thou arte set in such a purpose, out of which the lyste not to parte. But I saye it, for many men there bene, that to knowing of other mennes doynges setten all theyr cure, and lyghtlye desyren the badde to clatter rather than the good, and haue no wyl theyr owne maner to amende. They also hate of olde rācoure lyghtly hauen, & there that such thyng abideth, sodainly in theyr mothes procedeth the abundaunce of the herte, and wordes as stones, stones out throw. wherfore my cōsayle is euer more openlye and apertelye, in what place thou syt, countreplete therrours and meaninges, in as farre as thou hem wyst false, and leaue for no wyghte to make hem be knowe in euery bodyes eare, and be alwaye paciente and vse Jacobes wordes, what so euer menne of the clappen, I shall sustayne my ladyes wrathe whyche I haue deserued, so longe as my Margaryte hathe rightwysed my cause. And certes (quod she) I wytnesse my selfe, yf thou thus conuerted sorowesse in good meanynge in thyne herte, wolte from all vanytie parfytelye departe, in consolatioun of al good plesaunce of that Margaryte, whiche that thou desyreste after wyl thyne herte, in a maner of a mothers pytie, shull fully accepte the into grace. For ryghte as thou rentest clothes in open syght so openlye to sowe hem at hys worshyppe wythouten reprofe commended. Also ryght as thou were ensample of muche folde erroure, ryghte so thou muste be ensample of manyfolde correction, so good sauoure to forgoynge all erroure distroyeng causeth dilygent loue, with many playted praysinges to folowe, and than shal all the fyrst errours make the folowynge worshyppes to seme hugely encreased, blacke and whyte sette togyder, euerye for other more semeth, and so dothe euery thynges contrary in kynde. But infame that gothe alwaye to fore, and praysynge worshyppe by any cause folowing after, maketh to ryse thylke honoure in double of welth, and that quēcheth the spotte of the fyrst enfame. why wenist I saye these thynges, in hyndrynge of thy name. Naye naye god wotte, but for pure encreasing worship thy ryghtwysnesse to cōmende, & thy trouth to seme the more. wost not wel thy selfe, that thou in fourme of makynge passeth not Adā that ete of the apple. Thou passeth not the stedfastnesse of Noe, ý eatynge of the grape become dronke. Thou passeth not the chastyte of Lothe, that laye by hys doughter. Eke the nobley of Abraham, whō god reproued by hys pryde. Also Dauides mekenesse,

whych

whyche for a woman made Troye be slawe. What also Hector of Troye, in whome no defaute myght be founde, yet is he reproued that he ne hadde wyth manhode not suffered the warre begonne, ne Paris to haue wente into Grece, by whome ganne all the sorowe: for trewly hym lacketh no venyme of pryue consentynge, whyche that openlye leaueth a wronge to wythsaye.

Lo eke an olde prouerbe amōges many other, he that is styll semeth as he graunted.

Now by these ensamples, thou myght fully vnderstonde, that these thynges ben wryte to your lernynge, & in ryghtwyseneſſe of tho persones, as thus: To euery wyght hys defaute cōmitted, made goodneſſe afterwardes done, be the more in reuerēce and in open shewynge, for ensample is it not songe in holye church. Lo howe necessary was Adās synne Dauyd the kynge gat Salomō the kynge of her that was Uries wyfe. Truly for reprofe is none of these thinges wrytte: Right so tho I reherce thy before dede, I repreue ỳ neuer the more, ne for no vyllany of the are they reherſed, but for worſchyppe, so thou contynue well here after, and for profyte of thy selfe, I rede thou on hem thynke.

Then sayd I ryght thus. Lady of vnyte and accorde, enuye and wrathe lurken there thou comest in place, ye wetē well your selue and so done many other, that whyle I administred the offyce of cōmen doynge, as in rulynge of the stablyshmentes amōges the people, I defouled neuer my conscience for no maner dede, but euer by wytte and by counsayle of the wyſest, the maters were drawen to theyr ryght endes. And thus trewlye for you ladye I haue desyred suche cure, and certes in youre seruyce was I not ydell, as ferre as suche doynge of my cure stretcheth. That is a thynge (quod she) that may drawe many hertes of noble, and voyce of cōmune in to glorye, and fame is not but wretched and fyckle.

Alas that mankynde coueyteth in so leude a wyse, to be rewarded of any good dede, sith glorye of fame in this worlde, is not but hyndrynge of glorye in tyme cōmynge. And certes (quod she) yet at the hardest such fame in to heauen, is not the erthe but a centre to the cercle of heuen. And prycke is wōder lytell in respecte of al ỳ cercle, and yet in al this prycke may no name be borne in maner of peersyng for many obstacles, as waters and wylderneſſe, and straunge langages, and not onely names of men ben stylled and holden oute of knowlegynge by these obstacles, but also cyties & realmes of prosperite ben letted to be know, and theyr reason hyndred, so that they mow not ben parfytly in mennes proper vnderstandynge. Howe shulde then the name of a synguler londenoys passe the glorious name of London, whyche by many it is commended, and by many it is lacked, and in many mo places in erthe not knowen, then knowen: for in many countrees lytel is London in knowyng or in speche, and yet among one maner of people may not suche fame in goodneſſe come, for as many as praysen comenly as many lacken. Fye then on suche maner fame, slepe and suffre hym that knoweth preuyte of hertes, to dele suche fame, in thylke place there nothynge ayenst a sothe shal neyther speake ne dare appere, by atturney ne by other maner. Howe many great named and many greate in worthyneſſe losed, han be tofore thys tyme, that now out of memorie are slydden and clenely forgetten, for defaute of wrytynges, and yet scriptures for great elde so ben defased, ỳ no perpetualte maye in hem ben iuged. But yf thou wolte make comparison to euer, what ioy mayst thou haue in erthlye name, it is a fayre lykeneſſe, a pees or one grayne of wheate, to a thousand shyppes ful of corne charged. What nombre is betwene the one and thother, and yet mowe both they be nombred, and ende in rekenyng haue. But trewly all that maye be nombred, is nothyng to recken, as to thylke that maye not be nombred, for ofte thynges ended is made comparyson, as one lytel, another great, but in thinges to haue an ende, and another no ende, suche comparyson maye not be founden. wherfore in heauen to ben losed wyth God hath none ende, but endleſſe endureth, and thou canste nothynge done aryght, but thou desyre the rumoure therof be healed and in euerye wyghtes eare, and that dureth but a prycke in respect of the other. And so thou sekest rewarde of folkes smale wordes, and of vayne praysynges. Trewly therin thou leſest the guerdon of vertue, and leſest the greatest valoure of conscience, and vphap they re-

nome euerlastyng. Therfore boldely renome of fame of the erthe shuld be hated, and fame after deth shulde be desyred, of werkes of vertue asketh guerdoning, and the soule causeth al vertue: Thē the soule delyuered out of prisone of erthe, is most worthy suche guerdone amonge to haue in the euerlastynge fame, & not the body that causeth all mannes yuels.

If tweye thynges arte thou answered as me thynketh (quod Loue) and yf any thynge be in doute in thy soule, shewe it forth thyne ignoraūce to clere, and leaue it for no shame. Certes (quod I) there ne is no bodye in thys worlde, that ought coude saye by reason ayenst any of your skylles, as I leue, & by my wytte nowe kele I wel, that euell spekers or bearers of enfame, may lytel greue or lette my purpose, but rather by suche thynge my quarell to be forthered. Yea (q̄ she) and it is proued also, that the ylke iewell in my keypnge shal not there thorowe be steered, of ȳ lest moment ȳ myght be ymagined. That is soth (q̄ I), well (q̄ she) then leneth there, to declare ȳ thy insufficiaūce is no maner letting as thus, for that she is so worthye thou shuldest not clymbe so hygh, for thy moebles and thyne estate arne voyded, thou thynkest fallē in suche myserye, that gladnesse of thy pursute woll not on thy dyscende. Certes (quod I) that is sothe: ryghte suche thought is in myne herte, for cōmenly it is spoken, and for an olde prouerbe it is leged: He that heweth to hye, wyth chyppes he maye lese his syght. Wherfore I haue ben about in al that euer I myghte, to studye wayes of remedye by one syde or by another. Nowe (quod she) god forbede ere thou seke any other doynges, but such as I haue lerned ȳ in our restinge wyhyles, and suche herbes as ben planted in oure gardyns. Thou shalt well vnderstande, that aboue man is but one god alone. How (quod I) han mē to forne thys tyme trusted in writtes and chauntementes, and in helpes of spirites that dwellē in the ayre, and therby they han gettē theyr desyres, where as fyrst for all hys manly power he daunced behynde.

O (quod she) fye on such maters, for trewly that is sacrilege, and that shal haue no sort with any of my seruaūtes, in myne eyen shall suche thynge not be loked after. Howe often is it cōmaunded by these passed wyse, that to one god shal men serue, and not to goddes. And who that lyst to haue myne helpes, shal aske none helpe of foule spirites. Alas, is not man maked semblable to god: wost thou not wel that al vertue of lyuelych werkynge by goddes purueyaunce is vnderputte to resonable creature in erth, is not euery thynge a thischalke god made buxome to mannes cōtemplacyon, vnderstandynge in heuen and in erthe, and in helle: Hath not manne beynge wyth stones, soule of wexyng with trees and herbes: Hathe he not soule of felynge, wyth beestes, fysches, and foules, and he hath soule of reason and vnderstandyng wyth aungels, so that in hym is knyt all maner of lyuynges by a reasonable proporcion. Also mā is made of all the foure elementes. All vniuersytee is rekened in him alone: he hath vnder god princeypalite aboue al thynges. Now is his soule here, now a thousand myle hence, now ferre nowe nygh, nowe hye now lowe, as ferre in a momente, as in mountenaunce of ten wynter, and al thys is in mannes gouernaunce & dysposition. Then sheweth it, ȳ men ben lych vnto goddes, and chyldren of moste heyghte. But now sythen al thynges vnderputte to ȳ wyll of resonable creatures, god forbede any man to wynne that lordshyp, & aske helpe of any thynge lower then hym selfe, & thē namely of foule thynges innominable. Nowe thē why shuldest thou wene to loue to high: sythen nothynge is the aboue but god alone. Trewly I wote well, ȳ thylke iewell is in a maner euē in lyne of degre there thou art thy selfe, & nought aboue, saue thus. Angel vpon angell, man vpon man, and deuell vpon deuell, han a maner of souerayngnitie, and that shall cease at the daye of dome: and so I saye, thoughe thou be putte to serue the ylke iewel durynge thy lyfe, yet is that no seruage of vnderputtynge, but a maner of trauaylynge pleasaunce, to conquere and gette that thou haste not. I sette nowe the hardest, in my seruyce nowe thou deidest for sorowe of wātynge in thy desyres: trewlye all heauenlye bodyes wyth one voyce shul come & make me lody in thy comynge, and saye welcome oure fere, and worthy to entre into Jupyters ioye for thou wyth myght haste ouercome dethe,

thou

thou woldest neuer flytte out of thy seruyce, and we all shul now pray to the goddes row by rowe to make thilk Margarite ý no routh had in this persone, but vnkyndely wythout comforte let the deye, shall besette her selfe in suche wyse, that in erthe for parte of vengeaunce, shal she no ioye haue in loues seruyce, and when she is deed, then shal her soule ben brought vp in to thy presence, and whyther thou wylte chese, thylke soule shall ben commytted. Or els after thy dethe anone all the foresayd heuenly bodyes by one accorde, shall benõmen from thylke perle, all the vertues that fyrste her were taken, for she hathe hem forfeyted, by that on the my seruaunte in thy lyue she wolde not suffre to worche all vertues, withdrawen by myght of the hygh bodyes: why then shuldest thou wene so any more? And yf thy lyste to loke vpon the lawe of kynde, and wyth order wyche to me was ordayned, sothely none age, none ouertournynge tyme, but hytherto had no tyme ne power to chaunge the weddinge, ne ý knotte to vnbynde of two hertes thorow one assent in my presence, together accorden to enduren tyll dethe hem departe. What trowest thou euery ydeot wotte the menyng and the priuy entente of these thynges? they wene forsothe that suche accorde may not be, but the rose of maydenhede be plucked, do waye, do waye, they knowe nothyng of thys: for consente of two hertes alone, maketh the fastenynge of the knotte, neyther law of kynde, ne mannes lawe, determyneth neyther the age ne ý qualyte of persones, but onely accorde betwene thylke twaye. And trewlye after tyme that suche accorde by theyr consent in hert, is ensealed & put in my treasory amonges my priuy thynges: then gynneth the name of spousayle, and althoughe they breaken forwarde both, yet suche mater ensealed is kept in remẽbraunce for euer. And se nowe that spouses haue the name anone after accorde, thoughe the rose be not take. The aungell badde Joseph take Marye hys spouse, and to Egypte wende: Lo she was cleped spouse, and yet to forne ne after neyther of hem bothe mente no fleshly luste knowe, wherfore the wordes of trouthe accorden, that my seruaũtes shulden forsake both father and mother, and be adherande to hys spouse, and they two in vnite of one flesche shulden accorde. And thys wyse two that werne fyrste in a lytell maner dysacordaunt, hygher that one and lower that other, bene made euenlyche in gree to stonde. But nowe to enfourme the that ye ben lyche to goddes, these clerkes sayne, and in determynacion shewen, that thre thinges hauen ý names of goddes ben cleped, that is to saine: man, dyuell, and ymages, but yet is there but one god, of whom al goodnesse, all grace, and al vertue cometh, and he is louyng & trewe, and euerlastynge, & pryme cause of al beynge thynges: but men bene goddes, louynge and trewe, but not euerlastyng, and that is by adopcion of the euerlastynge god. Dyuels ben goddes styrynge by a maner of lyuynge, but neyther bene they trewe ne euerlastyng, and theyr name of godlyheed they han by vsurpacion, as the prophete sayeth: All goddes of gentyles, that is to saye paynims, are dyuels But ymages bene goddes by nuncupacion, and they ben neyther lyuynge ne trewe ne euerlastynge: After these wordes they celapẽ goddes ymages wrought with mennes handes. But nowe reasonable creature, that by adopcion alone arte to the greate god euerlastynge, and therby thou arte god cleaped: let thy fathers maners so entre thy wyttes, that thou myght folowe, in as moche as longeth to the thy fathers worschyppe, so that in nothynge thy kynde from hys wyll declyne, ne from hys nobley peruerte. In thys wyse yf thou werche, thou arte aboue all other thynges saue god alone, and so say nomore thyne herte to serue in to hye a place.

Fully haue I nowe declared thyne estate to be good, so thou folowe therafter, & that the abiection fyrste be the aleged in worthines of thy margarite shal not the lette, as it shal forther ý, & encrease the, it is nowe to declare, ý last abiection in nothyng may greue.

Yes certes (q I) both greue and let muste it nedes, the contrary maye not ben prcued, and se now why. Whyle I was glorious in worldly welfulnesse, and had such goodes in welth as maken men ryche, tho was I draw in to companyes that loos, pryse, and namyeuen: tho louteden blasours, tho curreyden glosours, tho welcomedẽ flatterers, tho worschypped thilke, that nowe deynen not to loke Euery wight in such erthly wele habaũdant

is hold noble, precious, benigne, and wyse to do what he shall, in any degre that men hym set, al be it that the sothe be in the contrary of all tho thynges: But he that can, ne neuer so well hym behaue, & hath vertue haboūdaunt in manyfolde maners, & be not welthed with suche erthly goodes, is holde for a foole, and sayd hys wyt is but sotted. Lo howe false for auer is holde trewe. Lo howe trewe is cleaped false for wantynge of goodes. Also lady, dygnities of offyce maken men mykel comended as thus: he is so good, were he oute hys pere shuld men not fynde. Truely I trowe of some suche that are so prayled, were they out ones, another shulde make hym so be knowe he shulde of no wyse no more ben loked after: but onely fooles well I wotte, desyren suche new thinges. Wherfore I wōder that thilke gouernoure, out of whome alone the causes proceden, that gouerne all thynges, whych that hath ordeyned thys world in werkes of the kyndely bodyes so be gouerned, not with vnstedfast or happyous thynge, but with rules of reason, whych shewen the course of certayne thynges: why suffreth he such slydyng chaunges, that mysturnen suche noble thynges as ben we men, that arue a fayre parsell of the erthe, and holdē the vpperest degre vnder god of benigne thinges, as ye saidē right nowe your selfe, shulde neuer man haue bene set in so worthy a place, but if his degre were ordeyned noble. Alas, thou that knyttest the purueyaunce of al thynges, why lokest thou not to amenden these defautes: I se shrewes that han wicked maners, sytten in chayres of domes, lambes to punyshen, there wolues shulden be punyshed. Lo vertue shynende naturallly, for pouertie lurketh and is hydde vnder cloude: but the moone false forswoorne, as I knowe my selfe, for auer & yeftes hath vsurped to shyne by daye lyght, w̄ peynture of other mens praylynges: and truely thylke forged lyst fouly shuld fade, were the trouth away of colours fayned. Thus is night turned into daye, and daye in to nyght, wynter into sommer, & sommer into wynter, not in dede, but in mysclepyng of folyshe people.

Now (quod she) what wenest thou of these thynges: howe feleest thou in thyne herte, by what gouernaunce ÿ thys cometh aboute:

Certes (q̄ I) that wotte I neuer, but yf it be that fortune hath graunt from aboue, to lede the ende of men as her lyketh. Ah nowe I se (quod she) thentent of thy meanyng: Lo bycause thy worldly goodes ben fullych dyspente, thou berafte out of dygnite of offyce, in whych thou madest the gatheryng of thylke goodes, and yet dyddest in that office by coūsayle of wyse, any thynge were ended: & true were vnto hem, whose profyte thou shuldest loke, and seest nowe many that in thylke herueſt made of the mokel, and now for glosing of other, deineth the nought to forther, but enhaunsen false shrewes, by wytnessynge of trouthe. These thynges greueth thyne herte to sene thy selfe thus abated, & then fraylte of mankynde ne setteth but lytel by the lesers of suche rychesse, haue he neuer so moche vertue and so thou wenest of thy iewell to renne in dyspyte, and not ben accepted into grace: All thys shal the nothyng hynder. Nowe (q̄ she) fyrst thou wost wel thou lostest nothing that euer thou myghtest chalēge for thyne owne: when nature brought the forthe, come thou not naked out of thy mothers wombe: thou haddest no rychesse, and when thou shalt entre into the ende of euery fleshly body, what shalt thou haue wyth the then: So euery rychesse thou haste in tyme of thy lyuynge, nys but lente, thou myght therin chalenge no propertie. And se now euery thyng that is a mānes owne, he may do therwyth what hym lyketh, to yeue or to kepe: but ryches thou playnest from the lost, yf thy myght had stretched so ferforth, fayne thou woldst haue hem kept multiplied with mo other: and so ayenst thy wyl ben they departed frō the, wherfore they were neuer thyn. And if thou laudest & ioyest any wyght, for he is stuffed with such maner rychesse, ÿ arte in ÿ beleue begyled, for thou wenest thylke ioy to be selynesse or els ease, & he that hath loste suche happes to ben vnsely yea forsoth (q̄ I). Wel (q̄ she) then woll I proue that vnsely in that wyse is to prayse, & so ÿ tother is ÿ cōtrary to be lacked. Howe so (q̄ I): For vnsely (q̄ she) begyleth not, but sheweth thentent of her workyng. Et ecōtra Selynesse begyleth, for in prosperite she maketh a iape in blyndnesse, that is she wyndeth hym to make sorowe when she withdraweth wolt thou not (q̄ she) prayse hym better that sheweth to ÿ hys herte, tho it be with bytāde wordes & dispytous, thē him ÿ gloseth & thinketh in theyr absence to do the many harmes

Certes

Certes(q̃ I) the one is to cõmende, & the other to lacke & dyspyce. A ha(q̃ she)ryght so ease whyle he lasteth, gloseth & flatereth, and lyghtly voydeth whẽ she moste plesaũtly sheweth, & euer in her absence she is about to do the tene & sorowe in herte: but vnsely all be it wyth bytande chere, sheweth what she is, & so doth not that other, wherfore vnsely dothe not begyle. Selynesse dysceyueth: vnsely put awaye doute. That one maketh men blynde, that other openeth theyr eyen in shewyng of wretchednesse. The one is ful of drede to lese that is not his owne: that other is sobre and maketh men dyscharged of mokell heuynesse in burthen. The one draweth a man from bery good, ỳ other haleth hym to vertue by the hookes of thoughtes. And wenyst thou not that thy dysease hath done the mokel more to wynne, then euer yet thou lostest: and more then euer the contrary made the wynne. Is not a greate good to thy thynkynge, for to knowe the hertes of thy sothfast frẽdes: Par dy they ben proued to ỳ ful, & the trewe haue dyscouered from the false. Trewly at the goynge of the ylke brotel ioy, ther yede no more awaye, then the ylke that was not thyne proper: He was neuer from that lyghtly departed, thyne owne good therfore leaueth it styl wyth the. Nowe good(quod she) for howe moche woldest thou somtyme haue boughte thys very knowyng of thy frendes, from the flatterynge flyes that the gloseb, when thou thought thy self sely: But thou that playnest of losse in rychesse, hast founden the most dere worthy thynge that thou clepest vnsely, hath made the moche thynge to wynnen. And also for conclusion of all, he is frende that nowe leaueth not hys herte frõ thyne helpes. And yf that Margarite denyeth nowe not to suffre her vertues shyne to the wardes, wyth spreadynge beames, as farre or farther then yf thou were sely in worldly ioye: trewely I saye not els but she is somdele to blame.

Ah, peace(quod I) and speake nomore of thys, myne hert breaketh, now thou touchest any suche wordes. A well(quod she) then let vs syngen, thou hearest no more of these thynges at thys tyme.

¶ Thus endeth the fyrste boke of the Testament of Loue, and here after foloweth the seconde.

Ery welthe maye not be founden in al thys world and that is well sene:

Lo howe in my moost comforte, as I wende & moste supposed to haue hadde ful answere of my contrary thoughtes, sodaynly it was vanysched. And all the workes of man faren in the same wyse, when folke wenen beste her entente for to haue, and wylles to perfourme, anone chaungynge of the lyft syde to ỳ ryght halue, tourneth it so clene into another kynde that neuer shall it come to the fyrste plyte in doynge.

O thys wrongful sterynge so soone other wysed out of knowynge, but for my purpose was at my begynnynge, and so dureth yet, yf God of hys grace tyme woll me graunt, I thynke to perfourme thys worke, as I haue begonne in loue, after as my thynne wytte, with inspiracion of him that hildeth al grace woll suffre. Greuously god wotte haue I suffred a great throwe that the romayne Emperour, whyche in vnite of loue shulde accorde and euery wyth other, in cause of other to auaunce, and namely sythe thys empyre to be corrected of so many sectes in heresie, of faith, of seruyce, o rule in loues religion. Trewlye al were it but to shende erronious opinions, I maye it no lenger suffre: for many menne there ben that sayne loue to ben in grauel and sande, that wyth see ebbynge and flowynge woweth, as ryches that sodaynly vanysheth And some sayne that loue shuld be in wyndy blastes, that stoundmele turneth as a phane, and glorye of renome, whyche after lustes of the baryaunt people is areysed or stylled. Many also wenen that in the sonne and the moone, and other sterres, loue shulde ben foũden, for amonge all other planettes moste souerayn ly they shynen, as dygnityes in reuerence of estates rather then good han and occuppyen. Ful many also there ben that in okes and in huge postes supposen loue to be groũded, as in strength & in might, which mowen not helpen theyr owne wretchednesse, when they gynne to fall. But suche dyuersyte of sectes ayenst the ryghtfull byleue of loue, these errours ben forth spredde, that loues seruaũtes in trewe rule and stedfaste faythe, in no place darne apere: Thus irrecuperable ioy is

went, and anoy endlesse is entred, for no man aryght reproueth suche errours, but confyrmen theyr wordes, and sayne that bad is noble good, and goodnes is badde: to whyche folke the prophet byddeth, wo without ende.

Also many tonges of great false techinges in gylynge maner, principally in my tymes, not only wyth wordes, but also wyth armes loues seruauntes and professe in hys religyō of trewe rule, pursewen to confoūden and to dystroyen. And for as moche as holy fathers that oure christen faythe aproued and strengthed to the iewes, as to mē resonable, and of dyuinite lerned, proued thilke fayth with resones, and wyth authorities of the olde testament & of the newe, her pertinacye to distroy But to paynyms, that for beestes and houndes were holde, to put hem out of theyr errour, was myracles of god shewed. These thynges were fygured by comynge of thāgel to the shepeherdes, and by the sterre to paynyms kynges, as who sayeth: angel reasonable to resonable creature, and sterre of myracle to people bestial not lerned, werne sent to enforme. But I louers clerke in all my connyng and with al my mightes, truly I haue no such grace in vertue of myracles, ne for to dyscomfyte falsheedes, suffyseth not authorites alone, sythen that suche heretykes and mayntenours of falsytes. Wherfore I wote wel sythen that they ben men, and reason is aproued in hem, the clowde of errour hath her reason bewonde probable resons, whych that catchende wyt rightfully may not with sytte. By my trauaylynge studye I haue ordeyned hem, wyth ý authorite mysglosed by mannes reason, to graunt shall be enduced.

Now gynneth my penne to quake, to thynken on the sentences of the enuyous people, whych alwaye ben redy, both ryder and goer to skorne and to iape thys leude boke, and me for rancoure & hate in theyr hertes they shullen so dyspyse, that althoughe my booke be leude, yet shall it ben more leude holden, and by wycked wordes in many maner apayred. Certes me thynketh the sowne of theyr bad speche, ryght nowe is full both myne eares. O good precious Margarite, myne herte shulde wepe yf, I wyste ye token hede of suche maner speche, but trewly I wotte wel in that your wysedom shal not asterte. For of god maker of kynde wytnesse I toke, that for none enuy ne yuell haue I drawe thys matter together, but onely for goodnesse to maintayne, and errours in falsytees to destroye. Wherfore (as I sayde) wyth reason I thynke, thylke forsayd errours to distroye and dequace.

These reasons and suche other, yf they enduce men in loues seruyce, trewe to beleue of parfyte blysse, yet to full fayth in credence of deserte, fully mowe they not suffise, sythen faythe hath no meryte of mede, when mannes reason sheweth experience in doynge. For vtterlye no reason the parfyte blysse of loue by no waye may make to be comprehended. Lo what is a parcell of louers ioye, parfyte scyence in good seruyce, of theyr desyre to comprehende in bodely doynge the lykyng of the soule, not as by a glasse to haue contemplacyon of tyme comynge, but thylke fyrste ymagyned and thought, after face to face in beholdynge: what herte, what reason, what vnderstandynge can make hys heuen to be feled and knowe wythout assaye in doynge? certes none. Sythen then of loue cometh suche fruyte in blysse, and loue in him selfe is the moste amonge other vertues, as clerkes sayne: The sede of suche spryngynge in all places, in all countreys, in al worldes shulde ben sowe.

But o welawaye thylke sede is forsake, & mowen not ben suffred the lāde tyllers to set a werke, wythout medlynge of cockle, badde wedes whych somtyme stonken, hath caught the name of loue amonge ydiotes and badde meanynge people. Neuer the later, yet how so it be that men cleape thylke kynge precyousest in kynde, wyth many eke names, that other thynges, that the soule yeuen the yike noble name, it sheweth well that in a maner men haue a great lykynge in worschyppynge of thilke name, wherfore thys worke haue I wryt, and to the tytledof loues name, I haue it auowed in a maner of sacrifice, that where euer it be radde, it mowe in merite by the excellence of thylke name the more were in authorite and worschyppe of takynge in hede, and to what entente it was ordayned, the infeeres mowen be moued: Euery thynge to whome is owande occasyon done as for hys ende Aristotle supposeth that the actes of euery thynge ben in a maner hys fynall cause.

A fynall

A fynal cause is noblerer or els euen as noble as thylke thynge that is fynally to thilke ende, wherfore accion of thyng euerlastyng, is demed to be eternal, and not temporal, sythen it is his fynal cause: Ryght so the actes of my boke loue, and loue is noble, wherfore though my boke be leude, the cause w̃ which I am stered, and for whom I ought it done, noble forsothe ben bothe. But bycause that in connynge I am yonge, and canne yet but crepe, this leude A,b,c, haue I sette in to lernyng, for I can not passen the tellyng of thre as yet: and yf god wyl in shorte tyme I shall amende this leudnesse in ioynyng syllables, whyche thyng for dulnesse of wytte I maye not in thre letters declare. For trewly I saye the goodnesse of my Margaryte perle wolde yeue mater in endityng to many clerkes: certes her mercy is more to me swetter than any lyuynges, wherfore my lyppes mowen not suffyse in spekyng of her full laude and worshyppe as they shulde. But who is that in knowynge of the orders of heuen, & putteth his resones in the erthe? I forsothe may not w̃ blere eyen, the shynyng sonne of vertue in bright whele of this Margaryte behold, therfore as yet I maye her not discryue in vertue as I wolde. In tyme comyng in another tretyse thorowe goddes grace, this sonne in clereuesse of vertue to be knowe, and howe she enlumyneth al this day, I thynke to declare.

N this meane whyle this cõfortable lady ganne syng, a wõder mater of endityng in latyn, but trewly the noble colours in rethorykwyse knytte were so cracktely, ỳ my connyng wol not stretche to remẽbre, but the sentence I trow somdele haue I in mynde. Certes they were wõder swete of sowne, and they were touched al in lamentacyon wyse, and by no werbles of mythe: Lo thus ganne she synge in latyn, as I may cõstrewe it in our englyche tonge.

Alas that these heuenly bodyes their light and course shewen, as nature yaue hem in cõmaundement at the gynnyng of the first age, but these thynges in free choyce of reson han none understondynge: but man that ought to passe all thynge of doynge, of ryght course in kynde, ouer whelmed sothnesse by wrongfull tytle, and hath drawẽ the sterre of enuye to gon by his syde, that the clyps of me that shulde be his shynande sonne, so ofte is seyl, that it wened thilke errour thorowe hẽ come in, shulde ben myne owne defaute. Trewely therfore I haue me withdrawe, & made my dwellynge out of lande in an yle by my selfe, in the occian closed, and yet sayn there many they haue me harberowed but god wote they faylen. These thynges me greuen to thynke, and namely on passed gladnesse, that in thys worlde was wonte me dysporte of hygh and lowe, and nowe it is fayled: they that woldẽ maystries me haue in thylke stoundes. In heuen on hyghe aboue Saturnes sphere, in seasonable tyme were they lodged, but nowe come queynte consaylours that in no house woll suffre me soiourne, wherof is pyte: and yet sayne some that they me haue in celler wyth wyne shede, in gernere there corne is layde, couered wyth whete, in sacke sowed with wolle, in purse with money fast knytte, amonge pannes mouled in a wyche, in presse amonge clothes layde wyth ryche pelure arayed, in stable among horse & other beestes, as hogges, shepe, and nete, and in other manye wyse. But thou maker of lyght (in wynkynge of thyne eye the sonne is queynt) wost ryght well that I in trewe name was neuer thus herberowed. Somtyme to forne the sonne in the seuenth partye was smyten, I bare bothe crosse and mytre, to yeue it where I wolde. With me the pope went a fote, and I tho was worshypped of all holye churche kynges baden me their crownesholdẽ. The lawe was set as it shulde: tofore the iuge as well the poore durste shewe hys greefe as the ryche, for all hys money. I defended tho taylages, and was redy for the poore to pay. I made gret feestes in my tyme, & noble sõges & maryed damoselles of gẽtyl feture, withouten golde or other rychesse. Poore clerkes for wytte of schole, I sette in churches, and made such persones to preache: and tho was seruyce in holy churche honest and deuoute, in pleasaunce bothe of god and of the people. But nowe the leude for symonye is auaunced, and shendeth all holy churche. Nowe is stewarde for his achates, nowe is courtyour for hys debates, nowe is eschetoure for hys wronges, nowe is losell for hys songes, personer and prouendre alone, wyth whych manye thriftye shulde encrease. And yet is thys

shrewe behynde, free herte is forsake, and losengeour is take. Lo it accordeth, for suche there ben that voluntarye lustes haunten in courte with rybaudye, that tyl midnight and more woll playe and wake, but in the churche at matyns he is behynde, for yuell disposycion of hys stomake: therfore he shulde eate beane breed, & so dyd hys syre, his estate therwith to strenghthen. Hys auter is broke, and lowe lythe in poynte to gone to the erth, but hys horse muste ben easy and hye to beare hym ouer great waters. Hys chalyce poore, but he hath ryche cuppes. No towayle but a shete there god shal ben handled. And on his meate borde there shal ben borde clothes and towelles many payre. At masse serued but a clergyon: fyue squiers in hall. Poore chaunsell, open holes in euery syde: beddes of sylke wyth tappytes goyng all aboute his chambre. Poore masse boke and leude chapelayne, and broken surplyce wyth manye an hole: good houndes and many, to hounte after harte & hare, to fede in theyr feestes. Of poore men haue they great care, for they euer craue, and nothynge offren, they wolden haue hem doluen. But amonge legystres there dare I not come, my doynge they sayne maken hem nedy, they ne wolde for nothynge haue me in towne, for than were tort and forthe nought worthe an hawe aboute and pleasen no men but thylke greuous & torcious ben in myght and in doynge: these thynges to forne sayde mowe well yf men lyste ryme, trewly they acorde nothynge. And for as moche as al thynges by me shulden of ryght ben gouerned, I am sorye to se that gouernaunce fayleth, as thus: to sene smale and lowe gouerne the hye and bodyes aboue. Certes that polesye is naught, it is forbode by them that of gouernaunce treaten and enformen. And right as beestly wytte shulde ben subiect to reason, so erthly power in it selfe, the lower shulde ben subiect to the hygher. What is worth thy bodye, but it be gouerned wyth thy soule-ryght so lytell or naught is worthe erthely power, but if reignatyke prudence in heedes gouerne the smale, to whyche heedes the smale owen to obey, and suffre in their gouernaunce. But soueraynnesse ayenwarde shulde thynke in thys wyse: I am seruaunt of these creatures to me delyuered, not lorde but defendour, not mayster but enfourmer, not possessoure but in possessyon, & to hem lyche a tree in whiche sparowes shullen stelen, her byrdes to norysche and forthe bryngе vnder suretye ayenst all raueynous foules and beestes, and not to be tyraunt them selfe. And than the smale in reste and quyete, by the heedes well disposed owen for their soueraynes helth and prosperyte to pray, and in other doynges, in maynteaunce therof performe, wythouten other admynistracion in rule of any maner gouernaũce. And they wyt haue in hem, and grace to come to such thinges, yet shulde they cease tyll theyr heedes them cleped, although profyte and pleasaunce shulde folowe. But trewlye other gouernaunce ne other medlynge ought they not to clayme, ne the heedes on hem to put. Trewly amonges cosynage dare I not come, but yf rychesse be my meane, sothly she and other bodily goodes maketh nygh cosynage, ther neuer propynquite ne alyaũce in lyue was, ne shulde haue be, nere it for her medling maners, wherfore kyndly am I not ther leged. Pouert of kynred is behynde, rychesse suffreth hym to passe: truly he saith he come neuer of Japhetes chyldre. Wherof I am sorry that Japhetes chyldren for pouert, in no linage ben rekened, & Caynes chyldren for ryches be maked Japhetes heires. Alas thys is a wonder chaunge bytwene tho two Noes chyldren, sythen that of Japhetes ofspryng comeden knightes, & of Cayn discended ÿ lyne of seruage to his brothers chyldre Lo howe gentyllesse and seruage as cosyns, bothe discended out of two bretherne of one body: wherfore I saye in sothnesse, that gentylesse in kynrede maken not gentyll lynage in succession, without deserte of a mans own selfe. Where is nowe the lyne of Alysanndre the noble, or els of Hector of Troye? who is discended of ryght bloode of lyne fro king Artour? Parde syr Perdicas, whom that kyng Alisandre made to bẽ his heire in Grece, was of no kynges bloode, hys dame was a tombystere. Of what kynred ben the gẽtyles in our dayes: I trow therfore if any good be in gentylesse, it is only that it semeth a maner of necessyte be input to gentylmen, that they shulden not varyen fro the vertues of their auncestres. Certes al maner lynage of men ben euen liche in byrth, for one father maker of al goodnes enformed hem all, & al mortal folke of one sede arne greyned, wherto auaũt men

of her

of her lynage, in cosynage or in elde fathers. Loke nowe the gynnyng, and to god maker of mans person, there is no clerke ne no worthy in gentylesse: and he that norysheth hys corare wyth vyces and vnresonable lustes, and leaueth the kynde course, to whych ende hym brought forthe hys byrthe, trewly he is vngentyll, and amonge clerkes may ben nēpned. And therfore he that woll ben gentyl, he mote daūten hys flesche fro vyces that causen vngentylnesse, and leaue also reignes of wicked lustes, and drawe to hym vertue, that in all places gentylnesse gentylmen maketh. And so speke I in feminyne gendre in generall, of tho persones at the reuerence of one, whom euery wyght honoureth, for her boūtie and her noblesse ymade her to god so dere that hys moder she became, and she me hath had so great in worshyp, that I nyll for nothynge in open declare, that in any thynge ayenst hersecte maye so wene: for all vertue and al worthynesse of pleasaunce in hem haboundeth. And although I wold any thyng speke, trewly I can not, I may kynde in ruel of hem no maner mater.

Ight wyth these wordes she stynte of that lamentable melodye, and I ganne wyth a lyuely herte to praye, yf that it were lykynge vnto her noble grace, she wold her deyne to declare me the mater that fyrste was begonne, in whiche she lefte and stynte to speke beforne she gan to synge.

O (q she) thys is no newe thyng to me, to sene you menne desyren after mater, whyche your selfe caused to voyde.

Ah good lady (q I) in whom victorie of strength is proued aboue al other thynge, after the iugement of Esoram, whose lordshyp all lignes: who is that right as emperour hē cōmaundeth, whether thilke ben not womē, in whose lykenesse to me ye aperen. For right as man halte the principalte of all thyng vnder his beynge, in the masculyne gender, and no mo genders ben there but masculyne and femenyne, all the remenaunt ben no gendres but of grace, in facultie of grammer. Ryght so in the femenyne, the women holden the vpperest degree of all thynges vnder thilke gendre conteyned. Who bryngeth forth kynges, whyche that ben lordes of see and of earthe and al peoples of womē ben borne: they norysche hem that graffen vynes, they maken men comforte in their gladde cheres. Her sorowe is dethe to mannes herte. without women the beyng of mē were impossible. They conne with their swetnesse the crewel herte rauysche and make it meke, buxome, and benigne, wythout violence meuynge. In beautie of theyr eyen, or els of other maner fetures is all mēs desyres, yea more thā in golde precious stones, eyther any rychesse. And in thys degree lady your selfe manye hertes of men haue so bounden, that parfyte blysse in womankynde to ben, men wenen, and in nothynge els. Also lady the goodnesse, the vertue of women, by properte of discrecyon, is so well knowen, by lytelnesse of malyce, that desyre to a good asker by no waye conne they warne: and ye thanne that woll not passe the kynde werchynge of your sectes by generall discrecyon, I wotte wel ye wol so enclyne to my prayere, that grace of my requeste shall fully ben graunted. Certes (q she) thus for the more parte fareth al mankynde to praye, and to crye after womans grace, and fayne manye fantasyes to make hertes enclyne to your desyres: and whan these sely womē for freelte of theyr kynde beleuen your wordes, and wenen al be gospell the promyse of your behestes, than graunt they to you their hertes, and fulfyllen your lustes, wherthrough theyr lyberte in maystreship that they toforn had is thralled, and so maked souerayn and to be prayed, that fyrste was seruaunte, and voyce of prayer vsed. Anone as fylled is your luste, manye of you be so trewe, that lytell hede take ye of suche kyndenesse, but wyth traysoun anon ye thynke hem begyle, and let lyght of that thynge whyche fyrste ye maked to you wonders dere, so what thyng to women it is to loue any wight er she hym well knowe, & haue him proued in many halfe, for euery glyttryng thynge is nat golde, & vnder colour of fayre speche many vices may be hid and conseled. Therfore I rede no wyght to trust on you to rath, mens chere & her speche right gylefull is full ofte, wherfore without good assay, it is nat worthe on many on you to truste: Trewly it is right kyndely to euery man that thynketh women betraye, & shewē outward al goodnesse, til he haue his wil performed

formed. Lo the byrde is begyled with the mery voice of the foulers whistel. Whan a woman is closed in your nette, than wol ye causes fynden, and beare vnkyndenesse her vnhande or falsete vpon her putte, youre owne malycious trayson wyth suche thynge to excuse. Lo than han women none other wrech in vengeaunce, but bloder and wepe tyl hem lyst stynte, and sorily her mishap complayne, and is put in to wenynge that all men ben so vntrewe. Howe often haue men chaunged her loues in a lytell whyle, or els for faylyng theyr wyll in theyr places hem sette: for frenschyp shal be one, and same wyth another him lyste for to haue, and a thirde for delyte, or els were he loste bothe in packe and in clothes: Is this fayre: nay god wot, I maye nat tell by thousande partes, the wronges in trechery of suche false people, for make they neuer so good a bonde, all sette ye at a myte whan your hert tourneth: And they that wenen for sorow of you dey, the pyte of your false herte is flowe out of towne. Alas therfore, ȳ euer anye woman wolde take anye wyght in her grace, tyll she knowe at the full on whome she myght at all assayes trust. Women cone no more crafte in queynte knowynge, to vnderstande the false disceyuable contectementes of mannes begilynges. Lo howe it fareth, though ye men gronen and cryen, certes it is but disceyt, & that preueth well by thendes in your werkynge. Howe many women haue ben lorne, and wyth shame foule shent by long lastyng tyme, which thorowe mēnes gyle haue ben disceyued: euer their same shal dure, and theyr dedes radde and songe in many londes, that they han done recoueren shal they neuer, but alwaye ben demed lightly, in suche plyte ayen shulde they fall, of whyche slaunders and tenes ye false men and wicked ben the verey causes, on you by ryght ought these shames and these reproues all holy discende. Thus arne ye all nyghe vntrewe, for all youre fayre speche youre herte is full fyckell. What cause han ye women to dispyse better fruyte than they ben, ne swetter spyces to youre behoue mowe ye not fynde, as farre as worldely bodyes stretchen. Loke to theyr formynge at the makynge of theyr persones by god in ioye of paradyce, for goodnesse of mans propre bodye were they maked, after the sawes of the Byble, rehersynge goddes wordes in thys wyse: It is good to mankynde that we make to hym an helper. Lo in paradyse for your helpe was this tree grafted, out of whyche all lynage of man discendeth: yf a man be noble frute, of noble frute it is sprongen: the blysse of paradyse to mennes sory hertes, yet in thys tree abydeth. O noble helpes ben these trees, and gentyll iewell to ben worshypped of euery good creature: He that hem anoyeth dothe hys owne shame, it is a comfortable perle ayenst all tenes. Euerye companye is mythed by theyr present beyng. Trewely I wyste neuer vertue, but a womā were therof the rote. What is heauen the worse though sarazins on it lyen: Is your faythe vntrewe though renno gates maken theron leasynges. If the fyre dothe anye wyght brenne, blame hys owne wytte that put him selfe so farre in the heate. Is not fyre gentyllest and moste element, comfortable amonges all other: fyre is chefe werker in fortherynge sustenaunce to mankynde: shall fyre ben blamed for it brende a foole naturelly, by hys owne stulty wytte in sterynge: Ah wycked folkes, for youre propre malyce, and shreudnesse of youre selfe: ye blame & dispyse the precioust thyng of youre kynde, and whyche thynges amonge other moste ye desyren. Trewely Nero and hys chyldren ben shrewes, that dispysen so theyr dames. The wyckednesse and gylyng of mē, in disclaundryng of thylke that moste hathe hem gladed and pleased, were impossyble to write or to nempne. Neuer ȳ later yet I say he that knoweth a way, may it lightly passe: eke an herbe proued may safely to smertande sores ben layde: So I say, in him that is proued is nothyng such yuels to gesse. But these thynges haue I rehersed to warne you women al at ones that to lyghtly without good assaye ye assenten not to mannes speche. The sonne in the day light is to knowen from the moone that shyneth in the nyght. Nowe to the thy self (quod she) as I haue ofte sayd, I knowe wel thyne herte thou arte none of al the tofore nempned people, for I knowe wel the contynaunce of thy seruyce, that neuer sythen I set the a werke, myght thy Margaryte for plesaunce, frendschyp, ne fayrehede of none other, be in poynte moued frome thyne herte, wherfore in to myne houshold hastely I wol that thou entre, and all ȳ parfyte priuyte

uyte of my werkynge make it be knowe in thy vnderstondynge, as one of my priuy fa-
myliers. Thou desyrest (q̃ she) fayne to here of tho thynges there I lefte. Yea forsothe (q̃ I) that were to me a great blysse. Nowe (q̃ she) for thou shalt not wene that womans condycyons for fayre speche suche thynge be-
longeth.

Thou shalt (q̃ she) vnderstond fyrste amonge al other thyn-
ges, that all the cure of my seruyce to me in the parfyte blysse in doynge is desyred in euery mannes herte, be he ne uer so moche a wretche, but euerye man tra-
uayleth by dyuers studye, and seke thylke blysse by dyuers wayes, but al the endes are knyt in selynesse of desyre in the perfyte blisse that is suche ioye, whan men it haue gotten, there lyueth nothynge more to ben coueyted: But howe that desyre of suche perfectyon in my seruyce be kyndely sette in louers hertes, yet her erronyous opinyons mysturne it by falsenesse of wenyng. And although mennes vnderstandynge be mysturned, to knowe whyche shulde ben the way vnto my person, and whyther it abydeth: yet wote they there is a loue in euery wyght, weneth by ẏ thyng that he coueyted moste, he shulde come to thylke loue, and that is parfyte blysse of my seruauntes, but than fulle blysse may not be, and there lacke anye thynge of that blysse in anye syde. Eke it foloweth than, that he that must haue full blysse, lacke no blysse in loue on no syde.

Therfore ladye (q̃ I) tho thylke blysse I haue desyred, and sothe toforne this my selfe by wayes of riches, of dignite, of power, and of renome, wenynge me in tho thrages had ben thylke blysse, but ayenst the heere it tur-
neth. Whan I supposed beste thylke blysse haue get and come to the ful purpose of your seruyce, sodaynly was I hyndred, and thro-
wen so fer abacke, that me thynketh an im-
possyble to come there I lefte. I woll well (q̃ she) & therfore hast thou fayled, for thou wentest not by the hye way: a lytel misgoyng in the gynnynge causeth mybyll erroure in the ende, wherfore of thylke blysse thou fay-
ledest for hauynge of rychesse, ne none of the other thynges thou nempnedest, mowen nat make suche parfyte blysse in loue as I shall shew. Therfore they be nat worthy to thylke blysse, and yet somwhat muste ben cause and waye to thylke blysse: Ergo there is some suche thyng and some way, but it is lytell in vsage and that is nat openlye yknowe. But what felest in thyne herte of the seruyce, in whyche by me thou art entred: wenest aught thy selfe yet be in the hye waye to my blysse. I shall so shewe it to the, thou shalte nat con saye the contrary.

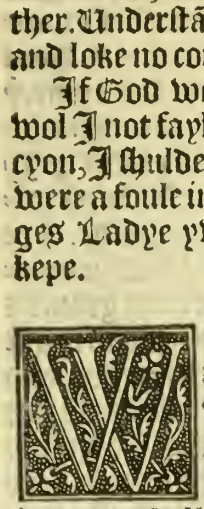
Good lady (q̃ I) altho I suppose it in my herte, yet wolde I here thyne wordes, howe ye meanen in this mater. (Quod she) that I shall wyth my good wyl. Thylke blysse desy-
red, some deale ye knowē, altho it be nat par-
fytly, for kyndely entention ledeth you ther-
to, but in thre maner lyuenges is all suche ways shewed. Euery wight in this world to haue thys blysse one of thylke thre wayes of lyues muste procede, whyche after opynions of great clerkes arn by names cleaped, besti-
allich, resonablich, is vertuous: manliche is worldelich, bestialliche is lustes & delytable nothynge restrayned by brydell of reason, all that ioyeth and yeueth gladnesse to the hert, and it be ayenst reason, is lykened to bestyall lyueng, whyche thynge foloweth lustes and delytes, wherfore in suche thynge maye nat that precious blysse that is mayster of al ver-
tues abyde. Youre fathers to forne you haue cleaped suche lusty lyuenges after the flesshe passyons of desyre, whyche are innominable to fore god and man bothe. Than after deter-
mination of suche wyse, we accorden that suche passyons of desyre shull nat be nemp-
ned, but holden for absolute frome all other lyuenges and prouynges, and so lyueth in to lyuenges, manlyche and resonable to declare the maters begonne. But to make the fullye haue vnderstandynge in manlich lyuenges, whiche is holden worldlich in these thynges so that ignorauncе be made no letter. I woll (q̃ she) nēpne these forsayd wayes be names and cōclusions. First riches, dignyte, renome and power, shull in thys worke be cleped bo-
dily goodes, for in hē hath ben a gret throwe mānes trust of selynesse in loue, as in riches, suffysance to haue mayntayned that was be-
gon, by worldly catel in dignite, honour, & re uerēce of hem that werne vnderput by mai-
stry therby to obey. In renome glorie of peo-
ples

ples prayſyng, after luſtes in their hert, with
out hede takyng to qualite & maner of doing,
and in power, by trouth of lordſhyps mayn-
tenaunce, thynk to procede forth in doynge.
In all whyche thynges a longe tyme mans
coueytiſe in commune hath ben greatly grou
ded, to come to the blyſſe of my ſeruyce, but
trewely they were begyled, and for the prin-
cypall muſte nedes fayle and in helpynge
mowe nat auaile. Se why for holdeſt hym
not poore that is nedy? Yes parde (q I) And
hym for diſhonored that moche folke deyne
nat to reuerence. That is ſoth (q I) & what
hym that his mightes faylen and mowe nat
helpen? Certes (q I) me ſemeth of al men he
ſhuld be holden a wretch. And weneſt nat (q
ſhe) that he that is lytell in renome, but ra-
ther is out of the prayſynges of mo men thã
a fewe be nat in ſhame? For ſoth (q I) it is
ſhame and villany to hym that coueyteth re-
nome, that more folke nat praiſe in name thã
preyſe. Sothe (q ſhe) thou ſayſt ſoth, but all
theſe thynges are folowed of ſuche maner
doynge, & wenden in ryches ſuffyſaunce, in
power might, in dignyte worſhyp, and in re-
nome glorie, wherfore they diſcẽded in to diſ-
ceyuable wening, & in that ſeruice diſceyte is
folowed. And thus in general, thou & al ſuch
other that ſo worchẽ faylen of my blyſſe that
ye longe han deſyred, wherfore truly in lyfe
of reaſon is the hye way to thys blyſſe, as I
thynke more openly to declare herafter. Ne-
uer the later, yet in a lytell to comforte thy
herte, in ſhewyng of what way thou arte en-
tred thy ſelfe, and that thy Margaryte maye
know the ſet in the hye way, I wol enforme
the in this wiſe. Thou haſt fayled of thy firſt
purpoſe, bycauſe thou wenteſt wronge and
lefteſt the hye way and on thy ryght ſyde, as
thus, thou lokedeſt on worldly lyueng & that
thyng ꝑ begyled, & lightly therfore as a lytel
aſſay thou ſongedeſt, but whan I turned thy
purpoſe, & ſhewed the parte of the hye waye
tho thou abode therin, and no dethe ne ferd-
neſſe of none enemy mizt ꝑ out of thilke way
reue, but euer one in thyn hert, to come to the
ylke blyſſe whan thou were areſted and fyrſt
tyme enpriſoned, ꝓ were loth to chaunge thy
way, for in thy hert thou wendeſt to haue bẽ
there thou ſhuldeſt, & for I had routh to ſene
the miſcaried, & wyſt wel thyne ableneſſe my
ſeruyce to forther & encreaſe, I conze my ſelfe
wythout other mean to viſyt thy perſon, in
comforte of thy hert: and perdy in my cõming
thou were greatly gladed, after whiche tyme
no diſeaſe, no care, no tene, myght moue me
out of thy herte. And yet am I gladde and
greatly enpited, howe continually thou had-
deſt me in mynde, wyth good auyſement of
thy conſcience, whan thy kyng and his prin-
ces by huge wordes and gret, loked after va-
riaunce in thy ſpeche, and euer thou were re-
dye for my ſake in pleſaunce of that Marga-
rite peerle, and many mo other, thy bodye to
obyge in to Marces doynge, yf anye contra-
ryed thy ſawes, ſtedfaſt way maketh ſtedfaſt
herte wyth good hope in the ende. Trewely
I woll that thou it well knowe, for I ſe the
ſo ſet and not chaungyng hert haddeſt in my
ſeruyce, and I made thou haddeſt grace of
thy kynge in forzeueneſſe of mykell mifdede:
to that gracious kyng arte thou mykell hol-
den, of whoſe grace and goodneſſe ſomtyme
herafter I thynke the enforme, whã I ſhew
the grounde where as morall vertue gro-
weth. Who brought ꝑ to werke? who brought
thys grace aboute? who made thy herte har-
dy? Trewly it was I, for haddeſt thou of me
fayled, than of this purpoſe had neuer taken
in this wyſe. And therfore I ſay thou might
well truſte to come to thy blyſſe, ſythen thy
gynnyng hath ben harde, but euer gracious-
ly after thy hertes deſyre hath proceded. Syl
uer fyned wyth manye heates men knowen
for trewe, and ſafely men may truſt to the a-
lay in werkynge. This diſeaſes hath proued
what waye hence forwarde thou thynkeſt to
holde. Nowe in good fayth ladye (quod I
tho) I am nowe in, me ſemeth it is the hye
waye and the ryght. Yea forſoth (quod ſhe)
and nowe I wol dyſproue thy fyrſte wayes,
by whyche many men wenen to gette thylke
blyſſe. But for as moche as euery herte that
hath caught full loue, is tyed wyth queynte
knyttynges, thou ſhalt vnderſtande that loue
and thylke forſayd blyſſe toforne declared in
this prouinges, ſhal hote the knot in the hert
well (q I) this inpoſſeſſion I wol wel vn
derſtande. Nowe alſo (q ſhe) for the knotte
in the herte muſte ben from one to another,
and I knowe thy deſyre: I woll thou vnder-
ſtande theſe maters to ben ſayd of thy ſelfe in
dyſprouing of thy fyrſt ſeruyce, & in ſtrengh-
thynge of thylke that thou haſt vndertake to

thy

thy Margaryte perle. A goddes halfe(q I) ryght well I fele that al thys case is possible and trewe, and therfore I admitted al togi-ther. Understāden well(q she)these termes, and loke no contradiction thou graunt.

If God woll(q I) of all these thynges wol I not fayle, and yf I graunt contradic-cyon, I shulde graunte an impossible, & that were a foule inconuenience, for whych thin-ges Ladye ywys herafter I thynke me to kepe.



Well (quod she) thou knowestе that euerye thynge is a cause wherthrough any thyng hath beynge, that is cleped caused, than yf rychesse causen knotte in herte, thylke rychesse arne cause of thylke precious thyng beyng: but after the sentence of Aristotle, euerye cause is more in dignitie than hys thynge caused, wherthrough it fo-loweth rychesse to bene more in dignitie thā thilke knot, but rychesses arne kindly naugh-ty, badde, and nedy, & thylke knotte is thyng kyndely good, mooste prayſed and desyred: Ergo thinge naughtye, badde, and nedye, in kyndelye vnderstandynge is more worthye than thyng kyndely good, most desyred and prayſed: the consequence is false, nedes the antecedent mote bene of the same condition. But that rychesses ben badde, naughty, and nedy, ý woll I proue, wherfore they mowe cause no such thyng, that is so glorious and good: The more rychesse thou hast, the more nede haste thou of helpe hem to kepe.

Ergo thou nedeste in rychesse, whyche nede thou shuldest not haue yf thou hem wantest. Than must rychesse bene nedy, that in theyr hauinge maken the nedy to helpes in sucetie thy rychesse to kepē, wherthrough foloweth rychesse to bene nedy. Euery thynge causyng yuels is badde and naughty: but rychesse in one causen mischeſe, in another they mowen not euenly stretchē al about. wherof cometh plee, debate, thefte, begylynges, but rychesse to wynne, whych thynges bene bad, & by ri-chesse arne caused: Ergo thylke ryches bene badde, whych badnesse & nede bene knytte in to rychesse by a maner of kyndely propertie, and euery cause and caused accorden, so that it foloweth thylke rychesse to haue the same accordaunce with badnesse & nede, that their cause asketh. Also euery thyng hath hys be-yng by his cause, thā yf ý cause be distroyed, the beyng of caused is banyshed: And so if ry chesse causen loue, & richesse weren distroyed the loue shulde banyshe, but thylke knot and it be trewe maye not banyshe for no goynge of no richesse: Ergo richesse is no cause of the knotte. And many men as I sayd, setten the cause of the knotte in rychesse, thilke knytten the rychesse, and nothynge the yuell: thylke persons what euer they ben, wenen that ry-chesse is most worthy to he had, & that make they the cause: & so wene they thylke rychesse be better thā the person. Cōmenly such askē rather after the quantyte than after the qua-lyte, and such wenen as well by hem selfe as by other, that coniunction of hys lyfe and of hys soule is no more precious, but in as my-kel as he hath of riches. Alas howe maye he holden such thynges precious or noble, that neyther han lyfe ne soule, ne ordynaunce of werchynge lymmes: such richesse bene more worthy whan they ben in gatherynge, in de-parting ginneth his loue of other mens pray syng. And auerice gatheryng maketh be ha-ted and nedy to many out helpes: and whan leueth the possession of suche goodes, & they gynne banysh, than entreth sorow and tene in theyr hertes. O badde & strayte ben thylke that at theyr departing maketh men teneful and sory, and in the gatheryng of hem make men nedy: Moche folke at ones mowen not togyder moch therof haue. A good gest glad deth his hoste and al hys meyny, but he is a badde gest that maketh his host nedy & to be aferde of hys gestes goyng. Certes(q I) me wondreth therfore that the comune opinion is thus: He is worth no more than ý he hath in catell. O(q she) loke thou be not of that o-pinion, for yf gold or money, or other maner of richesse shinen in thy sight, whose is that not thyne: & tho they haue a lytle beautye, they be no thyng in cōparison of our kynd, & therfore ye shulde not set your worthinesse in thyng lower thā your self, for the ryches, the fayrenes, the worthines of thylke goodes yf ther be any such preciousnesse in hem are not thine, thou madest hem so neuer, from other they come to the, & to other they shul from ý: wherfore embrasest ý other wightes goodes as tho they were thine: kind hath draw hem by hem self. It is soth the goodes of the erth

bene ordayned in your fode and norysshynge, but yf thou wolte holde the apayed wyth ý suffyseth to thy kynde, thou shalte not be in daunger of no such ryches, to kinde sufficeth lytle thynge who that taketh hede. And yf thou wolte algates wyth superfluite of rychesse be a throted, thou shalt hastelych be anoyed, or elles yuell at ease. And fayrnesse of feldes ne of habitations, ne multytude of meyne, maye not be rekened as rychesse that are thyne owne, for if they be bad it is great sclaunder and bylany to the occuppyer, and if they be good or fayre, ý mater of the workeman that hem made is to praise. How shuld otherwyse bountie be cõpted for thine, thilke goodnesse & fayrnesse be proper to tho thynges hem selfe, thã yf they be not thine sorow not whã they wend, ne glad the not in põpe and in pryde whan thou hem haste, for their bountie & their beauties cometh out of their owne kynde, and not of thyne owne person: as fayre bene they in their not hauynge as whan thou haste hem, they be not fayre for thou haste hem, but thou hast geten hem for the fayrnesse of them selfe. And ther the vaylance of men is demed in rychesse outforthe, wenen men to haue no proper good in them selfe but seche it in straunge thynges: trewly the condition of good wenyng is in ý mystourned, to wene your noblenesse be not in your selfe, but in the goodes and beautie of other thynges. Pardy the beastes that han but felynge soules, haue suffysaunce in their owne selfe: and ye that bene lyke to God, seken encrease of suffysaunce from so excellent a kind of so low thynges, ye do great wrõge to hym that you made lordes ouer all erthly thynges, and ye put your worthynesse vnder the nombre of the fete of lower thynges and foule, whã ye iuge thylke rychesse to be your worthynesse, than put ye your self by estimacyon vnder thylke foule thynges, and than leue ye the knowyng of your selfe, so be ye yler thã any dombe beest, ý cometh of shreude vice. Ryghte so thylke persons ý louen none yuel for dere worthynesse of the person, but for straunge goodes, and sayth the adornement in the knotte lyth in such thing, hys errour is perylous and shreude, and he wrieth muche venym with moch welth, & that knot moy not be good whã he hath it getten. Certes thus hath ryches wyth flyckeryng syght anoyed many: & often whan ther is a throw out shrew, he coyneth al the golde, al the precious stones that mowen be foundẽ to haue in his bandon, he weneth no wight be worthy to haue such thynges but he alone. How many hast thou knowe nowe in late tyme, ý in their riches supposed suffisaunce haue folowed, & nowe it is al fayled: Ye lady (q I) that is for mysse medlynge, & otherwyse gouerned thylke rychesse than they shulde. Yee (q she tho) had not the floode greatlye areysed, and throwe to hemwarde both grauel & sande, he had made no medlyng. And rygh as see yeueth flood, so draweth see ebbe, and pulleth ayen vnder wawe all the fyrste out throwe, but yf good pyles of noble gouernaũce in loue, in wel meanynge maner, bene sadly grounded, to which holde thylke gravel as for a while, ý ayen lightly mow not it turne, & yf the pyles bene trewe, the grauell and sande wol abyde. And certes full warnyng in loue shalte thou neuer thorowe hem gette ne couer ý lightly with an ebbe er thou be ware it wol ayen meue. In rychesse many mẽ haue had tenes and diseases, which they shuld not haue had, if therof they had fayled Thorowe whiche nowe declared partly it is shewed, that for rychesse shulde the knotte in herte neyther ben caused in one ne in other: trewly knott maye ben knytte, and I trowe more stedfast in loue though rychesse fayled and els in rychesse is the knotte & not in hert. And than such a knotte is false, whan the see ebbeth & withdraweth the grauel, that such rychesse voydeth, thilke knotte wol vnknytte wherfore no trust, no way, no cause, no parkyte beyng is in rychesse of no suche knotte, therfore another way must we haue.

Honoure in dignitie is wened to yeuen a ful knot. Yee certes (q I) & of that opinion bene manye, for they saine dignitie, wyth honour and reuerence, causen hertes to encheynen, and so abled to be knytte togyther, for the excellence in souerayne of such degrees

Nowe (q she) yf dignitie, honour, and reuerence causen thilke knot in herte, this knot is good and profitable. For euery cause of a cause, is cause of thinge caused: Than thus, good thynges and profitable ben by dignite honour, and reuerence caused. Ergo they acorden

corden, and dignities bene good wyth reuerences and honoure, but contraryes mowen not accorden: wherfore by reason ther shuld no dignitie, no reuerēce, none honour accord wyth shrewes, but ý is false: they haue bene cause to shrewes in many shreudnesse, for whem they accorden. Ergo frō begynnyng to argue ayenwarde tyl it come to the last conclusyon, they are not cause of the knot. Lo all day at eye, arne shrewes not in reuerence, in honoure, and in dignitie: yes forsoth, rather thā the good. Thā foloweth it that shrewes rather thā good shull ben cause of this knot. But of this contrary of al louers is bileued, and for a soth openly determyned to holde.

Nowe (quod I) fayne wolde I here how suche dignities accorden wyth shrewes.

O (quod she) that woll I shewe in manyfolde wise. Ye wene (quod she) that dignites of office here in your cite is as ý sūne, it shyneth bryghte wythouten any cloude, whiche thynge whan they comen in the handes of malycyouse tyrauntes, there cometh muche harme, and more greuaunce therof, than of the wylde fyre, though it brende all a strete. Certes in dignite of office, the werkes of the occupyer shewen the malice and the badnes in the persoune, wyth shrewes they maken manyfolde harmes, and muche people shamen. How often han rancours for malyce of the gouernoure shulde bene mayntenyned. Hath not than such dignities caused debate rumours, and yuels: yes God wote, by such thynges haue bene trusted to make mennes vnderstādyng encline to many queynt thynges. Thou wotest e well what I meane. Ye (quod I) therfore as dignitie suche thyng in tene ywrought, so ayenwarde the substaūce in dignitie chaunged, relyed to bryngeayen good pyte in doyng. Doway, doway (quod she) if it so betyde, but that is selde, that such dignitie is betake in a good mannes gouernaunce. what thynge is to recken in the dignities goodnesse: parde the bountie & goodnes is hers, that vse it in good gouernaūce, and therfore cometh it that honoure aud reuerence shulde bene done to dignitie, bicause of encreasynge vertue in the occupyer, and not to the ruler, bicause of souerayntie in dignitie. Sythen dignitie may no vertue cause, who is worthy worship for such goodnesse no: dignitie, but person ý maketh goodnesse in dignitie to shyne. Thys is wonder thyng (quod I) for me thynketh, as the person in dignitie is worthye honoure for goodnesse so tho a person for badnesse magre hath deserued, yet the dignite leneth to be commended. Let be (quod she) thou errest right foule dignite with badnes is helper to perfourme the felonous doynge: pardy were it kyndly good or any propertie of kyndly vertue hadden in hem selfe, shrewes shulde hem neuer haue, wyth hem shulde they neuer accorde. water and fyre that ben cōtrarious mowen not togyther bene assembled, kynde wol not suffre suche contraryes to ioyne, & sythen at eye by experiēce in doyng, we sene that shrewes haue hem more often thā good menne, syker mayste thou be, ý kyndly good in suche thynges is not appropred. Pardy were they kyndly good, as wel one as other shulden euenliche in vertue of gouernaūce ben worth: but one faileth in goodnes another doth the contrary, and so it sheweth kyndly goodnes in dignitie not be grounded. And thys same reason (quod she) maye be made in generall on all the bodily goodes, for they comen ofte to throw out shrewes. After this he is strōg that hath myght to haue great burthyns, & he is lyght and swyfte that hathe souerante in runnynge to passe other ryghte so he is a shrewe on whō shreude thynges and badde han most wyrchyng. And ryght as philosophy maketh philosophers, & my seruice maketh louers: Ryghte so if dignities weren good or vertuous, they shulde maken shrewes good, and turne her malyce and make hem be vertuous, but that do they not, as it is proued, but causē rancour & debate. Ergo they be not good, but vtterly badde. Had Nero neuer bene Emperoure, shulde neuer hys dame haue be slayn, to maken open the priuitie of his engendrure. Herodes for his dignitie slewe many chyldrē. The dignite of king Pompey wolde haue distroyed al Italy Therfore mokyl wisedome & goodnes bothnedeth in a person, the malyce in dignitie slyly to bridel, and with a good bytte of arest to withdrawe, in case it wolde praunce otherwise than it shulde: trewly ye yeue to dignities wrongful names in your cleping. They shulde hete not dignitie, but moustre of badnes & mayntenour of shrewes. Pardy shyne the sūne neuer so bryght, & it bryngeforth no

heate, ne sesonably the herbes brynge out of the erth, but suffre frostes and colde, and the erth baraine to lygge be time of his compas in circute aboute, ye wolde wonder and dispreyse that sunne. If the mone be at full and sheweth no lyghte but derke and dymme to your syghte appereth, and make distruction of ꝑ waters, wol ye not suppose it be vnder cloude or in clips: and that some priuy thing vnknowen to your wyttes, is cause of suche contrarious doyng. Thã yf clerkes that han ful insight and knowyng of such impedimẽtes enforme you of the sothe, very idiotes ye bene, but yf ye yeuen credence to thylke clerkes wordes, & yet it doth me tene, to sene many wretches reioycen in such maner planets Trewly lytle con they on phylosophy or els on my lore, that any desyre hauen such lightyng planettes in ꝑ wyse any more to shew. Good Ladye (q I) tell ye me how ye meane in these thynges. Lo (quod she) the dignities of your citie, sunne & mone, nothyng in kynd shewe theyr shynyng as they shulde. For the sunne made no brẽnyng hete in loue, but fresed enuye in mennes hertes for feblenesse of shynynge hete: and the mone was about vnder an olde cloude, the lyuenges by waters to distroye.

Lady (q I) it is supposed they had shined as they shulde. Yee (quod she) but nowe it is proued at the full their beaute in kyndly shynynge fayled, wherfore dignitye of hym seluen hath no beautie in fayrnesse, ne dryueth nat awaye vices but encreaseth, & so be they no cause of the knot. Now se in good trouth holde ye not such sonnes worthy of no reuerence and dignities, worthy of no worshyp, that maketh men to do the more harmes? I not (quod I) No (q she) and thou se a wyse good man, for hys goodnesse and wysenesse wolte thou not do hym worship? Therof he is worthy. That is good skyl (quod I) it is dewe to suche, both reuerence and worshyp to haue. Than (quod she) a shrewe for hys shreudnesse, all tho he be put forth to forne other for ferd, yet is he worthy for shreudnes to be vnworshypped: of reuerence no part is he worthy to haue, to cõtrarious doyng belongeth and that is good skyl. For rights as besmyteth the dignities, thylke same thinge ayenwarde hym smyteth, or els shulde smite And ouer this thou wost wel (quod she) that fyre in euery place heateth where it be & water maketh wete: why? for kyndely werking is so yput in hem to do such thinges: for euery kyndly in werkynge sheweth his kynde. But though a wight had ben mayre of your citie manye wynter togyther, and come in a straunge place ther he were not knowen, he shuld for his dignite haue no reuerence. Thã neyther worshyppe ne reuerence is kyndelye propre in no dignitie, sythen they shuldẽ don theyr kynde, in such doyng yf any were. And yf reuerence ne worshyppe kyndly be not set in dignities, & they more therin bene shewed thã goodnesse, for that in dignitie is shewed but it proueth that goodnesse kyndly in hem is not grounded. I wys neyther worshyppe ne reuerence ne goodnesse in dignitie, doone none offyce of kynde, for they haue none such propertie in nature of doenge, but by false opinion of the people. Lo how somtyme thilk that in your citie werne in dignitie noble, yf thou lyst hem nempne, they bene nowe ouerturned, bothe in worshyppe, in name, and in reuerence: wherfore suche dignities haue no kyndely werchynge to worshyppe and of reuerence, he that hathe no worthynesse on it selfe. Now it ryseth and nowe it vanysheth after the varyaunt opynyon in false hertes of vnstable people. Wherfore yf thou desyre the knotte of thys iewell, or els yf thou woldest suppose she shuld sette the knotte on the for such maner dignitie, than thou wenest beautye or goodnesse of thylke somwhat encreaseth the goodnesse or vertue in the body: But dignitye of hem selfe bene not good, ne yeuen reuerence ne worshippe by their owne kynde, howe shulde they than yeue to any other a thynge, that by no waye mowe they haue hem selfe? It is sene in dignitie of the Emperour and of many mo other, that they mowe not of hem selue kepe theyr worshyp ne theyr reuerence, that that in a lytle whyle it is now vp and now downe, by vnstedfast hertes of the people. what boũtie mow they yeue that wyth cloude lyghtlye leaueth hys shyning? Certes to the occupier is mokyl appeyred, sythen such doynge dothe vylany to hym that maye it not mayntayne, wherfore thylke waye to the knotte is croked: and yf anye desyre to come to the knotte, he muste leaue thys waye on his lefte syde, or els shal he neuer come there.

Vayleth

Wayleth ought (q̃ she) power of myght in mayntenaunce of worthy to come to thys knot Parde (q̃ I) yee, for hertes bene rauysched from such maner thynges. Certes (q̃ she) though a fooles hert is with thing rauished yet therefore is no generall cause of the powers, ne of a syker parfyte herte to be loked after. Was not Nero the moost shrewe one of thylke that men rede, & yet had he power to make senatours, iustices & princes of many landes: was not that great power: Yes, certes (quod I) wel (quod she) yet myght he not help him selfe out of disease, whā he gan fal. How many ensamples canst thou remēbre of kynges great and noble, and huge power holden, & yet they myghte not kepe hem selue from wretchednesse. Howe wretched was kyng Henry Curtmantyll er he deyed: he had not so moch as to couer w̄ hys membres: and yet was he one of the greatest kinges of al the Normandes ofspryngе, & most possession had. O, a noble thinge and clere is power, that is not founden myghty to kepe hym selfe. Nowe trewly a greate fole is he, that for such thyng wolde sette the knotte in thyne herte. Also power of realmes is not thylk greatest power amonges the worldly powers rekened: And yf suche powers han wretchednesse in hem selfe, it foloweth other powers of febler condicion to ben wretched, and than that wretchednesse shulde be cause of such a knotte. But euery wyght that hath reason wote well that wretchednesse by no waye maye bene cause of none suche knotte, wherfore such power is no cause. That powers haue wretchednesse in hem selfe, maye ryght lyghtly bene preued. If power lacke on any side, on that side is no power, but no power is wretchednesse: for al be it so the power of emperours or kynges, or els of theyr realmes (whych is the power of the prynce) stretchen wyde and brode, yet besyde is ther mokell folke of whyche he hath no cōmaundement ne lordshyp, & ther as lacketh his power, hys nonepower entreth, where vnder spryngeth that maketh hem wretches. No power is wretchednesse, and nothynge els: but in this maner hath kinges more porcion of wretchednesse thā of power. Trewly such powers bene vnmighty, for euer they ben in drede howe thylke power frō lesinge may be keped of sorowe, so drede sorily prickes euer in their hertes: litle is ý power which careth & ferdeth it selfe to maintayn. Unmyghty is ý wretchednes whych is entred by the ferdful wenyng of the wretch him selfe: & knotte ymaked by wretchednesse is betwene wretches, & wretches all thyng bewayten: wherfore the knotte shulde be bewayled, and ther is no such perfyte blysse that we supposed at the gynning. Ergo power in nothing shulde cause such knottes. wretchednesse is a kyndly propertie in suche power, as by waye of drede, whiche they mowe not eschewe ne by no way lyue in sikernesse. For thou wost wel (q̃ she) he is nought mighty that wold done ý he may not doone ne perfourme. Therfore (quod I) these kynges and lordes that han suffysaunce at the ful of men and other thinges, mowen well bene holden myghty: their cōmaūdemētes ben done, it is neuermore denied. Foole (q̃ she) or he wot him selfe mighty or wotte it not: for he is nought myghty, that is blynde of his might and wote it not. That is sothe (quod I). Than yf he wot it, he must nedes ben a drad to lesen it. He that wot of his might is in dout ý he mote nedes lese, & so leadeth hym drede to ben vnmyghtye. And yf he retche not to lese, lytle is that worth ý of ý lesyng reson retcheth nothing: & if it were myghty in power or in strengthe the lesyng shulde bene wythset, and whan it cometh to the lesyng he may it not wythsyt. Ergo thylke myght is leude and naughty. Such mightes arne ylike to postes and pyllers that vpright stonden, and greate might han to beare many charges, & yf they croke on any syde, lytell thynge maketh hem ouerthrow. Thys is a good ensāple (q̃ I) to pyllers & postes ý I haue seneouerthrowed my selfe, and hadden, they bene vnderput wyth any helpes, they had not so lyghtly fal. Thā holdeste thou hym mighty that hath manye men armed and many seruauntes, and euer he is adradde of hem in his herte, and for he gasteth hem, somtyme he mote ý more feare haue. Comenly he that other agasteth, other in hym ayenwarde werchen the same: and thus warnysched mote he be, and of warnish the houre drede: Lytel is that myght & right leude, who so taketh hede. Than semethe it (q̃ I) that such famulers about kinges and

greate lordes, shulde great myght haue. Although a sypher in augrym haue no myght in signifycation of it selfe, yet he yeueth power in significacion to other, and these clepe I the helpes to a post to kepe hym from fallynge. Certes (quod she) thylke skylles bene leude. why-but yf ỳ shorers ben wel grounded, the helpes shullen slyden and suffre the charge to fal, her myght lytle auayleth. And so me thynketh (quod I) that a poste alone stondynge vpright vpon a basse, may lenger in great burthen endure, than croken pillers for all theyr helpes, and her grounde be not syker. That is soth (q̃ she) for as the blynde in bearynge of the lame gynne stomble, both shulde fal, right so such pyllers so enuyroned wyth helpes in fallynge of the grounde fayleth altogyther, how ofte than suche famulers in theyr moost pryde of prosperyte bene sodaynly ouerthrowen. Thou haste knowe many in a moment so ferre ouerthrow, that couer might they neuer, whan the heuynesse of suche faylynge cometh by case of fortune, they mowe it not eschewe: and myghte and power, yf there were any, shulde of strength such thynges voyde & weyue, and so it is not Lo than whiche thynge is this power, that tho men han it they bene agast, & in no tyme of full hauyng be they syker, & yf they wolde weyue drede, as they mowe not, lytle is in worthynesse. Fye therfore on so naughtye thynge any knot to cause. Lo in aduersitie, thylke bene his foes that glosed and semed frendes in welthe: thus arne hys famylyers his foes and his enemyes: and nothynge is werse ne more myghty for to anoy than is a familier enemye, & these thynges maye they not weyue: so trewelye theyr myghte is not worth a cresse. And ouer all thing, he ỳ maye not wythdrawe the bridell of hys flesshly lustes and hys wretched complayntes (nowe thinke on thy selfe) trewly he is not mighty. I can se no waye ỳ lyeth to the knot. Thylke people thã that setten their hertes vpõ suche myghtes and powers, often bene begyled. Parde he is not myghty that maye do anye thing, that another may done him the selue and that mẽ haue as great power ouer hym as he ouer other. A iustice that demeth men, ayenward hath bene often demed. Buserus slewe his gestes, and he was slaine of Hercules his geste, Hugest betrayshed many men, and of Collo was he betrayed. He that with swerde smytteth, with swerde shall be smitten. Than gan I to studyen a while on these thinges, and made a countenaunce with my hande in maner to bene huyshte. Nowe lette sene (quod she) me thynketh somwhat there is wythin thy soule, that troubleth thy vnderstandynge, saye on what it is. (Quod I tho) me thynketh that although a mã by power haue suche myghte ouer me, as I haue ouer other, that disproueth no myght in my person, but yet may I haue power & myght neuer the later. Se nowe (q̃ she) thine owne leudnesse: He is myghty that may wythout wretchednes, and he is vnmyghty that may it not withsitte: but then he that might ouer the, & he woll put on the wretchednesse, thou might it not wythsytte. Ergo thou seest thy selfe what foloweth. But nowe (quod she) woldest thou not skorne & thou se a flye han power to done harme to another flye, & thilk haue no myght ne ayenturninge him selfe to defende- Yes certes (quod I) who is a frayler thyng (quod she) than the flesshly bodye of a man, ouer whyche haue oftentyme flyes, and yet lasse thyng than a flye, mokel might in greuaunce and anoyenge withouten any withsytting, for al thylke mannes mightes And sythen thou seest thy flesshlye bodye in kyndely power fayle, how shulde thã the accident of a thing ben in more surete of beyng than substancial- wherfore thylke thinges ỳ we clepe power, is but accident to the flesshly body, and so they may not haue that suretie in might, which wanteth in the substanciall body, why there is no waye to the knot, that loketh aright after the hye way as he shulde

Verily it is proued that richesse, dignite, & power, ben not trew way to the knot, but as rath by such thynges the knotte to be vnbounde: wherfore on these thynges I rede no wight trust, to gette anye good knotte. But what shul we saye of renome in the peoples mouthes, shulde ỳ ben any cause: what supposest ỳ in thine hert- Certes (quod I) yes I trow, for your sly resons I dare not sarely it say. Than (q̃ she) wol I preue ỳ shrewes as rath shul ben in ỳ knot as the good & ỳ were

ayenst

ayenst kynde. Fayne (quod I) wolde I that here, me thynketh wondre howe renoume shoulde as wel knyt a shrewe as a good person: renoume in euery degree hathe auaunced, yet wist I neuer the contrary: shuld thã renoume accorde with a shrewe: it may not synke in my stomacke tyll I heare more.

Howe (quod she) haue I not sayd alwayes the shrewes shull not haue the knot. what nedeth (quod I) to rehersse that anye more: I wote well euery wyght by kyndely reason, shrewes in knyttyng wol eschewe. Than (q̃ she) the good ought thylke knotte to haue.

Howe els: (quod I) It were greate harme (quod she) that the good were weyued and put out of espoire of the knot, yf it be desired. O (q̃ I) alas, on suche thynge to thynke I wene that heuen wepeth to se suche wrõges here bene suffred on erth: the good ought it to haue and no wyght els. The goodnesse (q̃ she) of a person may not ben knowe outforth, but by renome of the knowers, wherfore he must be renouned of goodnesse to come to the knot. So must it be (q̃ I) or els all lost that we carpen. Sothly (q̃ she) that were great harme, but yf a good mã might haue his desyres in seruyce of thylke knot, and a shrewe to be beyned, and they ben not knowen in general but by lackyng and prayseing and in renome, and so by the cõsequẽce it foloweth, a shrewe to ben prayseed & knyt, and a good to be forsake and vnknyt. Ah (q̃ I tho) haue ye ladye bene here abouten, yet wolde I se by grace of our argumentes better declared, how good & bad do accordẽ by lackyng and prayseyng, me thynketh it ayẽst kynde. Nay (q̃ she) and that shalt thou se as yerne: these elementes han cõtrarious qualities in kynde, by whiche they mowe not accorde nomore than good & bad, and in qualities they accorde, so that contraryes by qualitie accorden by qualitie. Is not erth drye, & water that is nexte and bytwene therth is wete: drye and wete ben contrary, & mowen not accorde, & yet this discordaunce is boũd to accorde by cloudes, for bothe elementes ben colde. Ryght so the eyre that is next the water is wete, and eke it is hote. This eyre by his hete contraryeth water that is colde, but thylke contraryoustye is oned my moysture, for both be they moyst. Also the fyre ỳ is next the eyre, and it encloseth al about, is drye: wherthrough it contraryeth eyre that is wete: & in hete they accorde, for both they ben hote. Thus by these accordaũces, discordaũtes ben ioyned, and in a maner of accordaunce they accorden by connection, that is knyttyng togyther: of that accorde cõmeth a maner of melody ỳ is ryght noble. Ryght so good and bad are contrarye in doinges, by lackyng and prayseyng: good is both lacked and prayseed of some, and bad is both lacked and prayseed of some: wherfore theyr contrarioustie accorde both by lackynge and prayseyng. Than foloweth it, though good be neuer so mokel prayseed, oweth more to bẽ knit than the bad: or els bad for the renome that he hath, must be takẽ as wel as ỳ good, and that oweth not. No forsoth (q̃ I) wel, q̃ she than is renome no way to the knot: Lo fole (q̃ she) howe clerkes writen of suche glorye of renome. O glorie, glorie, thou arte none other thynge to thousandes of folke, but a great sweller of eares. Many one hath had full greate renoume by false opynion of baryaunt people: And what is fouler thã folke wrongfully to ben prayseed, or by malyce of the people gyltelesse lacked: nedes shame foloweth therof to hem ỳ with wronge prayseth, and also to the desertes prayseed, and vilanye and reprofe of hym that disclaũdreth.

Good chylde (quod she) what echeth suche renome to the conscience of a wyse man that loketh and measureth his goodnesse, not by sleuelesse wordes of the people, but by sothfastnesse of conscience: by god nothyng. And if it be fayre a mans name be eched by moch folkes prayseyng, and fouler thynge that mo folke not prayseen. I sayde to the a lytle here beforne, that no folke in straunge countries nought prayseen, suche renoume may not comen to theyr eares, bycause of vnknowyng and other obstacles, as I sayde: wherfore more folke not prayseen, and that is ryghte foule to hym that renome desyreth, to wete lesse folke prayseen than renoume enhaunce. I trowe the thanke of a people is nought worth in remembraunce to take, ne it proceeth of no wyse iudgement, neuer is it stedfast perdurable: it is beyne and flying, with wynde wasteth and encreaseth.

Trulye such glorye ought to be hated. Yf gentyllesse be a clere thyng, renome and glory to enhaũce, as in rekenyng of thy lynage

than is gentylleſſe of thy kynne, for why, it ſemeth that gentyleſſe of thy kynne, is but prayſynge and renoume that come of thyne auncestres deſertes: and yf ſo be that prayſynge and renoume of theyr deſertes, make theyr clere gentyleſſe, than mote they nedes ben gentyl for theyr gentil dedes, & not ÿ: for of thy ſelfe commeth not ſuche maner gentyleſſe, prayſynge of thy deſertes. Than gentyleſſe of thyne auncesters that forayne is to the, maketh the not gentyl, but vngētyl and reproued, and yf thou contynueſt not theyr gentylleſſe. And therfore a wyſe man ones ſayde. Better is it thy kynne to bene by the gentyled, than thou to glorify of thy kynnes gentyleſſe, and haſte no deſerte thereof thy ſelfe.

How paſſyng is the beautie of fleſhly bodyes: more flytttyng than mouable floures of ſommer. And yf thyne eyen were as good as the Lynx, that may ſene thorowe many ſtone walles, both fayre and foule in theyr entrayles, of no maner hewe ſhoulde appere to thy ſyght, that were a foule ſyght. Than is fayreneſſe by feble ſſe of eyen, but of no kynde, wherfore thylke ſhoulde be no waye to the knot: whan thylke is went the knotte wendeth after.

Lo nowe at all proues, none of all theſe thinges mowe perfectlye ben in vnderſtandyng, to ben way to the duryng blyſſe of the knot. But nowe to conclusyon of theſe matters, herkeneth theſe wordes. Very ſommer is knowe from the wynter: in ſhorter cours draweth the dayes of Decēbre, than in the moneth of June: The ſpryngeſ of May faden and folowen in October. Theſe thinges ben not vnbounden from theyr olde kynde, they haue not loſt her werke of their propre eſtate. Men of volūtarious wyll, withſyt ÿ henens gouerneth. Other thynges ſuffren thynges pacyently to werche: Man in what eſtate he be, yet wolde he bene chaunged. Thus by queynt thynges blyſſe is deſyred, and the frute that cometh of theſe ſpringes, nys but anguyſh and bytter, although it be a whyle ſwete, it may not be withholde, haſtely they departe: thus al daye fayleth thinges that fooles wende. Ryght thus haſte thou fayled in thy fyrſte wenynge. He that thinketh to ſayle and drawe after the courſe of the ſtarre, de polo antartico, ſhall he neuer come northwarde to the contrary ſtarre of polus articus: of whiche thinges yf thou take kepe, thy fyrſt out waye goinge, pryſon and exyle maye be cleped. The grounde falſed vnderneth, and ſo haſte thou fayled. No wyght I wene blameth hym that ſtynteth in miſgoing, and ſecheth redye waye of hys blyſſe. Nowe me thynketh (quod ſhe) that it ſuffyſeth in my ſhewynge the wayes, by dignitie, rycheſſe, renoume, and power, if thou loke clerely, arne no wayes to the knotte.

Euerye argument ladye (q I tho) that ye han maked in theſe fore nempned maters, me thynketh hem in my full wytte conceyued, ſhall I nomore yf god wil in the contrary be begyled But fayne wolde I and it were your wyll, blyſſe of the knotte to me were declared, I myght fele the better how myne hert myght aſſente to purſue the ende in ſeruyce, as he hath begone. O (quod ſhe) there is a melody in heuen, which clerkes clepen armonye, but that is not in breakynge of voyce, but it is a maner ſwete thynge of kyndly werchynge, that cauſeth ioye out of nombre to recken, & and that is ioyned by reaſon and by wyſedome, in a quantitie of proporcyon of knyttyng. God made all thynge in reaſon and in wytte of proporcyon of melodye, we mowe not ſuffyſe to ſhewe. It is wrytten by great clerkes and wyſe, that in earthlye thynges lyghtly by ſtudye and by trauayle, the knowynge maye be getten: but of ſuche heuenly melodye, mokell trauayle wol bryngе out in knowyng ryght lytle. Swetneſſe of this paradyſe hath you rauyſhed, it ſemeth ye ſlepten, reſted from all other diſeaſes, ſo kyndly is your hertes therin ygrounded. Blyſſe of two hertes in full loue knyt, may not aright ben ymagyned: euer is theyr contemplacion in full of thoughty ſtudy to pleaſaunce, mater in bryngyng, comforte euerych to other. And therfore of erthly thynges mokell mater lyghtly commeth in your lernynge. Knowledge of vnderſtondynge that is nygh after eye, but not ſo nygh the couetyſe of knyttynge in your hertes: More ſouerayne deſyre hath euerye wyght in lytle hearynge of heuenly

heuenly comyng, than of mokell materyall purposes in earth. Ryght so it is in propertie of my seruauntes, that they ben more affyched in sterynge of lytle thynge in his desyre, than of mokell other mater, lasse in his conscience. This blysse is a maner of sowne delicious, in a queynt voyce touched, and no dynne of notes: there is none impressyon of breakynge laboure. I can it not otherwyse nempne, for wantynge of prayuye wordes, but Paradyse terrestrye full of delicyous melodye withouten trauayle in sowne perpetual seruice in full ioy coueyted to endure.

Onely kynde maketh hertes in vnderstandyng, so to slepe, that otherwyse may it not be nempned, ne in other maner names forly kyng swetnesse can I not it declare, al sugre and hony, all mynstralsye and melodye ben but soote and galle in comparisō by no maner proporcyon to recken, in respecte of thys blyssfull ioye. This armonye, this melodye, this perdurable ioye may not be in doinge, but betwene heuens and elementes, or twey kyndly hertes, ful knyt in trouth of naturall vnderstondyng, withouten wenyng and disceyte, as heuens and planettes, which thinges contynually for kyndely accordaunces, forzeteth all contraryous meauynges: that into passyue diseases may sowne, euermore it thyrsteth after more werkyng. These thinges in proporcyon be so well ioyned, that it vndoth all thyng, which into badnesse by any wayc maye be accompted. Certes (q I) this is a thynge precious and noble. Alas, that falsenesse euer or wantruste shoulde be mayntayned, this ioye to voyde. Alas that euer any wretche shulde thorowe wrath or enuy, iangyng dare make to shoue this melody so farre abacke, that openly dare it not ben vsed: truly wretches ben fulfylled with enuy and wrath, aud no wight els. Flebryng and tales in suche wretches shall appeare openly in euery wyghtes ere, with ful mouth so charged, mokell malyce moued many innocentes to shende, god wold theyr soule therwith were strangled. Lo, trouth in this blysse is hyd, and ouer all vnder couert hym hydeth: He dare not come a place for waytyng of shrewes.

Cōmenly badnesse, goodnesse amastryeth with my selfe and my soule this ioye wolde I bye, yf I the goodnesse were as moche as the nobley in melody. O (q she) what goodnesse maye be accompted more in this materyall worlde, truly none that shalt thou vnderstonde. Is not euery thyng good that is contrariant and destroying euyll. Howe els (q I) Enuy, wrath, and falsenesse ben generall (q she) and that wote euery man beinge in his ryght mynde, the knotte the whiche we haue in this blysse, is contraryaunt and distroyeth such maner euils: ergo it is good.

What hath caused auy wyght to don any good dede. Fynde me anye good, but yf this knotte be the chefe cause: Nedes mote it be good, that causeth so many good dedes.

Euery cause is more and worthyer than thyng caused, and in that mores possessyon, all thynges lesse ben compted. As the kynge is more than his people, and hath in possessyon all his realme after: Ryght so the knot is more than all other goodes, thou myght recken all thynges lasse, and that to hym lōgeth, oweth into hys mores cause of worschyppe and of wyll do tourne, it is els rebell and out of his mores defendyuge to voyde. Ryght so of euery goodnesse into the knotte and into the cause of his worschyp oweth to turne. And truly euerye thyng that hath beinge profytably is good, but nothynge hath to ben more profytably than this knot: Kynges it mayntayneth, and hem theyr powers to mayntayne: It maketh mysse to ben amēded with good gouernaunce in doinge. It closeth hertes so togythet, ꝑ rancour is out thresten. who that it lengest kepeth, lengest is gladded. I trowe (q I) heretyckes and mysmeanynge people hence forwarde woll mayntayne this knotte, for there throughe shall they ben mayntayned, and vtterly wol turne and leaue theyr olde euyll vnderstondyng, and knytte this goodnesse, and profer so farre in seruyce, that name of seruauntes myght they haue.

Theyr iangles shal cease, me thynketh he lacketh mater now to alege. Certes (q loue) yf they of good wyll thus tourned as thou sayest wolen truly perfourme, yet shul they be abled partye of this blysse to haue: a they woll not, yet shull my seruauntes the werre well sustayne in myne helpe of mayntinaūce to the ende. And they for theyr good trauayl shullen in rewarde so be ben meded, that end lesse ioye bodye and soule togyther in this

shullen

shullen abyden, there is euer action of blysse withouten possible corruption, there is action perpetuell in werke withoute trauayle, there is euerlastyng passyse, withouten any of labour, continuel plyte without seasynge coueted to endure. No tonge may tel ne hert maye thynke the leest poynte of this blysse. God brynge me thyder (q̃ I than). Contynueth well (q̃ she) to the ende, and ȳ mygbt not fayle than, for thoughe thou spede not here, yet shal the passyon of thy martred like ben wrytten and rad toforne the greate Jupyter that god is, of routh, an hygh in the holownesse of heuen, there he syt in his trone: & euer thou shalt forwarde ben holden amōge all these heuens for a knyght, that mygbtest with no penaunce bene discomfyted. He is a bery martyr that lyuynglye goinge is gnawen to the bones. Certes (q̃ I) these bene good wordes of comfort, a lytle myne herte is reioysed in a mery wyse. Ye (q̃ she) and he that is in heuen feleth more ioye, than whā he first herde therof speke. So it is (quod I) but wyst I the sothe, that after disease comfort wolde folowe with blysse, so as ye haue often declared, I wolde well suffre this passyon with the better chere, but my thoughtfull sorowe is endlesse, to thynke how I am cast out of a welfare, & yet dayneth not this euyll none herte none hede to mewarde thorowe, which thynges wolde greatly me by wayes of comfort disporte, to weten in my selfe a lytle with other me ben ymoned: and my sorowes peysen not in her balaunce the weyght of a peese: Slynges of her daunger so heuyly peysen, they drawe my causes so hyghe, that in her eyen they semen but lyght and ryght lytle.

O, for (q̃ she) heuen with skyes that foule cloudes maken and darke wethers, wyth great tempestes and huge, maketh the mery dayes with soft shynynge sunnes. Also the yere withdraweth floures & beautye of herbes and of earth. The same yeres maketh sprynges and iolitie in Mere so to renouell with paynted colours, that erth semeth as gaye as heuen. Sees that blasteth, & with wawes throweth shyppes, of which the lyuyng creatures for great peryll for hem drednen: ryght so the same sees maken smothe waters and golden saylynge, and cōforteth hem w̄ noble hauen that first were so ferde. Hast thou not (q̃ she) lerned in thy youth, ȳ Jupyter hath in his warderobe bothe garmentes of ioye and of sorowe: what woste thou howe soone he woll tourne of the garment of care, and cloth the in blysse: parde it is not farre fro the. Lo an olde prouerbe aleged by manye wyse: whan bale is greatest, than is bote a nye bore. whereof wylte thou dismaye: hope well and serue well, and that shall the saue, with thy good beleue.

Ye, ye (quod I) yet se I not by reason how this blysse is comyng, I wot it is cōtingent it may fal on other. O (q̃ she) I haue mokell to done to clere thyne vnderstandynge and voyde these errores out of thy mynde, I woll prouе it by reason thy wo maye not alway enduren. Euery thynge kyndely (quod she) is gouerned, and ruled by the heauenly bodyes, which hauen full werchyng here on earth: & after course of these bodyes, all course of youre doinges here bene gouerned and ruled by kynde.

Thou wost wel by course of planettes all your proceden, & to euerych of synguler houres be enterchaunged stondmele aboute, by submytted worchyng naturally to suffre, of which chaunges commeth these transitory tymes that maketh reuoluing of your yeres thus stondmele, euerye hath full mygbt of worchyng, tyl al seuen han had her course about. Of which worchinges & possessyon of houres, the dayes of the weke haue take her names, after denominacyon in these seuen planettes. Lo, your sondaye gynneth at the fyrst houre after noone on the saturdaye, in which houre is than the sunne in ful mygbt of worchynge, of whom sonday taketh hys name. Nexte hym foloweth Venus, & after Mercurius, & than the Mone, so than Saturnus, after whom Jouis, & than Mars, & ayen than the Sunne, and so forth, be. xxiiii houres togyther, in which houre gynnynge in the second day stant the mone, as master for that tyme to rule, of whom mondaye taketh his name, & this course foloweth of all other dayes generally in doing. This cours of nature of these bodyes chaungynge, stynten at a certayne terme, lymytted by theyr fyrst kynde, and of hem all gouernementes in this elemented worlde proceaden, as in sprynges, constellacions, engendrures, and all that folowen kynde and reason, where-

fore

fore the course that foloweth sorowe & ioye: kyndly moten entrechaungen theyr tymes, so that alway on wele, as alwaye on woo, may not endure. Thus seest thou apertly thy sorowe into wele mote bene chaunged, wherefore in suche case to better syde euermore enclyne thou shuldest. Truly nexte the ende of sorowe anon entreth ioye, by maner of necessitie it wol ne may none other betide and so thy contigence is disproued: yf thou holde this opinyon anye more, thy wytte is ryght leude. wherfore in full conclusyon of all this, thylke Margaryte thou desyreste, hath ben to the dere in thy herte, and for her hast thou suffred many thoughtful diseases hereafter shall be cause of mokell myrth and ioye, and loke how glad canst thou ben, and cease al thy passed heuynesse with manifold ioyes. And than woll I as blythlye here the speken thy myrthes in ioye, as I nowe haue yherde thy sorowes and thy complayntes. And yf I mowe in ought thy ioye encrease by my trouth on my syde shal not be leaued, for no maner trauayle, that I with all my myghtes ryght blythly woll helpe, and euer ben redy you both to plese. And than thanked I that lady with al goodly maner that I worthely coude, and truly I was greatly reioyled in myne hert, of her fayre behestes, and profred me to be slawe in al that she me wolde ordayne whyle my lyfe lested.

ME thynketh (q I) that ye haue ryght wel declared that way to ȳ knot shuld not ben in non of these disprouing thinges, & nowe orde of our purpose this asketh, that ye shulde me shewe yf any waye be thyther, and whyche thylke waye shulde ben, so that openly may be sey, the very hye waye in full conclusyoun of these other thynges.

Thou shalt (q she) vnderstande, that one of thre lyues (as I first sayd) euery creature of mankinde is sprongen, and so forth proceeth. These lyues bene thorowe names departed in thre maner of kyndes, as bestyallyche, manlyche, and resonablyche, of which two bene vsed by fleshlye bodye, and the thyrde by his soule. Bestyall amonge reasonables is forboden in euery lawe and euery sect, both in chrysten and other, for euerye wyght dispyseth hem that lyueth by lustes, and delyttes, as hym that is thrall & bounden seruaunt to thynges ryght foule, suche ben counted werse than men, he shall not in theyr degre ben rekened, ne for such one alowed. Heretykes sayne they chosen lyke bestial, that voluptuouslye lyuen, so that (as I fyrst sayde to the) in manly and reasonable lyuynges, our mater was to declare, but manly lyke in lyuyng after flesh or els fleshly wayes to chese, maye not blysse in this knot be conquered, as by reason it is proued.

wherfore by resonable lyke he must nedes it haue, syth away is to this knotte, but not by the fyrste tway lyues, wherefore neades mote it ben to the thyrde, and for to lyue in flesh but not after flesh, is more resonablych than manliche rekened by clerkes. Therfore how this way commeth in, I wol it blithly declare.

Se now (quod she) that these bodyly goodes of manlyche lyuynges, yelden sorowful stoundes and smeretande houres, who so wele remembre hym to theyr endes, in their worchynges they ben thoughtfull and sory. Ryght as a bee that hath hadde his honye, anon at his flyght begynneth to stynge: So thylke bodyly goodes at the last mot away and than stynge they at her goinge, wherethrough entreth and clene voydeth al blysse of this knotte.

Forsoth (quod I) me thynketh I am wel serued, in shewig of these wordes, although I had lytle in respect amonge other greate and worthye, yet had I a fayre parcell, as me thought for the tyme, in fortheryng of my sustenaunce, whiche whyle it dured, I thought me hauyng mokell hony to myne estate. I had rychesse suffyciauntly to weyue nede, I had dignitie to be reuerenced in worship. Power me thought that I had to kepe fro myne enemyes, and me semed to shyne in glory of renoume as manhode asketh, in meane, for no wyght in myne administration coude none euyl ne trecherye by sothe cause on me put. Lady your selfe weten wel that of tho confederacyes maked by my soueraynes I nas but a seruaunt, and yet mokell meane folke woll fullye ayenste reason thilke maters mayntayne, in which mayntenaunce glorye them selfe, and as often ye

hauen

hauen sayde, therof ought nothyng in euyll to be layde to mewardes, sythen as repentaunt I am tourned, and nomore I thynke neyther tho thynges ne none suche other to susteyne, but vtterly destroy without medlynge maner, in all my myghtes. Howe am I nowe caste oute of all swetnesse of blysse, and myscheuously stongen my passed ioye: sorowfullye muste I wayle, and lyue as a wretche.

Euery of tho ioyes is turned into his contrary: For rychesse nowe haue I pouertye, for dignitie now am I emprysoned, in stede of power, wretchednesse I suffer, and for glory of renoume I am now dispysed, and soulyche hated: thus hath farne Fortune, that sodaynly am I ouerthrowen, and out of all wealth dispoyled.

Trulye me thynketh this way in entre is rygyt harde, god graunt me better grace er it be al passed, ỳ other way lady me thought rygyt swete. Now certes (q̃ Loue) me lyst for to chyde. what ayleth thy darke dulnesse woll it not in clerenesse ben sharped. Haue I not by many reasons to the shewed suche bodily goodes kaylen to yeue blis, their might so kerforth wol not stretche: Shame (q̃ she) it is to say, thou lyest in thy wordes. Thou ne hast wyst but rygyt fewe, that these bodyly goodes had al at ones, commenly they dwellen not togyther. He that plentie hath in richesse, of his kynne is ashamed: another of lynage rygyt noble and well knowe, but pouerte him hãdleth he were leuer vnknow An other hath these, but renome of peoples praylyng maye he not haue ouer al he is hated and defamed of thynges rygyt foule.

An other is fayre and semely, but dignite hym fayleth: and he that hath dignite is croked or lame, or els mishappen and fouly dispysed: thus pertable these goodes dwellen cõmenlye in one houshold ben they but selde. Lo how reetched is your trust, on thynge ỳ wol not accorde. Ye thynketh thou clepest thylke plyte thou were in selynes of fortune and thou sayest for that ỳ selynesse is departed, thou art a wretche. Than foloweth this vpon thy wordes, euerye soule resonable of man, may not dye, and yf death endeth selynesse and maketh wretches, as nedes of fortune maketh it an ende. Than soules afterdeth of ỳ body in wretchednesse shuld lyuen.

But we know many that han getten the blysse of heuen after theyr deth. Howe than may this lyke maken men blysful, that whã it passeth it yeueth no wretchednesse, & manye tymes blysse, yf in this lyke he con lyue as he shulde. And wolt thou accompt with fortune, that now at the fyrst she hath done the tene and sorow: yf thou looke to the maner of al glad thynges & sorowful, ỳ mayest not naye it, that yet, and namely nowe thou standest in noble plyt in a good gynnyng, w̃ good forth goinge hereafter. And yf thou wene to be a wretch for such welth is passed why thã art thou not wel fortunate for bad thynges & anguys wretchednesse bẽ passed. Art thou now come first into the hostrye of this lyke, or els the booth of this world, art thou now a sodayne gest into this wretched exyle. wenest there be any thing in this erth stable. Is not thy fyrst arest passed ỳ brought the in mortal sorowe. Ben these not mortal thinges agone with ignorauncе of bestiall wyt, and hast receyued reason in knowynge of vertue. what cõfort is in thy hert. the knowynge sykerly in my seruyce be grounded. And wost thou not wel as I sayde, ỳ death maketh ende of al fortune. what thã stãdest thou in noble plyte, lytle hede or rekenynge to take, yf thou let fortune passe dyng, or els that she fye whan her lyst, now by thy lyue. Pardy a mã hath nothyng so lefe as his life and for to holde that he doth al his cure and dyligent trauayle. Than saye I, thou arte blisfull & fortunate selye, yf thou knowe thy goodes that thou hast yet beloued, whiche nothinge maye dout, that they ne bene more worthy than thy lyke. what is that (q̃ I). Good contẽplacion (q̃ she) of well dounge in vertue in tyme coming, both in plesaunce of me & of thy Margaryte perle. Haestly thyne hert in ful blysse with her shalbe eased. Ther fore dismay the not, fortune in hate greuously ayẽst thy bodily persõ, ne yet to gret tempest hath she not sẽt to ỳ, sithen ỳ holding cables & ankres of thy life holden by knytting so fast, that thou discomforte the nought of tyme ỳ is nowe, ne dispayre the not of tyme to come, but yeuen the cõfort in hope of well doing, and of gettyng agayne the double of thy lesynge, w̃ encrealyng loue of thy Margarite perle therto. For this hytherto ỳ hast had al her ful daũger, and so thou myght amende

mende all that is mysse, and all defautes that somtyme thou dyddest, and that nowe in all thy tyme to that ylke Margaryte in full seruyce of my loze thyne herte hath contynued, wherfoze she ought moch the rather enclyne fro her daungerous sete. These thynges ben yet knyt by the holdynge anker in thy lyue, & holden mote they: To god I praye all these thynges at full ben perfozmed. Foz whyle thys anker holdeth I hope thou shalte safely escape, and whyle thy trew meanyng seruice aboute bzyng, in dispyte of all false meaners that the of newe haten, foz this trew seruyce thou arte nowe entred.

Certayne (q̃ I) amonge thynges I asked a question, which was ý way to the knot. Trewly lady howe so it be, I tẽpt you wyth questions and answers, in spekyng of my tyme seruyce, I am now in full purpose in the pricke of the hert, ý thilke seruice was an enprisonmẽt, & alway bad & naughty in no maner to be desyred. Ne ý in gettyng of the knot, may it nothyng auayle. A wyse gentyll hert loketh after vertue, & non other bodily ioyes alone. And bycause to fozne this, i tho wayes I was sette, I wote wel my selfe I haue erred, & of the blysse fayled, & so out of my waye hugely haue I ron. Certes (q̃ she) ý is sothe, & there thou hast my swent, eschew that path frõ hens fozwarde I rede. Wonder I trewly why the moztal folke of this wozlde seche these wayes outfozth, & it is preued in youre selfe. Lo howe ye ben cõfounded with errour & folly. The knowyng of very cause & waye is goodnesse & vertue. Is there any thyng to the moze precious than thy selfe? Thou shalt haue in thy power, ý thou woldest neuer lese and that in no way may be taken fro the, and thilk thyng is that is cause of this knot. And yf dethe mow it nat reue moze thã an erthly creature, thilke thing than abydeth with thy selfe soule, & so our conclusion to make suche a knot thus getten, abydeth with this thyng & with the soule, as long as they last, a soule dieth neuer, vertue & goodnesse euermoze w̃ ý soule endureth, & this knot is perfite blysse. Thã this soule in this blysse endlesse shal endureu. Thus shul hertes of a trewe knot ben eased: thus shul their soules bẽ pleased: thus perpetually in ioye shul they synge. In good trouth (q̃ I) here is a good begynnyng, yeue vs moze of this way. (Quod she) I sayd to ý nat longe sythen, that resonable lyke was one of thze thynges, & it was preued to the soule. euerye soule of reason hath two thynges of steryng lyke, one in vertue and another in the bodily wozkynge: and whan the soule is the maister ouer the body, than is a man maister of hym selfe: & a mã to be a maister ouer him selfe, lyueth in vertue and in goodnesse, & as reson of vertue techeth, so the soule & the body wozchyng vertue togider lyuen resonable lyke, which clerkes clepen felycite in lyueng, and theryn is the hye way to this knot, these olde philosophers that hadden no knowyng of diuyne grace of kyndly reason alone, wenden that of pure nature, wythoutẽ any helpe of grace, me might haue yshoned thother lyuenges, resonablye haue I lyued: and foz I thynke herafter, yf god woll (& I haue space) thylk grace after my leude knowyng declare: I leaue it as at thys tyme. But (as I sayd) he that outfozth loketh after ý wayes of this knotte, connyng with which he shulde know the way infozth slepeth foz the tyme, wherfoze he that wol this way knowe must leaue the lokyng after false wayes outfozth, & opẽ the eyen of hys conscience and vnclose hys herte. Seest nat he that hath trust in the bodily lyke is so besy bodily woũdes to anoynt in kepynge frome smert (foz all out may they nat be healed) that of woundes in hys true vnderstandynge he taketh no hede, the knowynge euenfozth slepeth so harde, but anone as in knowyng a wake, than gynneth ý preuy medicines foz healyng of his trewe entẽt, inwardes lightly healeth conscience yf it be wel handled. Than must nedes these wayes come out of the soule by steryng lyke of the body, & els maye no man come to perfyte blysse of this knotte: and thus by this waye he shal come to the knot, and to the perfyte selynesse that he wende haue had in bodilye goodes outfozthe. Yea (q̃ I) shall he haue bothe knotte, riches, power, dignite, and renome in this maner waye. Ye (q̃ she) ý shall I shewe the. Is he nat riche that hath suffisaunce, and hath the power that no man may amaistriẽ. Is nat gret dignite to haue wozshyp and reuerẽce. & hath he nat glozie of renome whose name perpetuall is duryng. and out of nom-

bye in comparation. These be thynges that men wenen to getten out forth (q I). Ye (q she) they that loken after a thyng that nought is therof in al ne in partie, longe mowe they gapen after: That is soth (q I:) therfore (q she) they that sechen gold in grene trees, and wene to gader precyous stones amonge bynes, and layne her nettes in mountaynes to fysh, & thynkē to hunt in depe sees after hart & hynde, and sechen in erth thylke thynges that surmoūteth heuen, what may I of hem say: but folyshe ignorauncе mysledeth wandryng wretches by vncouth wayes that shul den be forleten, and maketh hem blynde fro the ryght pathe of trewe way that shuld ben vsed. Therfore in generall erroure in mankynde, departeth thylke goodes by mysse sechynge, whyche he shulde haue hole and he sought by reason. Thus gothe he begyled of that he sought, in hys hode men haue blowe a iape. Nowe (q I) yf a man be vertuous & all in vertue lyueth, howe hathe he all these thynges: That shall I prouen (q she) what power hathe anye man to let another of lyuēg in vertue: for prisonmēt or any other disese, he taketh it paciently, discōfyteth he nat, the tyraunt ouer hys soule no power maye haue: Than hathe that man so tourmented suche power, that he nyll be discōfit, ne ouercome may he nat ben, sythen pacience in hys soule ouercometh, and as nat ouercomen. Suche thyng that may nat be a maistred, he hath nede to nothyng, for he hath suffisaunce ynowe to helpe him selfe. And thylke thyng that thus hath power and suffysaunce, & no tyrant may it reue, & hath dignyte to sette at nought all thynges, here it is a great dignite that deth may a maistry. Wherfore thilk power suffisaunce so enclosed wyth dignyte, by all reson renome must haue. Thys is thylke ryches w̄ suffisance ye shulde loke after: thys is thilke worshipful dignite ye shulde coueyt this is thylke power of myght, in whyche ye shulde truste, this is the ilke renome of glorie that endlesse endureth, and all nys but substaunce in vertuous lyueng. Certes (q I) all thys is sothe, & so I se well that vertue with ful gripe encloseth al these thiges. Wherfore in sothe I may saye, by my trouth, vertue of my Margarite brought me first in to your seruice, to haue knytting with that iewel, nat so dayn longinges ne folkes smale wordes, but onely our cōuersation togider: & thā I seinge thentent of her trewe menyng w̄ florishyng vertue of pacience, that she vsed nothynge in yuel, to quyte the wicked leasynges that false tonges ofte in her haue layde, I haue sey it my selfe, goodlye forgeuenesse hathe sprongе out of her herte, vnite and accorde aboue all other thynges she desyreth in a good meke maner, and suffereth many wicked tales.

Trewly lady to you it were a gret worship, that such thynges by due chastysment were amended. Yea (q she) I haue the excused, al suche thynges as yet mowe nat be redressed thy Margarytes vertue I commende well the more that paciently such anoyes suffreth. Dauid kynge was meke and suffred mokell hate and manye yuell speches: no dispyte ne shame that his enemis him deden, might nat moue pacience out of hys herte, but euer in one plyte mercy he vsed. Wherfore god hym selfe toke rewarde to the thynges, and therō suche punyshement let fall. Trewely by reason it ought be ensample of drede to all maner peoples myrthe. A man vengeable in wrathe no gouernaūce in punishment ought to haue. Plato had a cause hys seruaunt to scoure, and yet cleaped he hys neyghbour to perfourme the doynge, hym selfe wolde nat, lest wrath had hym a maistred, & so might he haue layde on to moche: euermore grounded vertue sheweth thentent fro within, & trewly I wott well for her goodnesse and vertue, thou hast desyred my seruyce to her pleasance well the more, and thy selfe therto fully haste profered. Good lady (q I) is vertue the hye waye to thys knot, that long we haue yhandled: ye for sothe (q she) and wythout vertue goodlye thys knotte maye nat be goten. Ah nowe I se (quod I) howe vertue in me fayleth, and I as a seer tre wythout burionyng or frute alwaye welke, & so I stonde in dyspeyre of thys noble knotte, for vertue in me hathe no maner workynge. A wyde where aboute haue I trauayled. Peace (q she) of thy first way thy traueyle is in ydel, and as touchynge the seconde way, I se well thy meanyng. Thou woldest cōclude me yf thou coudest, bycause I brought the to seruyce, and euery of my seruātes I helpe to come to this

blysse,

blysse, as I sayd here before: & thou saydest thy selfe, thou myghtest nat be holpē as thou wenyst, bycause that vertue in the fayleth, & thys blysse perfytly without vertue may nat be goten, thou wenest of these wordes contradiction to folowe. Parde at the hardest I haue no seruaunt but he be vertuous in dede and thoughe I brought the in my seruyce, yet arte thou nat my seruant: but I say, thou myght so werche in vertue herafter, that thā shalt thou be my seruante, and as for my seruaunt acompted. For habyt maketh no mōke ne wearynge of gylte spurres maketh no knyght. Neuer the later, in confortе of thyne herte, yet wol I otherwyse answere. Certes lady (q̃ I tho) so ye must nedes, or els I had nyghe caught suche a cordiacle for sorowe, I wotte it well I shulde it neuer haue recouered. And therfore nowe I praye to enforme me in this, or els I holde me wythout recouerye. I maye nat longe endure tyll thys lesson be lerned, and of this myschefe the remedy knowen. Nowe (q̃ she) be nat wrothe, for there is no man on lyue that maye come to a precious thynge longe coueyted, but he somtyme suffre tenefull diseases, and wenyst thy selfe to ben vnlyche to all other: that may nat ben: And with the more sorowe that a thyng is getten, the more he hathe ioye, the ylke thynge afterwardes to kepe, as it fareth by chyldren in schole that for lernynge arne beaten, whan theyr lesson they forzyetten, commēly after a good disciplynyng with a yerde they kepe ryght wel doctryne of theyr schole.

Ight wyth these wordes, on thys lady I threwe vp myne eyen to se her countenaunce and her chere, and she apercey uynge thys fantasye in myne herte, gan her semblaūt goodly on me caste, and sayde in this wyse.

It is well knowe, bothe to Reason and experience in doyng, euery actyue worcheth on hys passyue, and whan they ben togider, actyue and passyue ben yclepeed by these philosophers, yf kyre be in place chafynge thynge able to be chafed or hete, and thylke thynges ben sette in suche a distaūce that the one may werche, the other shall suffre. Thylke Margarite thou desyrest is ful of vertue, and able to be actyue in goodnesse: but euery herbe sheweth his vertue outforthe from within, the sonne yeueth lyght that thynges may be sey. Euery fyre heteth thylke thyng ỳ it neyghed and it be able to be hete, vertue of this Margarite outforth wrethe, and nothyng is more able to suffre worching or worke catch of the actyke, but passyke of the same actyke, and no passyke to vertues of thys Margaryte, but ỳ in all my donet can I kynde, so that her vertue must nedes on the werche, in what place euer thou be, within distaūce of her worthynesse, as her very passyke thou arte closed: but vertue may the nothyng profyte, but thy desyre be perfourmed and all thy sorowes ceased. Ergo through werchynge of her vertue thou shalte easely ben holpen and driuen out of all care, and welcome to this longe by the desyred. Lady (q̃ I) thys is a good lesson in gynnyng of my ioye: but wete ye wel forsothe, though I suppose she haue mothe vertue, I wolde my spousayle were proued, and than maye I lyue out of doute, and reioyce me gretly in thynkyng of tho vertues so shewed. I herde the say (quod she) at my begynnyng whan I receyued the fyrste for to serue that thy iewel, thylke Margaryte thou desyrest, was closed in a muskle with a blew shel. Ye forsothe (q̃ I) so I sayd, and so it is. Wel (q̃ she) euery thyng kyndely sheweth it selfe, thys iewell closed in a blewe shel, excellence of coloures sheweth vertue frome wythin, and so euery wight shulde rather loke to the propre vertue of thynges, thā to hys forayne goodes. If a thynge be engendred of good mater, comenly and for the more parte it foloweth after the congelement vertue of the fyrste mater, and it be not corrupt with vyces, to procede with encrease of good vertues ete right so it fareth of badde. Trewly great excellence in vertue of lynage, for the more parte discendeth by kynde to the successyon in vertues to folowe. Wherfore I saye, the colours of euery Margarite sheweth krō within the fynesse in vertue. Kyndely heuen whan mery wether is a loke, apereth in mānes eye of coloure in blewe, stedfastnesse in peace betokenyng within and without: Margaryt is engendred by heuenly dewe, & sheweth in it selfe by fynenesse of coloure, whether the engendrure were maked on morowe or on euen: thus sayth kynd of this perle. This precious

Margaryte that thou seruest, sheweth it self dyscended by nobley of vertue from thys heuenlych dewe, norished and congeled in mekenesse, that mother is of all vertues, and by werkes that men sene withouten the signyfication of the coloures, ben shewed mercy and pytie in the herte wyth peace to al other, and all thys is yclosed in a muskle, who so redily these vertues lokē. All thyng that hath soule is reduced in to good by meane thynges, as thus: In to god man is reduced by soules resonable, and so forthe beestes or bodyes that mowe not mouen, after place ben reduced in to manne, by beestes meue that mouyn from place to place: so that thylke bodyes that han felynge soules, and moue not frome places, holdē the lowest degree of soulynge thynges in felynge, and suche ben reduced in to man by meanes. So it foloweth, the muskle as mother of al vertues, halte the place of mekenesse to hys lowest degree discendeth downe of heuen, and there by a maner of virgyne engendrure arne these Margaretes engendred and afterwarde congeled. Made not mekenesse so low the hye heuen to enclose & catche out therof so noble a dewe, that after cōgelement a Margaryte wyth endelesse vertue & and euerlastyng ioy was wyth full vessell of grace yeuen to euery creature, that goodlye wolde it receyue. Certes (q I) these thynges ben ryght noble, I haue er thys herde these same sawes. Than (q she) thou woste well these thynges ben sothe: yea forsothe (q I) at the full. Nowe (q she) that thys Margaryte is full of vertue it is well proued, wherfore some grace, some mercye amonge other vertues, I wotte ryght wel on the shall discende: ye (q I) yet wolde I haue better declared vertues in thys Margaryte, kyndely to ben grounded. That shal I shewe the (q she) and thou woldest it lerne: Lerne (q I) what nedeth suche wordes: wete ye nat well lady youre selfe that all my cure, all my dyligence, and all my might haue turned by your counsayle, in plesaunce of that perle all my thought and all my studye, with your helpe desyreth, in worshyppe thylke iewel to encrease all my trauayle and al my besynesse in youre seruyce, thys Margaryte to gladde in somehalue: me were leauer her honoure, her pleasaunce, and her good there thorowe me for to be mayntayned and kepte, and I of suche thynge in her lykynge to be cause, than al ỳ welthe of bodyly goodes ye coude reckē And wolde neuer god, but I put my selfe in great ieoperdye of all that I wolde, that is nowe no more but my lyke alone, rather than I shulde suffre thylke iewell in anye poynt ben blemysched, as ferre as I may suffre, and wyth my myghtes stretche. Suche thynge (q she) maye mokel further thy grace and the in my seruyce auaunce. But nowe (quod Loue) wylte thou graunte me thylke Margaryte to ben good: O good good (q I) why tempte ye me and tene wyth suche maner speche: I wolde graunte that, though I shulde anone dye, and by my trouthe fyght in the quarell, yf any wyght wolde countreplede. It is so moche the lighter (q Loue) to proue our entent.

Ye (q I) but yet wolde I here howe ye wolde proue that she were good by reasonable skyl, that it mowe not ben denyed, for al thoughe I knowe and so dothe many other, manyfolde goodnesse & vertue in this Margaryte ben prynted, yet some men there ben that no goodnesse spekē: and wher euer your wordes ben herde and your reasons ben shewed, suche yuell spekers lady by auctorite of your excellence, shullen ben stopped & ashamed. And more they that han none acquayntaunce in her persone, yet mowe they knowe her vertues, and ben the more enformed in what wyse they mowe sette theyr hertes, whan hem lyste in to your seruyce any entre make: for trewly al thys to begynne, I wote well my selfe that thylke iewel is so precious perle, as a womanly woman in her kynde, in whome of goodnesse, of vertue, and also of answerynge, shappe of lymmes, and fetures so well in all poyntes acordyng, nothyng fayleth: I leue that kynde her made wyth great studye, for kynde in her person nothyng hath forget, and that is well sene. In euery good wyghtes herte she hath grace of commendynge and of vertuous praysyng. Alas that euer kynde made her deedely saue onely in that I wot well, that Nature in fourmyng of her in no thynge hathe erred.

(.)

¶ Certes

Certes (q Loue) thou hast well begonne, and I aske the thys questyon: Is not in generall euerye thynge good? I not (q I) No (q she) sawe not god euerye thynge that he made, and werne rygh good? Than is wonder (q I) howe yuell thynges comen a place, sythen that al thynges weren right good. Thus (q she) I woll declare euerychе qualyte and euery action, and euery thyng that hath any maner of beynge it is of god, and god it made, of whom is all goodnesse and all beyng, of him is no badnesse: badde to be is naught: good to be is somwhat, and therfore good and beyng is one in vnderstandyng. Howe may this be (q I) for often han shrewes me assayled, and mokell badnesse therin haue I founden, & so me semeth bad to be somwhat in kynde? Thou shalt (q she) vnderstande that suche maner badnesse, whyche is vsed to purifye wronge doers is somwhat, and god it made and beyng hath, and that is good: other badnesse no beyng hath vtterly, it is in the negatyue of somwhat, and that is naught, and no thyng beyng. The parties essenciall of beyng arne sayde in double wyse, as that it is, and these parties ben founde in euerye creature, for all thynge a this halfe the fyrste beyng is beyng through partycipacion, takyng partye of beyng, so that euerye ceature is dyfference bytwene beynge and of hym through whom it is & hys owne beyng: rygh as euery good is a maner of beynge, so is it good thorowe beynge, for it is naught other to be: and euery thynge though it be good it is not of hym selfe good, but it is good by that it is ordinable to the great goodnesse. This dualite after clerkes determission is founden in euery creature, be it neuer so syngle of onhed. Ye (q I) but there as it is ysayd that god sawe euery thynge of his makyng, and were right good, as youre selfe sayde to me not longe tyme sythen. I aske whether euery creature is ysayd good, throughe goodnesse vnfourmed eyther els fourmed, and afterwarde yf it be accepte vtterly good? I shall saye the (q she) these great passed clerkes han deuyded good in to good beyng alone, and that is nothynge but good, for nothynge is good in that wyse but god. Also in good by partycipacion, and that is ycleped good, for farre fette and representa tyue of goodly goodnesse, and after thys manyfolde good is sayd, that is to saye, good in kynde and good in gendre, and good of grace and good of ioye. Of good in kynde Austen saythe, all that ben ben good: But peraunter thou woldest wete whether of hem selfe it be good, or els of anothers goodnesse, for naturel goodnesse of euery substaunce is nothyng els than his substanciall beyng, whiche is ycleaped goodnesse, after comparyson that he hath to his fyrste goodnesse, so as it is inductatyfe by meanes in to the fyrste goodnesse. Boece sheweth thys thynge at the full, that this name good is in general name in kynde as it is comparysoned generally to his principal ende, whyche is god, knotte of al goodnesse. Euery creature cryeth god vs made, & so they han full apeted to thylke god by affection, suche as to hem longeth: and in thys wyse all thynges ben good of the great god, whyche is good alone. Thys wonder thyng (q I) howe ye haue by manye reasons proued my fyrst way to be errour and misgoyng and cause of baddesse and feble menynge in the grounde ye aleged to be roted: whence is it that suche badnesse hathe sprynges, sythen all thynges thus in generall ben good, and badnesse hathe no beynge, as ye haue declared? I wene if al thinges ben good, I might than wyth the fyrst waye in that good haue ended, and so by goodnesse haue comen to blysse in your seruyce desyred. All thynge (q she) is good by beyng in partycipacion out of the fyrst goodnesse, whyche goodnesse is corrupte by badnesse, and badde meanyng maners: god hathe in good thynges that they ben good by beyng, and not in yuel, for there is absence of ryghtfull loue, for badnesse is nothynge but onelye yuell wyll of the vser, and through gyltes of the doer, wherfore at the gynnyng of the worlde, euery thynge by hym selfe was good, and in vnyuersall they werne rygh good. An eye or a hande is fayrer and betterer in a body sette in his kyndely place, than from the body discouered. Euerye thing in his kyndly place being kyndly, good dothe werche, and out of that place voyded, it dissolueth and is defouled him selue. Oure noble god in glyterãde wyse by armony this worlde ordeyned, as in purtreytures storyed wyth colours medled, in whyche blacke and

other derke coloures cōmenden the golden & the asured paynture, euerye putte in kyndely place one besyde another, more for other glytereth: right so lytle fayre maketh right fayre more glorious, and right so of goodnesse and of other thynges in vertue. Wherfore other badde, and not so good perles as thys Margaryte that we han of this matier, yeuen by the ayre lytell goodnesse and lytell vertue, ryght mokell goodnesse and vertue in thy Margaryte to ben proued, in shynynge wyse to be founde and shewed. Howe shulde euer goodnesse of peace haue ben knowe, but yf vnpeace somtyme reygne, and mokell yuell wrothe. Howe shulde mercy ben proued and no trespeace were, by due iustifycacion to be punysched. Therfore grace and goodnesse of a wyght is founde, the sorowfull hertes in good meanynge to endure, ben comforted, vnyte and accorde bytwene hertes knytte in ioye to abyde. What wenest thou I reioyce or els accompte hym amonge my seruaūtes that pleaseth Pallas, in vndoynge of Mercurye, all be it that to Pallas he be knytte by tytle of lawe, not accordyng to reasonable cōscience: and Mercurye in doynge haue grace to ben suffered: or els hym that weneth the moone for fayrenesse of the eue sterre. Lo otherwhyle by nyghtes lyght of the moone, greatlye comforteth in derke thoughtes and blynde. Understandyng of loue yeueth great gladnesse: who so lyste not byleue whan a sothe tale is shewed, adewe and a deblys his name is entred. Wyse folke and worthy in gentyllesse bothe of vertue and of lyuyng yeuen full credence in sothnesse of loue wyth a good hert, there as good euydence or experyence in doynge sheweth not the contrarye. Thus myghtest thou haue full preke in thy Margarytes goodnesse, by commendement of other iewels badnesse, and yuelnesse in doynge. Stoundemele diseases yeueth seuerall houres in ioye.

Nowe by my trouthe (qꝯ I) thys is well declared that my Margaryte is good, for sythen other ben good, and she passeth manye other in goodnesse and vertue, wherthrough by maner necessarye she muste be good: and goodnesse of thys Margaryte is no thynge els but vertue, wherfore she is vertuous, and yf there fayled any vertue in any syde, there were lacke of vertue: badde nothynge els is ne maye be, but lacke and wante of good and goodnesse, and so shulde she haue that same lacke, that is to saye badde, and that maye not be, for she is good, and that is good methynketh all good: and so by consequence me semeth vertuous and no lacke of vertue to haue. But the sonne is not knowe but he shyne, ne vertuous herbes but they haue her kynde werchynge, ne vertue but it stretche in goodnesse or prokyte to another, is no vertue. Than by all wayes of reason, sythen mercye and pytie ben moste commended amonge other vertues, and they myght neuer ben shewed refreshement of helpe and of comforte, but nowe at my moste nede, and that is the kynde werkynge of these vertues: trewely I wene I shall not varye frome these helpes. Fyre and yf he yeue non heate, for fyre is not demed. The sonne but he shyne for sonne is not accompted, water but it wete, the name shall ben chaunged. Vertue but it werche, of goodnesse dothe it fayle, and in to his contrarye the name shall ben reuersed, and these bē impossyble: wherfore the contradictorie that is necessarye, nedes muste I leue.

Certes (qꝯ she) in thy person and out of thy mouthe these wordes lyen well to ben sayd, and in thyne vnderstandyng to be leued, as in entent of thys Margaryte alone: and here now my speche in cōclusyon of these wordes.

IN these thynges (qꝯ she) that me lyst now to shew openly, shal be founde the mater of thy sycknesse, & what shal ben ꝑ medicyn that may be thy sorowes lysse and comfort, as well the as al other that amysse haue erred, & out of the way walked, so that any drope of good wyll in amendement ben dwelled in theyr hertes. Prouerbes of Salomon openly teacheth, howe somtyme an innocent walkyd by the waye in blyndnesse of a derke nyght, whom mette a woman (yf it be lefely to saye) as a strumpet arayed, redily purueyed in turnynge of thoughtes with veyne ianglynges and of rest inpacient by dissymulacion of my termes, sayeng in thys wyse: Come & be we

dronken

dronken of our swete pappes, vse we coueytous collynges. And thus drawen was this innocent, as an oxe to the larder. Ladye (q I) to me this is a queynte thynge to vnderstonde: I praye you of this parable declare me the entent. This innocent (q she) is a scholer lernynge of my lore, in sechyng of my blysse, in whyche thynge the daye of hys thought turnyng enclyneth in to eue, and the sonne of verye lyght faylinge, maketh derke nyght in hys connynge. Thus in derkenesse of many doutes he walketh, and for blyndenesse of vnderstandynge, he ne wote in what waye he is in: forsothe suche one may lightly ben begyled. To whome came loue fayned, not clothed of my lyuery, but vnlefull lustye habyte, wyth softe speech and mery, and with fayre honyed wordes heretykes & mysse mennynge people skleren and wymplen theyr errours. Austen wytnesseth of an heretyke that in hys fyrst begynnynge he was a man right expert in resones, and swete in hys wordes, and the werkes myscorden. Thus fareth fayned loue in her fyrst werchynges: thou knowest these thynges for trewe, thou haste hem proued by experience. Somtyme in doyng to thyn owne person, in which thyng thou hast founde mater of mokel dysease, was not fayned loue redely purueyed thy wyttes to catch and tourne thy good thoughtes: trewlye she hath wounded the conscience of many wyth florysshynge of mokel ianglynge wordes: and good worthe thanked I it for no glose, I am gladde of my prudence thou haste so manlye her beyned. To me arte thou moche holden, that in thy kynde course of good meanyng I returne thy mynde: I trow ne had I shewed the thy Margarite, thou haddest neuer returned. Of fyrste in good parfyte ioye was euer fayned loue impaciēt, as the water of Siloe whyche euermore floweth wyth stylnesse & priuy noyse, tyll it come nyghe the brynke, & then gynneth it so out of measure to bolne, with nouelleries of chaūgynge stormes, that in course of euery rennynge it is in poynte to spyll al his circuite of cankes. Thus fayned loue priuelye at the fullest of hys flowynge, newe stormes debate to arayse. And all be it that Mercurius often wyth hole vnderstandynge knowen suche peryllous matters, yet Venerians so lusty ben and so leude in theyr wyttes, that in suche thynges ryght lytell or nought done they fele, & wyttē and cryen to theyr felawes: here is blysse, here is ioy, and thus into one same errour, mokel folke they drawen. Come they sayne, and be we dronken of our pappes, that ben fallas and lyenge glose, of whych mowe they not souke myke of helthe, but deedlye venym and poyson corrupcyon of sorowe. Mylke of fallas, is venym of dysceyte: Mylke of lyeng glose is venym of corrupcion. Lo what thynge cometh out of these pappes: vse we coueyted collynges, desyre we and meddle we false wordes wyth sote, and sote wyth false, trewly this is the sorynesse of fayned loue, nedes of these surfettes sycknesse must folowe. Thus as an oxe to thy langoryng deth were thou drawē, the sote of the smoke hath ꝑ all defased. Euer the deper thou somtyme wadest ꝑ soner thou it founde: yf it had the kylled it had be lytell wonder. But on that other syde my trewe seruaūt not fayned ne dysceyue conne, sothly theyr doynge is open, my foundement endureth, be the burthē neuer so great, euer in one it lasteth: it yeueth lyke and blysful goodnesse in the last endes, though the gynnynges ben sharpe. Thus of two contraryes, contrarye ben the effectes. And so thylke Margaryte thou seruest shall sene the by her seruyce oute of peryllous trybulacyon delyuered, bycause of her seruyce into newe dysease fallen, by hope of amendement in the laste ende, wyth ioye to be gladded, wherfore of kynde pure, her mercy wyth grace of good helpe shall she graūt, and els I shal her so straine, that wyth pyte shall she ben amaystred. Remembre in thyne herte how horrybly somtyme to thyne Margaryte thou trespasest, and in a greate wyse ayenst her thou forfeytest: clepe ayē thy mynde, and know thyne owne gyltes. What goodnesse, what bountye, wyth mokell folowynge pyte founde thou in that tyme: were thou not goodlye accepted into grace: by my pluckynge was she to forfeueuesse enclyned. And after I her styred to drawe the to house and yet wendest thou vtterlye for euer haue ben refused. But well thou wost, sythen that I in suche sharpe dysease might so greatly auayle, what thynkest in thy wyt: howe ferre maye my wytte stretche: And thou lache not on thy syde I wol make the knotte: Certes in thy good beryng I wol acorde with the psauter. I haue foūde Dauid in my seruice trewe

and with holy oyle of peace and of rest longe by hyndesyred, vtterly he shalbe anoynted. Truste well to me, and I woll the not fayle. The leuynge of ý fyrst waye with good hert of continuaunce, that I se in the grounded, thys purpose to perfourme, draweth me by maner of cõstraining, that nedes must I ben thyne helper: although myth a whyle be taryed, it shall come at suche season, that thy thought shall ben ioyed. And wolde neuer god, sythẽ thyne herte to my reasons arne assented, and openlye haste confessed thyne amysse goynge, and nowe cryest after mercye, but yf mercy folowed: thy blisse shal ben redy ywys, thou ne wost howe sone. Nowe be a good chylde I rede. The kynde of vertues in thy Margarite rehersed, by strength of me in thy person shul werche. Comforte the in this for thou mayst not myscary. And these wordes sayde, she streyght her on lengthe and rested a whyle.

¶ Thus endeth the seconde booke, and here after foloweth the thyrde boke.

Of nõbre sayne these clerkes ý it is naturell sũme of discrete thinges, as in tellynge one, two, thre & so forth: but amonge all nombres thre is determined for moste certayne. Wherfore in nombre certayne this werke of my besy leudnesse I thynke to ende and parfourme. Ensample by thys world in thre tymes is deuyded: of whych the fyrst is cleped Demacion, that is to say, goyng out of trewe way, and al that tho deyden, in hel were they punysched for a mans synne, tyll grace & mercy fette hem thence, and there ended the fyrste tyme. The seconde tyme lasteth from the cõmynge of merciable grace, vntyll the ende of transytory tyme, in whyche is shewed ý true way in fordoyng of the badde, and that is ycleped tyme of grace: and that thynge is not yeuen by deserte of yeldynge one benefyte for another, but onely through goodnesse of the yeuer of grace in thilke tyme. Who so cã well vnderstande, is shapen to be saued in souled blysse. The thyrd tyme shal gyn when trãsytory thynges of wordes han made their end and that shal ben in ioye, glory, and rest, both body and soule, that well han deserued in the tyme of grace. And thus in that heuen togyther shul they dwel perpetuelly without any ymaginatyfe yuel in any halue. These tymes are fygured by tho thre dayes that oure god was closed in erthe, and in the thyrde arose, shewynge our resurrection, to ioye and blysse of tho that it deseruẽ, by his merciable grace. So this leud boke in thre maters accordaũt to tho tymes, lyghtly by a good inseer maye ben vnderstande, as in the fyrste erroure of mysse goynge is shewed, with sorowful pyne punysched is cryed after mercye. In the secõde is grace in good waye proued, whyche is fay lynge wythout deserte, thylke fyrst mysse amendynge in correction of tho erroures and euen waye to brynge, wyth comforte of welfare into amendement werynge. And in the thyrde ioye and blysse graunted to hym that well canne deserue it, and hath sauour of vnderstandynge in the tyme of grace. Thus in ioye of my thyrd boke shal the mater be tyl it ende. But speciall cause I haue in my hert to make this processe of a Margarit peerle, that is so precious a gẽme with clere and lytel, of which stones or iewel, ý tõges of vs English people turneth ý right names, & clepeth hem Margery perles: thus varieth our speche frõ many other langages. For trewly Latyn, Frenche, and many mo other langages cleapeth hem Margery perles, the name Margarites or Margaryte perles: wherfore in that denominacion I wol me acorde to other mẽs tonges, in that name clepyng. These clerkes that treaten of kyndes, & studyen out the propertye there of thynges, sayne the Margarit is a lytel whyte perle, throughout holowe & rounde, and vertuous, and on the see sydes in the more Britayne in muskel shelles of ý heauenly dewe the best ben engendred: in which by experience ben founde thre fayre vertues. One is, it yeueth comforte to the felyng spirites in bodely persones of reason. Another is good, it is profytable helth ayenst passyons of sorye mẽs hertes. And the thyrd it is nedeful and noble in staunchyng of bloode, there els to moche wolde out ren. To whych perle and vertues me lyst to lyken at this tyme philosophie wyth her thre speces, that is naturel and moral, and resonable: of whych thynges hereth what sayne these great clerkes. Philosophie

sophye is knowyng of deuynly & manly thinges ioyned wyth studye of good lyuyng, and thys stante in two thynges, that is connyng and opinion: connynge is when a thynge by certaine reson is cōceyued. But wretches and fooles and leude men, many wyll conceyue a thynge and maynteyne it as forsoth, though reson be in the contrarye, wherfore connyng is a straūger. Opinion is whyle a thynge is in none certayne, and hydde from mens bery knowlegynge, and by no parfyte reson fully declared, as thus: yf the sonne be so mokel as men wenen, or els yf it be more then the erth For in sothnesse the certayne quantyte of that planet is vnknowen to erthly dwellers, and yet by opinion of some men it is holden for more then mydle erthe. The fyrst spece of philosophye is naturel, whych in kyndely thynges treten, and sheweth causes of heuen, and strength of kyndely course: as by arsinetryke, geometry, musyke, & by astronomye, teacheth wayes and course of heuens, of planetes, and of sterres aboute heuen and erthe, and other elemētes. The seconde spece is morall, which in order of lyuyng maners techeth, and by reson proueth vertues of soule most worthy in our lyuyng, whych ben prudence, iustyce, temperaunce, and strength. Prudence is goodlye wysedome in knowyng of thinges. Strēgth voydeth al aduersitees alyche euen. Temperaunce destroyeth beestial lyuyng, wyth easy bearyng. And iustyce ryghtfully iugeth, and iugyng departeth to euery wyght that is his owne. The thyrde spece turneth into reason of vnderstandynge, al thynges to be said soth and dyscussed, & that in two thynges is deuyded: one is art, another is rethorike, in which two al lawes of mans reason ben grounded or els mayntayned. And for thys booke is all of loue, and therafter beareth hys name, and phylosophie and lawe muste here to acorden by theyr clergiall dyscripciōs: as philosophie for loue of wysedome is declared: Lawe for maynteynaunce of peace is holden, and these with loue must nedes acordē, therfore of hem in this place haue I touched. Orde of honly thynges & honest maner of lyuyng in vertue, with rightful iugemēt in causes & profitable administracion in cōminaltyes of realmes & cites, by euenhed profitably to raigne, not by synguler auaūtage ne by priue enuy, ne by soleyn purpose in couetise of worship or of goodes, ben dysposed in opē rule shewed, by loue philosophy, & law, & yet loue toforne al other Wherfore as sustenne in vnite they acordē & one ende that is peace & rest, they causen nory thynge, & in the ioye maynteynen to endure.

Now then, as I haue declared: my boke acordeth with discripciō of thre thynges, & the Margarit in vertue is lykned to philosophie wyth her thre speces. In whych maters euer twey ben acordaūt with bodely reason, & the thyrde with the soule: But in cōclusion of my boke & of thys Margarit peerle in knyttyng together lawe by thre sondry maners shalbe lykened, ÿ is to saye, lawe, ryght, & custome, whych I wold declare: all ÿ is lawe cometh of goddes ordynaūce by kyndly worchyng, & thylke thynges ordayned by mānes wyttes arne ycleped ryght, which is ordained by many maners & in constitucion wrytten: but custome is a thynge that is accepted for ryghte or for lawe, there as lawe and ryght fayien, and there is no dyfferēce, whether it come of scrypture or of reason. Wherfore it sheweth that lawe is kyndly gouernaunce: Ryght cometh out of mannes probable reason: and custome is of cōmen vsage by length of tyme vsed, and custome not wrytte is vsage, and yf it be wrytte constitucion it is ywrytten and ycleped: But lawe of kynde is cōmen to euery nation, as coniunction of man and womā in loue, succession of chyldren in heritaunce restitucyon of thynge by strength taken or lent and this lawe amōge al other halte the souerayneest gree in worschyp, whych lawe began at the begynnynge of reasonable creature, it varyed yet neuer for no chaungyng of tyme: cause forsothe in ordaynynge of law, was to constrayne mens hardynesse into peace, and wythdrawyng his euell wyl, & turnynge malyce into goodnesse, and that innocence syker ly withouten tenefull anoye amōge shrewes sakely myght inhabyte by protection of sakeconducte, so that ÿ shrewes harme for harme by bydle of ferdenesse shulden restrayne. But forsothe in kyndely lawe nothynge is cōmended, but suche as goddes wil hath cōfyrmed, ne nothyng denyed but cōtrarioustye of goddes wyl in heauen: eke then all lawes or custome, or els cōstitucion by vsage or wryting that cōtraryen lawe of kynde, vtterly ben repugnaunt and aduersary to our goddes wyl of heuen. Trewly lawe of kynde for goddes

owne

dwne lusty wil is berely to mainteine, vnder which lawe (& vnworthye) both professe and reguler arne obediencer and bounden to this Margarite perle, as by knotte of loues statutes and stablyshment in kynde, whyche that goodlye may not ben wythsetten. Lo vnder this bonde am I constrayned to abyde, and man vnder lyuyng lawe ruled: by that lawe oweth after desertes to be rewarded by payn or by mede, but yf mercy weyue the payne: so then be parte, reasonfully maye be sey, that mercy both ryght and lawe passeth, thentent of al these maters is the lest clere vnderstandynge, to wetē at thende of this thyrde boke ful knowyng thorow goddes grace, I thinke to make neuerthelater, yet yf these thynges hane a good & a sleight inseer, which that can souke hony of the harde stone, oyle of the drye rocke, may lightly kele nobley of mater in my leude ymaginacion closed. But for my boke shalbe of ioye (as I sayde) & I so ferre set fro thylke place, fro whēce gladnesse shuld come, my corde is to shorte to let my boket oughte catch of that water, and fewe men ben about my corde to eche, & many in ful purpose be redy it shorter to make, & to enclose thētre, that my boket of ioy nothing shuld catch, but empty returne, my careful sorowes to encrese, & yf I dye for payne, ȳ were gladnesse at theyr hertes. Good lord sende me water into ȳ cop of these moūtaynes, & I shall drynke therof, my thurstes to stāch: & sey these be cōfortable welles into helth of goodnesse of my sauiour am I holpen. And yet I say more, the house of ioye to me is not opened. How dare my sorowful goost then in any mater of gladnesse thynken to trete: for euer sobbynges & complaintes be redy refrete in his meditaciōs, as werbles in manyfold stoūdes cōmyng about I not then. And therfore what maner of ioye coude endite, but yet at dore shal I knocke, yf the key of Dauid wold the locke vnshyt, & he bryng me in, which that chyldrēs tōges both opneth and closeth. Whose spirite, where he wyl worcheth, departing goodly as hi liketh

Now to goddes laude & reuerēce, profit of the reders, amēdemēt of maners of ȳ herers, encresyng of worship amōge loues seruaūts, releuyng of my hert into grace of my iewel, & frenshyp plesaūce of thys peerle. I am stered in thys makynge, and for nothynge els: and yf any good thynge to mēnes lykynge in this scripture be founde, thanketh the mayster of grace, whych that of that good and all other is authour, and pryncypall doer. And yf any thynge be insuffycyent or els myslykynge, w̄ that that the leudnesse of myne vnable connynge, for body in dysease anoyeth the vnderstandynge in soule. A dyseasely habitacyon letteth the wyttes many thynges, and namely in sorowe. The custome neuer the later of loue, be longe tyme of seruyce in termes I thynke to pursue, whiche ben lyuely to yeue vnderstandyng in other thynges. But nowe to enform the of thys Margarites goodnesse I may her nat half preyse. Wherfore nat the for my boke, but this boke for her is worthy to be comended, tho my boke be leude: ryght as thynges nat for places, but places for thinges oughten to be desyred and prayled.

Now (q̄ Loue) trewly thy wordes I haue wel vnderstād. Certes me thinketh hē right good, & me wōdreth why thou so lightlye passest in the lawe. Sothly (q̄ I) my wyt is leude & I am right blynd and that mater depe, how shulde I than haue waded, lightly myght I haue drenched and spylte ther my selfe. Ye (q̄ she) I shall helpe the to swym. For ryght as lawe punisheth brekers of preceptes, and the contrary doers of the wrtten constitutions: ryght so ayenward, lawe rewardeth and yeueth mede to hem that lawe strengthen. By one lawe thys rebel is punished and this innocent is meded, the shrewe is enprisoned & thys ryghtfull is crowned. The same lawe that ioyneth by wedlocke without forsaking, the same lawe yeueth lybel of deperticion by cause of deuorse both demed and declared. Ye ye (q̄ I) I kynde in no lawe to mede and reward in goodnes, the gyltie of desertes. Fole (q̄ she) gyltie cōuerted in your lawe, mykell merite deserueth. Also Paulin of Rome was crowned, that by hym the maynteyners of Pompeus weren knowē & distroyed: & yet to forn was this Paulyn chefe of Pōpeus cōsayle. This law in Rome hath yet his name of meluryng in mede, ȳ bewrayeng of the cōspiracy, ordayned by tho senatours the dethe. Julius Cesar is acōpted in to Catons right wisnesse, for euer in trouth florisheth his name among the knowers of reason. Perdicas was crowned in ȳ heritage of Alexāder the great,

great, for tellynge of a preuy hate that kynge Porrus to Alexander hadde. wherfore euery wyght by reason of law after his rightwyse nesse apertly his mede maychalēge: & so thou that maynteynest lawe of kynde, & therfore disease hast suffred in ý law, reward is worthy to be rewarded & ordayned, & apartly thy mede might thou chalēge. Certes (q I) thys haue I wel lerned, & euer hēsforward I shal drawe me therafter in onehed of wyl to abyd this lawe both mayntene & kepe, & so hope I best entre into your grace, wel deseruynge in to worship of a wight, without nedful cōpul syon, ought medfully to be rewarded. Truly (q Loue) that is sothe, & tho by constitution good seruyce in to profyt & auaūtage stretch, vtterly many mē it demē to haue more desert of mede, thē good wyl not cōpelled. Se now (q I) how may men holden of thys the contrary. And what is good seruice of youwold I here thys question declared I shall say the (q she) in a fewe wordes, reasonable workinges in plesaunce & profyte of thy souerayne. How shuld I this performe (q I) Rizt wel (q she) & here me nowe a lytel. It is hardely (q she) to vnderstande ý ryghte as mater by due ouerchaūgynges foloweth his perfectiō and his forme: Ryght so euery mā by ryghtfull werkynges ought to folowe the leful desyres in hys herte, and se toforne to what end he deserueth, for many tymes he that loketh not after thēdes, but vtterly therof is vnknowen, befalleth oftē many yuels to don, wher throughe he be ware shamefully he is confounded, theude therof neden to be beforе loked to euery desyrer of suche forsyght, in good seruyce thre thynges specially nedeth to be rulers in hys workes. Fyrste that he do good, nexte that he do by election in hys own hert, and the thyrde that he do godlye wythouten any surquedry in thoughtes. That your werkes shulden be good in seruice or in any other actes, authorites many may be aleged neuer thelater, by reason thus maye it be shewed. All your werkes be cleped seconde, & mouen in vertue of the fyrst wercher, whych in good workes wrought you to procede, and ryghte so your werkes mouen in to vertue of the last ende, & right in the fyrst workyng were not, no man shulde in the secōde werche. Right so but ye feled to what ende & sene theyr goodnes closed, ye shulde nomore retche what ye wrought but the gynnynge gan wyth good, and there shall it cease in the last ende, yf it be well consydred. Wherfore the myddle, yf other wayes it drawe then accordaunt to the endes, there stynteth the course of good, and another maner course entreth, & so it is a partye by hym selue, and euery part be not accordaunt to hys all, is foule & ought to be eschewed. Wherfore euery thynge ý is wroughte and be not good, is not accordaūt to thendes of hys all hole, it is foule, & ought to be with drawe. Thus the persons that neyther do good ne harme, shamen foule theyr makyng: wherfore wythout workynge of good actes in good seruyce, may no man ben accepted. Trewly the ylke that han myght to do good and done it not, the crowne of worshyp shall be take from hem, and wyth shame shull they be anulled. And so to make one werke accordaunt wyth hys endes, euery good seruaunt by reason of cōsequēce muste do good nedes. Certes it suffyseth not alone to do good, but goodly wythall folowe, the thanke of goodnesse els in nought he deserueth: For ryghte as al your beyng come frō the greatest good in whom all goodnesse is closed. Ryght so your endes ben directe to the same good. Aristotel determineth ý end & good ben one, & cōuertible in vnderstandynge, & he that in wyll doth away good, & he that loketh not to thēd loketh not to good, but he that doth good & doth not goodly, draweth away the dyrectiō of thende not goodly, must nedes be bad. Lo badde is nothyng els, but absence or negatyf of good, as derknesse is absence or negatyue of lyght. Then he that doth goodly, dyrecteth thylke good in to theude of badde: So must thyng not good folowe, eke badnesse to suche folke ofte foloweth. Thus contrariant workers of thende that is good, ben worthy the contrary of thēde ý is good to haue. How (q I) may any good dede be done, but yf goodly it helpe. Yes (q Loue) the deuell doth many good dedes, but goodly he leueth behynd, for euen badly & in discreuable wyse he worketh wherfore the cōtrary of thende him foloweth And do he neuerso many good dedes, bicause goodly is away, his goodnes is not rekened. Lo then tho a mā do good, but he do goodly thende in goodnesse wol not folowe, & thus in good seruice both good dede & goodly don musten ioyne together, & that it be don wyth

free choise in hert: & els deserueth he not ý me rite in goodnesse, ý woll I proue, for yf thou do any thyng good by chaūce or by happe, in what thyng art thou therof worthy to be cōmended: for nothynge by reason of ý turneth into thy praysyng ne lackyng. Lo thilke thig done by hap by thy wyl is not caused, & therby shulde I thanke or lacke deserue: & sythen that fayleth, thende whych that wel shuld reward, must nedes faile. Clerkes sayn, no mā but wyllyng is blessed, a good dede ý he hath done is not done of fre choyse willyng, without which blyssednesse may not folowe. Ergo neither thāke of goodnesse ne seruice in ý is cōtrary of the good ende, so thē to good seruice lōged good dede goodly don, thorow fre choice in hert. Truely (q I) this haue I wel vnderstande. Wel (q she) euery thynge thus done sufficiēt ly by lawe, that is cleped iustice after reward clayme. For lawe & iustice was ordained in this wyse, suche desertes in goodnesse after quantite in doynge, by mede to reward, & of necessite of such iustice, ý is to say ryghtwisenesse was fre choice in deseruynge of wel or of yuel graūted to resonable creatures. Euery man hath fre arbitremēt to chose good or yuel to performe. Now (q I tho) yf I by my good wyl deserue this Margarite perle & am not therto cōpelled, and haue free choice to do what me lyketh: Sthe is thē holden as me thinketh to rewarde thentēt of my good wyl. Goddes forbode els (q Loue) no wizt meaneth otherwyse I trowe, fre wyl of good hert after mede deserueth. Hath euerye man (q I) free choice by necessarye maner of wyl in euery of his doynges, ý him lyketh by goddes proper purueyauce? I wolde se ý wel declared to my leude vnderstādynge, for necessary & necessyte ben wordes of mokel entencion, closyng (as to saye) so mote it be nedes, & otherwyse maye it not betyde. Thys shalt thou lerne (q she) so thou take hede in my speche. Yf it were not in mānes owne lyberte of fre wyl to do good or bad, but to the one tyed by bonde of goddes preordinaunce: Thē do he neuer so well it were by nedefull cōpulcion of thilke bonde & not by fre choice, wherby nothyng he deserueth, & do he neuer so yuel it were not man for to wyte, but onelyche to hym that such thynge ordayned hym to done. Wherfore he ne ought for bad be punyshed, ne for no good dede be rewarded, but of necessite of ryghtwysnesse was therfore free choice of arbitremente put in mans proper dispositiō: truely yf it were otherwise it cōtraryed goddes charite, ý badnes & goodnesse rewardeth after deserte of payne or of mede. Me thynketh this wōder (q I) for god by necessite forwote al thynges cōmyng, and so mote it nedes be: & thylke thynges ý bene done be our fre choice comen nothynge of necessite but onely by wyll: Howe maye thys stande togyther: and so me thynketh truely, that fre choice fully repugneth goddes forwetynge. Truly lady me semeth they mowe not stande together.

Then gan loue nygh me nere, & with a noble coūtenaūce of vysage & lymmes, dressed her nygh my sytting place. Take forth (q she) thy pen & redely wryt these wordes, for if god wol, I shal hem so enforme to the, ý thy leudnesse which I haue vnderstād in that mater, shal openly be clered, & thy sight in ful loking therin amēded. Fyrst if thou thinke that goddes prescience repugne lyberte of arbytrye of arbitrement, it is impossible ý they shuld accorde in onheed of soth to vnderstādyng. Yea (q I) forsoth so I it cōceyue. Well (q she) yf thylke impossible were away, the repugnāce that semeth to be therin, were vtterlye remoued. Shewe me ý absence of that impossibilite (q I.) So (q she) I shall. Nowe I suppose ý they mowe stāde together, prescieēce of god whō foloweth necessite of thiges cōming & lyberte of arbitremēt, thorow whych thou beleuest many thiges to be without necessite Both these propozcions be sothe (q I) & wel mowe stāde together, wherfore thys case as possible I admyt. Truly (q she) & this case is impossible. Howe so (q I). For herof (q she) foloweth & wereth anotger ipossible. Proue me that (q I), that I shal (q she) for sothyng is cōmyng without necessite, & god wot that toforne, for althig cōmyng he before wote, & that he beforne wot of necessite is cōming: as he beforne wot be ý case by necessary maner then, or els thorow necessite is sothyng to be without necessite, & wetherto euery wyght ý hath good vnderstāding, is sene these thiges to be repugnāt. Prescieēce of god, which that foloweth necessite & lyberte of arbytrement,

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fro which is remoued necessitie, for trulye it is necessary ý god haue foreweting of thyng withouten any necessitie cõmynge. Ye (q I) but yet remeue ye not away fro myne vnder standyng, the necessitie folowynge gods beforewetyng, as thus. God before wote me in seruice of loue to be boũden to this Margaryte perle, & therfore by necessitie thus to loue am I bounde, & yf I not had loued, thorowe necessitie had I bene kept from al loue dedes. Certes (q loue) bicause this mater is good & necessary to declare, I thynke herein wel to abyde, and not lightly to passe. Thou shalt not (q she) say al only god before wot me to be a louer or no louer, but thus: god before wot me to be a louer without necessite And so it foloweth whether thou loue or not loue, euery of hem is and shalbe. But nowe thou seest the impossibilitie of the case, and ý possibilitie of thylke that thou wendest had ben impossyble, wherfore the repugnaunce is adnulled. Ye (q I) & yet do ye not awaye the strengthe of necessitie whan it is sayde: though necessitie it is me in loue to abyde, or not to loue without necessitie for god before wot it. This maner of necessitie forsothe semeth to some men in to coaction, that is to sayne, constraynyng or els prohibicion that is defendynge, wherfore necessitye is me to loue of wyll. I vnderstande me to be constrayned by some priuy strength to the wyll of louynge, and if no loue to be defended frõ the wyll of louyng, and so thorow necessitie me semeth to loue, for I loue, or elles not to loue, if I not loue wherthrugh neither thãk ne maugre in tho thynges may I deserue.

Now (q she) thou shalt wel vnderstande, that often we sayne thyng thorow necessitie to be that by no strength to be neyther is coacted ne constrayned, and through necessitie not to be, that with no defendynge is remoued, for we sayne it is thorowe necessite god to be immortall nought deedlyche, and it is necessitie god to be ryghtfull, but not that any strength of vyolente maner constrayneth hym to be immortall, or defendeth him to be vnryghtfull, for nothynge maye make hym deedly or vnryghtful. Ryght so if I say thorowe necessite is the to be a louer or els none or elye thorowe wyll, as god before wete: It is not to vnderstande that any thyng defendeth or forbyt, the thy wyll whiche shall not be, or els cõstrayneth it to be which shalbe: that same thyng forsoth god before wot which he before seeth any thynge cõmende of only wyll, that wyl neyther is cõstrayned ne defended thorowe any other thynge: & so thorowe lybertie of arbytrement it is do, ý is done of wyll. And trulye my good chylde, yf these thynges be wel vnderstond I wene that none inconuenient shalt thou fynde betwene gods forwetyng & lybertie of arbytre mẽt, wherfore I wot wel they may stand together. Also fertherinore, who ý vnderstandyng of presciẽce proprelyche cõsyderyth thorow the same wyse that any thyng be afore wyst, is sayd for to be cõmyng it is pronoũced, there is nothing to forn wyst, but thyng cõmyng, forewetinge is but of trouth doute may not be wyst: wherfore whã I sey ý god toforne wot any thyng, thorow necessitie is thilke thyng to be cõmyng, al is one if I sey if it shalbe: but this necessitie neither cõstrayneth ne defẽdeth any thing to be or not to be Therfore sothly yf loue is put to be, it is said of necessitie to be, or els for it is put not to be it is affirmed not to be of necessite: not for ý necessite cõstraineth or defẽdeth loue to be or not to be. For whã I say, if loue shalbe of necessitie it shalbe, here foloweth necessitie, the thyng toforn put, it is as moche to sey, as yf it were thus pronoũced, ý thyng shalbe: none other thynge signifyeth this necessitye but onely thus, ý shall be maye not togyder be & not be. Euenyche also it is sothe, loue was and is, & shalbe, not of necessitie, and nede is to haue be all that was, & nedeful is to be al that is, & cõmyng to all that shalbe: and it is not the same to saye, loue to be passed, & loue passed to be passed, or loue present to be present, and loue to be present, or els loue to be commynge, and loue commynge to be commynge: dyuersitye in settynge of wordes, maketh diuersitie in vnderstonding altho in the same sentẽce they accordẽ of significatiõ ryght as it is not all one: loue sweete to be swete, & loue to be swete: for moche loue is bitter & sorowful er hertes ben eased, & yet it gladeth thilke sorouful hert on suche loue to thynke. Forsothe (q I) otherwhyle I haue had mokell blys in hert of loue, ý stoũdomele hath me sorily anoyed: & certes lady for I se my selfe this knit with this Margarit perle as by bonde of your seruyce, & of no lybertie

of wyl my hert wil now not accorde this seruice to loue. I can demen in my selfe none otherwyse, but thorowe necessitie am I constrayned in this seruyce to abyde. But alas than, yf I thorowe nedefull cōpultion magre me be withholde, lytle thanke for all my great trauayle haue I than deserued. Now (q̃ this lady) I saye as I sayde: We lyketh this mater to declare at the full, & why: for many men haue had dyuers fantasyes, and reasons, both on one syde thereof & in the other. Of whiche ryght sone I trowe if thou wolt vnderstōd, thou shalt conceue the sentence, to the partye more probable by reasō, & in soth knowyng, by ý I haue of this mater maked an ende. Certes (q̃ I) of these thiges long haue I had great lust to be lerned, for yet I wene gods wyl & his prescience accordeth with my seruyce, in louyng of thys precious Margaryte perle. After whō euer in my hert with thurstyng desyre wete I do brenne: vnwastyng I langour & fade, and ý day of my desteny in deth or in ioy I vnbide but yet in thende I am comforted be my supposayle in blysse, & in ioye to determyne after my desyres. That thyng (q̃ loue) hastely to the neygh, god graūt of his grace & mercy, and this shalbe my prayer tyl thou be lykende in hert at thyne owne wyll. But now to enfourme the in this mater (q̃ this lady) thou woste where lefte, that was loue to be swete, and loue swete to be swete, is not all one for to saye: for a tree is not alway by necessitie whyte sometyme er it were whyte, it myght haue be not whyte: & after tyme it is whyte, it maye be not whyte: But a whyte tree euermore nedeful is to be whyte: for neither tofore ne after it was whyte, myght it be togyther whyte and not whyte. Also loue by necessitie is not present as nowe in ý for er it were present it myght haue be, that it shulde now not haue be, and yet it may be that it shal not be presente, but thy loue present, which to her margarite the hath bond, nedefull is to be present. Truly some doing of action not by necessitie is cōmyge ferre to forne it be, it maye be that it shal not be commyng: thing forsoth comynge nedefull is to be cōmynge, for it may not be that cōmynge shall not be cōmynge: and ryght as I haue sayde of present and of future tymes, ý same sentence in sothnesse is of the preterit, ý is to say tyme passed for thig passed, must nedes be passed, & yet it wer it myght haue not be, wherfore it shuld not haue passed. Ryght so whā loue cōming is said of loue ý is to com nedeful is to be ý is sayd, for thyng cōmyng neuer is not comyng, & so oft the same thing we sayn of the same, as whā we sayn euery man is a man, or euerye louer is a louer, so must it be nedes, in no way may he be mā & no man togyther. And yf it be not by necessitie, that is to say, nedeful al thyng cōmynge to be cōmyng, than som thyng commyng is not cōming, and that is impossible, right as these termes nedefull, necessitie, and necessary betoken and signify thyng nedes to be, & it may not otherwyse be. Ryght these termes impossyble signifyeth, that thynge is not & by no way may it be, than thorow parfyte necessitie, al thyng cōmyng is cōmyng, but that is by necessitie, foloweth with nothyng to be cōstrayned: lo whan that commyng is sayd of thyng, not alwaye thynge thorowe necessitie is, altho it be commynge. For if I saye tomorowe loue is cōmynge in this Margarites hert, not therfore thorow necessitie shal thilke loue be, yet it maye be ý it may not be, although it were commynge. Neuerthelater, sōtyme it is soth that somethyng be of necessitie, that is sayde to come: as yf I say tomorow by cōmyng the rising of the sun. yf therfore with necessitie I pronounce cōmynge of thynge to come, in this maner loue to morne cōmynge in thy Margaryte to thewarde by necessitie is cōmyng or els the rysyng of the sunne to morne commyng, through necessitie is comynge. Loue sothly which may not be of necessitie aloone folowyng, thorowe necessitie cōmynge it is made certayne. For futur of future is sayde, that is to sayne cōmyng of cōminge is saide as if tomorow cōmyng is thorowe necessite cōming it is. Arysyng of the sun thorowe. ii. necessitis in cōming, it is to vnderstād ý one is to forgoig necessite, which maketh thing to be, therfore it shalbe, for nedefull is that it be. Another is folowyng necessitie, which nothing cōstrayneth to be, and so by necessite it is to come, why: for it is to come. Now than, whan we sayne, ý God before wote thing cōmyng, nedeful it is to be commyng, yet therfore make we not in certayne, euermore thyng to be thorow necessitie cōmyng.

Sothly

Sothly thynge commynge may not be not cōmynge by no waye, for it is the same sentence of vnderstandyng: as yf we saye thus. Yf god before wot any thynge, nedefull is that to be commynge. But yet therfore folowethnot the prescience of God, thynge thorowe necessitie to be comyng: for all tho god tofore wote all thynges comynge, yet not therfore he before wote euery thynge commyng thorowe necessetie. Som thynges he before wot commynge of frewyll out of resonable creature. Certes (q I) these termes nede and necessitie, haue a queynte maner of vnderstandynge, they wolde dullen manye mens wyttes. Therfore (q she) I woll hem openly declare, and more clerely thā I haue tofore er I departe hence.

HEre of this mater quod she, thou shalt vnderstande: that ryght as it is not nedefull God to wylne, that he wyll, ne more in manye thynges is not nedeful a man to wylne that he woll.

And euer ryght as nedeful is to be what that god woll, ryght so to be it is nedefull, that man woll in tho thynges, whiche that god hath put into mans subiection of wyllynge: as yf a man woll loue, that he loue: & yf he ne wol loue, that he loue not, & of suche other thynges in mans dispositiō. For why nowe than that god woll maye not be, whā he woll the wyll of man thorowe no necessitie to be constrayned or els defended for to wylne, and he woll theffecte to folowe the wyll, than is it nedefull wyll of man to be free, and also to be that he woll. In this maner it is soth, that thorowe necessitie is mānes werke in louyng, that he wol do althouz he woll it not with necessitie. (Quod I) thā how stant it in loue of thylke wyl, sythen mē louē wyllyng of free choyce inhert wherfore yf it be thorowe necessitie, I pray you ladye of an answer this questyon to assoyle. I wil (quod she) answere the blyuely: Ryght as men wyll not thorowe necessitie, ryght so is not loue of wyll thorowe necessitie, ne thorowe necessitie wrought thylke same wyll: for yf he wold it not with good wyl, it shuld not haue ben wrought, although ȳ he doeth it is nedefull to be done.

But yf a man do synne, it is nothyng elles but to wyll, that he shulde not: ryght so syn of wyl is not to be maner necessary done, no more than wyll is necessary. Neuerthelater this is soth, yf a man woll synne, it is necessary hym to synne, but though thylke necessitie nothyng is constrayned ne defended in the wyll, ryght so thylke thyng that frewyll woll and may, and not may, not wylne, and nedefull is that to wylne he may not wylne but thilke to wylne nedefull is, for impossyble to hym it is onethyng, and the same to wylne he may not wilne, but thilke to wilne nedefull is: for impossyble to hym it is one thynge, and the same to wylne and notte to wylne. The werke forsoth of wyl to whome it is yeue that it be that he hath in wyll, and that he wol not voluntary of spontany it is, for by spontany wyll it is do, that is to saye with good wyll, not constrayned: than by wyl not constrayned, it is constrayned to be and that is it may not togyther be. Yf thys necessitie maketh lybertye of wyll, whiche ȳ afore they weren they myght haue bene eschewed and shonned: God than, which that knoweth al truthe, and nothyng but truthe, al these thynges as they are spontany or necessarye syght, and as he seeth so they ben: & so with these thynges well consydered, it is open at the full, that withoute all maner repugnaunce, god before wot all maner thinges ben done by frewyll, which afozen they weren myght haue ben neuer they shulde be and yet ben they thozowe a maner necessitie fromfrewyll discended.

Hereby maye (quod she) lightly ben knowe that not all thynges to be is of necessytye though God haue hem in his prescience, for some thynges to be is of lybertye of wyll: and to make the to haue full knowynge of goddes before wetynge. Heare me (quod she) what I shall I saye. Blythlye ladye (q I) me lyst this mater entyrely to vnderstād. Thou shalt (q she) vnderstande, that in heauen is goddes being, although he be ouer al by power, yet there is abydynge of deuyne person, in which heuen is euerlastynge presence, whoutē any mouable tyme there sole haue I not sayd tofore this, as tyme hurteth, ryght so ayenwarde tyme healeth and rewardeth: and a tre oft fayled is hold more deyntye whan it frute forth bryngeth.

A marchaunt that for ones lesyng in the see nomore to auenture thynketh, he shal neuer with auenture come to rychesse: so oft must men on the oke smyte, tyll the happye dente haue entred, which with ỳ okes owne sway maketh it to come all at ones. So ofte falleth the lethy water on the harde rocke, tyll it haue thorow persed it. The euen draught of the wyre drawer, maketh the wyre to ben euen and supple werchyng, and if he stynted in his draught, the wyre breaketh a sonder. Euery tre wel springeth whā it is wel groū ded and not often remoued. what shall this frute be (q̃ I) nowe it gynnethe rype: Grace (quod she) in parfyte ioye to endure and ther with hou begon. Grace (q̃ I) me thiketh I shulde haue arewarde for my long trauayle I shal tell the (quod she) retrybution of thy good wylles to haue of thy Margaryte perle it beareth not the name of mede, but only of good grace, and that cometh not of thyde serte, but of thy Margarytes goodnesse, & vertue alone. (Quod I) shulde al my longe trauayle haue no reward but thorow grace and somtyme your seluen sayde, ryghtwilnesse euenlyche rewardeth to quyte one benefite for an other. That is soth (quod loue) euer as I sayd, as to hym that doeth good, which to done he were neyther holdē ne yet constrayned. That is soth (quod I). Truly, (quod she) all that euer thou dost to thy margaryte peerle, of wyll, of loue, and of reason thou owest to done it, yet is nothyng els but yeldynge of thy det in quytyng of thy grace, which she the lent whā ye fyrst met. I wene (quod I) ryght lytle grace to me she delyuered. Certes, it was harde grace, it hath nigh me astrangled. That it was good grace I wot wel thou wylt it graunt er thou depart hence. Yf anye man yeue to an other wyght to whom that he ought not, and which that of hym selfe nothyng maye haue, a garmēt or a cote, though he weare the cote or elles thylke clothynge, it is not to put hym ỳ was naked the cause of his clothyng, but onely to him that was yeuer of the garnement. wher fore I saye, thou that were naked of loue, & of thy selfe none haue myghtest, it is not to put thyne owne persō, sythen thy loue came to thorowe thy Margaryte perle. Ergo she was yeuer of the loue although thou it vse, and there lent she the grace thy seruyce to be gynne. She is worthye the thanke of this grace, for she was the yeuer. All the thoughtes, besy doinges, and plesaūce in thy might and in thy wordes that thou canste deuyse, ben but ryght lytle in quytynge of thy dette: had she not ben, suche thyng had not ben studyed. So all these maters kyndly drawen homeward to this Margaryte peerle, for from thence were they borowed, all is holy her to wyte the loue that thou haueſt: and thus quytest thou thy dette, in that thou sted fastly seruest. And kepe well that loue I the rede, that of her thou hast borowed, and vse it in her seruyce thy dette to quyte, and than art thou able right sone to haue grace, wher fore after mede in none halue mayest thou loke. Thus thy gynnyng and endyng is but grace alone, and in thy good deseruyng thy det thou aquytest: without grace is nothing worth what so euer thou werche. Thanke thy Margaryte of her great grace, that hytherto the hath gyded, and praye her of contynuaunce forthe in thy werkes hereafter, and that for no myschappe thy grace ouerthwartly tourne. Grace, glorye, and ioye, is commynge thorowe good folkes desertes, and by gettynge of grace therin shulde ende. And what is more glorye or more ioye than wysdome and loue in parfite charitie which god hath graunted to all tho that well can deserue. And with that this lady al at ones start into myne hert: here woll I onbyde (q̃ she) for euer. And neuer woll I gone hence, and I woll kepe the from medlynge whyle me lyst here onbyde: thyne intremetyng maners into stedfastnesse shullen be chaunged.

Orlyche tho threwe I vp myne eyen, and hugelye tho was I astonyed of thys sodayne aduenture, and fayne wolde I haue learned howe vertues shulden ben knowē in whyche thynges, I hoope to God, hereafter she shall me enfourmen, and namelye sythen her restynge place is nowe so nyghe at my wyll, and anon all these thynges that thys lady sayde, I remembred me by my selfe, and reuolued the

the lyues of myne vnderstandyng wyttes.
Tho founde I fully all these maters parfitly there wrytten, howe mysse rule by fayned loue both realmes and cyties hathe gouerned a great throwe. How lyghtly me might the fautes espye, howe rules in loue shoulde ben vsed, howe sometyme with fayned loue foule I was begyled, howe I shoulde loue haue knowe, and how I shall in loue wyth my seruyce proceede. Also furthermore, I founde of perdurable letters wonderly ther grauen, these maters which I shal nempne. Certes, none age ne other thynge in earthe maye the leest syllable of this in no poynte deface, but clerelye as the sunne in myne vnderstandyng soule they shynen. This maye neuer out of my mynde, how I may not my loue kepe, but thorowe wyllynge in herte.
wylne to loue maye I not, but I louynge, haue. Loue haue I none but thorowe grace of this Margaryte peerle. It is no maner dout, that wyl woll not loue but for it is louyng, as wyl woll not ryghtfully, but for it is ryghtful it selue. Also wyll is not louyng for he woll loue, but he woll loue for he is louynge. It is all one to wyll to be louynge, and louynges in possessyon to haue.
Ryght so wyll wol not loue, for of loue hath he in no partye, and yet I deny not louynge wyl wylne more loue to haue, which that he hath not whan he wolde more than he hath: but I saye he maye no loue wylne, yf he no loue haue, throughe whiche thylke loue he shulde wylne: but to haue this louynge wyll may no man of hym selfe, but onely through grace toforne going: Ryght so maye noman it kepe, but by grace folowynge. Consydre nowe euery man aryght, and let sene if that any wyght of hym selfe mowe this louynge wyl get, and he therof fyrste nothynge haue: for yf it shulde of hym selfe spryngе, eyther it must be wyllyng or not wyllynge. wyllynge by hym selfe maye he it not haue, sythen him fayleth the mater that shulde it forth bryng, the mater hym fayleth: why he may thereof haue no knowyng, tyll whan grace put it in his herte. Thus wyllyng by hym selfe may he it not haue, and not wyllynge maye he it not haue. Parde euery conceyt of euery reasonable creature otherwyse wyl not graunt wyll in affyrmatyke with not wyllynge by no waye mowe accorde. And although this louynge woll come in myne hert by frenesse of arbytrement, as in this boke fully is shewed, yet owe I not therfore as moche alow my free wyll, as grace of that Margaryte to me leaned, for neyther myght I without grace to fornegoinge, and afterwarde folowyng, thylke grace get ne kepe, and lese shal I it neuer but yf frewyll it make, as in wyllyng otherwyse than grace hath me graunted. For ryght as whan any person taketh wyllynge to be sobre, and throweth that awaye, wyllynge to be dronke, or els taketh wyll of drynkynge oute of measure, whiche thyng anon as it is doone, maketh thorowe his owne gylte by free wyll that leseth hys grace. In which thyng therfore vpon the no bley of grace I mote trusten, and my busye cure set thylke grace to kepe, that my frewyl otherwyse than by reason it shulde werche, cause not my grace to voyde: for thus must I both loke to frewyll & to grace. For right as naturall vsage in engendrynge of chyldren maye not bene withoute father, ne also but with the mother, for neyther father ne mother in begettynge maye it lacke: ryght so grace and frewyll accorden, and without hem both maye not louynge wyll in no partye ben getten. But yet is not frewyl in gettynge of that thyng, so mokell thanke worthy as is grace, ne in the kepynge thereof, so moche thanke deserueth, and yet in gettyng and kepynge both done they accorde.
Trulye oftentyme grace frewyll helpeth in foredoinge of contrarye thynges, that to wyllynge loue not accorden, and strengthe wyll aduersities to withsytte, wherfore all togyther to grace oweth to bene accepted, that my wyllynge deserueth. Frewyll to louynge in this wyse is accorded.
I remembre me well howe all this boke (who so hede taketh) consydreth all thynges to werchynges of mankynde, euenlye accordeth, as in tournynge of thys worde loue into trouth, or els ryghtwisnesse, whether that it lyke. For what thynge that falleth to man in helpynge of free arbytremēt, thylke ryghtwysnesse to take or els to kepe, thorowe whiche a man shall be saued, of whiche thyng all this booke mencyon hath maked, in euery poynt thereof grace oweth to be thanked.
wherfore I saye, euerye wyght hauynge

this ryghtfulnes ryghtfull is, and yet therfore I sey not in my conceyence, that to all ryghtfull is behoten the blysse euerlastynge but to hem that ben ryghtfull withouten any vnryghtousnesse. Some man after som degree maye ryghtfully ben accompted: as chaste men in lyuynge, and yet ben they ianglers and full of enuye pressed: to hem shal this blysse neuer bene delyuered. For ryght as verye blysse is withoute all maner nede, ryght so to noman shal it be yeuen but to the ryghtful, voyde from all maner vnryghtfulnesse founde, so noman to her blysse shal ben folowed, but he be ryghtfull, and wyth vnryghtfulnesse not bounde, and in that degre fully be knowe. This ryghtfulnesse in as moche as in hym selfe is, of none euyll is it cause, and of all maner goodnesse truly it is mother. This helpeth the spyrite to withsyt the leude lustes of flesshly lykyng: This strēgtheth and mayntayneth the lawe of kynde and yf that otherwhyle me weneth harme of this precyous thyng to folowe, therethorowe is nothynge the cause, of somwhat els commeth it aboute who so taketh hede. By rightfulnesse forsoth werne many holy saynctes good sauour in swetnesse to god almighty e, but that to some folkes they weren sauour of deth into deedly ende, that come not of the saynctes ryghtwysnesse, but of other wycked mens badnesse hath proceded. Truly the ilke wyl whiche that the ladye of loue me lerned, affectiō of wyl to nempne, which is in wyllyng of prokytable thynges, euel is it not, but whan to flesshly lustes it cōsenteth ayenst reason of soule. But that this thyng more clerely be vnderstand, it is for to know whence and how thylke wyll is so vycious, and so readye, euyll dedes to perfourme.

Grace at the gynnyng ordeyned thylke wyl ingoodnesse euer to haue endured, and neuer to badnesse to haue assented: Men shoulde not beleue that God thylke wyll made to be vycious. Our first father as Adam & Eue, for vycyous appetytes and vycious wyll to such appetytes consentyng, ben not one thig in kynde, other thyng is done for the other. And howe this wyll first into man first assented I holde it prokytable to shewe, but if the fyrste condicyon of reasonable creature wol be consydred and apertly loked lyghtly the cause of suche wyll maye ben shewed.

Intention of God was that ryghtfully and blysfed shulde reasonable nature ben maked hym selfe for to kepe, but neyther blysfull ne ryghtfull myght it not be withouten wyl in them bothe. wyll of ryghtfulnesse is thylke same rightfulnesse as heretoforne is shewed but wyll of blysse is not thylke blysse, for euery man hath not thylke blysse, in whome the wyll therof is abydynge. In this blysse after euery vnderstandyng is suffysaunce of couenable commodityes without anye maner nede, whether it be blysse of aungelles or els thylke, that grace first in paradyse suffered Adam to haue. For although aungelles blysse be more than Adams was in Paradyse, yet may it not be denyed, that Adam in Paradyse ne hadde suffysaunce of blysse, for ryght as great herte is without al maner of coldnesse, and yet maye an other herte more heate haue, ryght so nothyng defrnded Adā in Paradyse to bene blessed, without al maner nede. Although aungels blysse be moche more, forsothe it foloweth not lusse than an other to haue therefore hym nedeth, but for to wante a thynge whiche that behoueth to ben had, that may nede ben cleped, and that was not in Adam at the fyrst gynnynge. God and the Margaryte, weten what I meane.

Forsothe where as is nede, there is wretchednesse, good withoute cause to fornegoinge made not resonable creature wretched, for hym to vnderstand and loue had he fyrst maked. God made therfore mā blysfed without al maner indigēce, togyther and at ones toke reasonable creature blysse, and wyll of blyssednesse and wyl of rightfulnesse, which is ryghtfulnesse it selfe, and lybertye of arbitrement, that is free wyl, with which thilke ryghtfulnesse may he kepe and lese. So and in that wyse ordayned thylke two, that wyl which that instrument is cleped, and here to forne mencyon is maked, shoulde vse thylke ryghtfulnesse by teachynge of hys soule to good maner of gouernaunce, in thought and in wordes, and that it shulde vse the blysse in obedyent maner withouten any incommoditie. Blysse forsothe into mannes prokyte, and ryghtwysnesse into his worshyppe god delyuered at ones: but ryghtfulnes so was yeuen, that man myght it lese, whiche yf he not losse hadde not, but continuallye haue it

kept

kepte, he shulde haue deserued the auannce-
ment into the felowshyp of angels, in which
thinge yf he that loste, neuer by hym selfe for
warde shuld he it mowe ayenward recouer:
and as well the blysse that he was in, as an-
geis blysse that to him wardes was coming
shulde be nome at ones, & he depriued of thē
both. And thus fyl man vnto likenesse of vn-
reasonable beestes, and with hem to corrup-
cyon and vnlustye appetytes was he vnder,
throwen, but yet wyl of blysse dwelleth, that
by indigence of goodes whiche that he loste
through great wretchednesse, by ryght shuld
he bene punysched. And thus for he weyued,
ryghtfulnes, lost hath he hys blysse: but faile
of hys desyre in his owne comoditie may he
not, and were comodities to hys resonable
nature whych he hath lost may he not haue.
To false lustes, which ben bestial appetites
he is turned: foly of vnconning hath him be-
gyled, in wening that thylke bene the como-
dities that owen to bene desyred. This affec
tion of wyll by libertie of arbitriment is en-
duced to wylne thys thing that he shuld not
and so is wyl not maked yuyll but vnryght-
ful, by absence of rightfulnesse, whych thing
by reason euer shulde he haue. And freenesse
of arbitriment maye he not wylne, whan he
it not haueth, for whyle he it hadde, thylke
halpe it not to kepe: so ý wythout grace may
it not bene recouered. Wyll of cōmoditie, in
as much as vnryghtful it is maked, by wyl-
lynge of yuell lustes, wyllynge of goodnesse
may he not wylne: for wyll of instrument to
affection of wyl is thralled, sithen that other
thyng maye it not wylne, for wyll of instru-
ment to affection desyreth, and yet bene both
they wyl cleped: for ý instrumēt woll, throuz
affection it wylneth, and affection desyreth
thylke thynge wherto instrumente hym le-
deth. And so frewil to vnlusty affectiō ful ser
uaunt is maked, for vnryghtfulnesse may he
not releue, & wythout ryghtfulnes full fredō
may it neuer haue. For kyndly libertie of ar-
bytriment without it, beyne and ydell is for
sothe. wherfore yet I saye, as often haue I
sayd the same, whan instrument of wyl lost
hath rightfulnesse, in no maner but by grace
may he ayen returne ryghtfulnesse to wylne
For sythen nothyng but ryghtfulnesse alone
shulde he wylne, what ý euer he wylneth wō
oute ryghtfulnesse, vnryghtfullye he it wyl-
neth. These than vnryghtfull appetites and
vnthryfty lustes which the flyes desyreth, in
as mokell as they bene in kynde, bene they
not bad, but they ben vnryghtful and badde
for they ben in resonable creature, where as
they beyng in no waye shulde bene suffred.
In vnreasonable beastes neyther bene they
yuell ne vnryghtfull, for there is theyr kynde
beyng.

Nowen maye it wel bene
nowe, of these thynges to
forne declared, that man
hathe not alwaye thylke
ryghtfulnesse, whyche by
dutie of ryghte euermore
hauen he shulde, & by no
way by him selfe may he get ne kepe, and af-
ter he it hath if he it lese, recouer shal he it ne-
uer, without especial grace: wherfore the co
mune sētence of the people in opinion, ý euer
ry thing after destiny is ruled, false and wic-
ked is to bileue: For though predestinacyon
be as wel of good as of badde, sithen that it
is sayde God hadnest made, whych he neuer
ne wrought, but for he suffreth hem to be ma
ked, as that he hardeth whā he naught mis-
sayth, or ledde into temptation whan he not
delyuereth, wherfore it is none incōuenient
yf in that maner be sayd, God to forne haue
destenyed bothe badde, & her badde werkes
whan hem ne theyr yuel dedes neyther amē-
deth, ne therto hem grace leueth. But speci-
allyche predestinacion of goodnesse alone, is
sayde by these great clerkes, for in him God
doth that they bene, & that in goodnesse they
werchen. But the negatyfe herof in badnesse
is holdē, as the lady of loue hath me lerned,
who so aryght in thys boke loketh. And vt-
terly it is to weten, that predestinacyon pro-
perly in God maye not bene demed, no more
than beforne wetinge. For in the chapiter of
gods beforne wetynge, as loue me reherled,
al these maters apertly may ben foundē. All
thinges to god ben now togither and in pre-
sence during. Trewly presence & predestina-
cyon in nothyng disacorden, wherfore as I
was lerned how gods beforewetyng & free
choyce of wyll mowe stonden togyther, me
thinketh the same reason me leadeth, that de
stenye and frewyll accorden, so that neyther
of hem both to other in nothing contrarieth

And resonablelyche maye it not ben demed, as often as any thynge fayleth frewyl werthyng, as yf a man another man wrongfully anoyeth, wherfore he him sleyth, that it be constrayned to that ende, as mokel folke cryeth and sayeth: Lo, as it was destenyed of God to forne knowe, so it is thorowe necessytie fall, and otherwise myght it not betyde Trewly neyther he ÿ the wronge wroughte ne he that hym selfe venged, none of thylke thynges thorowe necessitie wrought: for yf that wyth freewyll there had it not wylled, neyther had wrought that he perfourmed: & so vtterly grace ÿ frewyll in goodnesse bryngeth and kepeth, and fro badnesse it turneth, in all thynge moost thanke deserueth. Thys grace maketh sētēce in vertue to abide, wherfore in body and in soule in full plentie of coryng after theyr good deseruyng in the euerlastyng ioy, after the daye of dome shul they endelesse dwell, and they shul bene learned in that kyngdome wyth so mokel affect of loue & of grace, that the leste ioy shall of the greatest in glorye reioyce & bene gladded, as if he the same ioye had. What wonder syth God is the greatest loue, and ÿ ne ought to loke thynges wyth resonnynge to proue, and so is instrumēt of wyll, wyll: and yet varyeth he from effecte and vsynge both. Affection of wyll also for wyll is cleped, but it varyeth frō instrument in thys maner wyse, by that name, lyche whan it commeth into minde anone ryght it is in wyllyng desyred, and the negatyfe therof with wyllyng nyl not acord this is closed in hart, thoughe vsage and instrument slepe. This slepeth whā instrumēt and vs waken: and of suche maner affection trewly some man hath more and some man lesse. Certes trew louers wenen euer therof to lytle to haue. False louers in lytle wenen haue ryght mokel: Lo instrument of wyl in false and trewe both euen liche is proporcianed, but affection is more in some place than in some, bycause of the goodnesse that folowetb, and that I thynke herafter to declare. Use of thys instrument is wyl, but it taketh hys name whan wylned thyng is in doyng. but vtterly grace to catche in thy blysse, desired to ben rewarded. Thou must haue than affection of wyl at the ful, and vse whan hys tyme asketh wisely to ben gouerued. Sothly my disciple wythout feruente affection of wyll may no man bene saued: thys affection of good seruyce in good loue, maye not bene groūded, without feruent desire to the thing in wyll coueyted. But he that neuer retcheth to haue or not to haue, affection of wyll in ÿ hath no restyng place. Why: for whan thyng cometh to mynde, and it be not taken in hede to comyn or not come, therfore in that place affection fayleth: and for thylke affection is so lytle, throwe which in goodnesse he shulde come to his grace, the lytelnesse wyl not sufere to auaile by no way in to his helpes: Certes grace & reason thylke affection foloweth Thys affection withe reason knytte, dureth in euerycbe trewe herte, and euermore is encreasyng, no ferdnesse, no strength maye it remoue whyle truthe in hert abydeth. Sothly whan falsheed gynneth entre, truth draweth away, grace and ioye both: but than thilke falsheed that trouth hath thus voyded, hath vnknyt the bonde of vnderstondyng reason, bytwene wyl and the hert. And who so that bonde vndoth, and vnknytteth wyl to be in other purpose thā to ÿ first accorde, knitteth hym wyth cōtrary of reason, and that is vnreason. Lo, than wyl and vnreason bringeth a man from the blysse of grace, whych thing of pure kynde, euery man ought to shonne & to eschewe, & to the knot of wyll and reason conforme. Me thynketh (q̄ she) by thy studient lokes, thou wenest in these woordes me to contraryen, from other sayenges here to forne in other place, as whā thou were somtyme in affection of wyl, to thynges ÿ nowe han brought the in disease, whiche I haue ÿ counsayled to voyde, and thyne herte discouer, and there I made thy wyl to ben chaunged, whyche nowe thou wenest I argue to wythholde and to kepe. Shortly I say that reuers in these woordes may not ben founde: for thoughe dronkennesse be forboden, men shul not alway ben drinklesse. I trowe right for thou thy wil out of reasō shuld not turne thy wyll in one reason shulde not vnbyde, I saye thy wyll in thy fyrst purpose wyth vnreason was closed: Construewe forthe of the remenante what the good lyketh. Trewly that wyll & reason shulde be knitte togyther was fre wyl of reasō, after tyme thyne hert is assentaunt to them both, thou myghte not chaunge, but yf thou from rule of reason varye, in whyche varyaunce to come to thylke

blysse

blysse desyred, cōtrariously thou wercheſt: & no thyng may knowe wyl & reason but loue alone. Than yf thou voyd loue, than weueſt the bonde that knytteth, and so nedes or els ryght lyghtly, ý other gone a sondre: wherfore thou seest apertly that loue holdeth this knot, & amaystreth hem to be bounde. These thynges, as a ryngе in circuite of wrethe ben knytte in thy soule wythout departynge. A let be, let be (q I) it nedeth not of this no rehersayle to make, my soule is yet in parfyte blysse, in thynkynge of that knotte.

Now trewly lady I haue my groūde well vnderstand, but what thyng is ý thylke spire that in to a tree shulde were: expowne me ý thynge, what ye therof meane. That shall I (q she) blithly, & take good hede to the wordes I the rede. Cōtinuaunce in thy good seruice, by longe processe of time in ful hope abiding, wythout any chaung to wylne in thyne hert: this is the spire, whych yf it be wel kepte & gouerned, shall so hugely spryng, tyl the fruite of grace is plentuously out sprongen: for although thy wyl be good yet may not therfore thilke blisse desyred hastely on the discendē, it must abyde hys seasonable tyme. And so by processe of growyng, wyth thy good traueyle, it shall in to more & more were, tyll it be founde so myghty, that windes of yuel spech, ne of stormes of enuy, make not the traueyle ouerthrow, ne frostes of mystruste, ne hayles of ielousy ryght lytle myght haue in harmyng of suche sprynges. Euery younge setlynge lyghtly wyth smale stormes is a peyred, but whan it is woxen sondele in gretnesse, than han great blastes and wethers but lytle myght, any disauaun tage to them for to werch. Mine owne soue rayne lady (q I) and welth of myne herte, & it were lykynge vnto your noble grace, therthrouz not to be displeased, I suppose ye erren, now ye makē ielousy enuy, & disturbour to hem that ben your seruauntes. I haue lerned ofte to forne this tyme, that in euery louers hert, greate plentie of ielousyes greues ben sowe, wherfore me thinketh ye ne ought in no maner accompte, thylke thyng among these other welked wyners and venomous serpentes, as enuy, mistrust, and yuel speche

O foole (q she) mistrust with foly with yuel wyl medled, engendreth that welked padde. Trewly yf they were distroyed, ielousye vndone were for euer, & yet some maner of ielousy I wote wel is euer redy in all the hertes of my trew seruauntes, as thus: to be ielous ouer hym selfe, leste he be cause of hys owne disease. Thys ielousy in full thoughte euer shulde be kepte for ferdnesse to lese hys loue by miskeping, thorow his owne doyng in leudenesse, or els thus: Lest she that thou seruest so feruently is beset there her better lyketh, that of al thy good seruyce she compteth not a cresse. These ielousyes in herte for acceptable qualities ben demed: these oughten euery trew louer by kindly, euermore hauen in his minde, tyll fully the grace & blysse of my seruice be on hym discended at wyll. And he that than ielousy catcheth, or els by wenyng of hys owne folysh wylfulnesse mistrusteth, truely wyth fantasy of venyme, he is foule begyled. Yuel wyll hathe grounded thylke mater of sorowe in hys leude soule, & yet not for thā to euery wight shulde me not truste, ne euery wyghte fully misbeleue, the meane of these thynges owen to be vsed. Sothly wythouten causefull euidence, mystruste in ielousye shulde not be wened in no wyse person cōmenly, such leude wickednes shulde me not fynde. He that is wyse & with yuell wyll not be acomered, can abyde well hys tyme, tyl grace & blysse of his seruice folowyng, haue hym so mokel eased, as his abyding to forehande hath him diseased. Certes lady (q I tho) of no thyng me wondreth sythen thylke blysse so precious is and kyndly good, & wel is and worthy in kynde, whā it is medled with loue & reasō, as ye to forne haue declared. Why, anone as hye one is sprongе, why springeth not the other and anone as the one cometh, why receyueth not the other? For euery thyng that is out of his kyndly place, by full appetite, euer commeth thytherwarde kyndly to draw, & his kyndly being therto him cōstrayneth. And the kindly stede of this blysse, is in suche wyl medled to vnbyde, & nedes in that it shulde haue hys kyndly beyng. wherfore me thynketh anone as that wyll to be shewed & kydde hym profreth, thylke blysse shulde him hye thylke wil to receyue, or els kynde of goodnesse worchē not in hem as they shulde. Lo, be the sunne

neuer

neuer so ferre, euer it hathe hys kynde werching in erth: great weyght on hye onloft caryed, stynteth neuer tyll it come to thys restyng place. waters to the see ward euer ben they drawyng, thynge that is lyght blythly wyl not synke, but euer ascendeth & bpward draweth. Thus kynde in euery thynge hys kyndely course, & hys beyng place sheweth: wherfore be kynde on thys good wyl, anone as it were sprynge, this blysse shulde theron discend, her kynde wolde they dwelleden togyther, & so haue ye sayd your selfe. Certes (q̃ she) thyne herte sytteth wonder sore this blysse for to haue, thyne hert is sore agreued that it taryeth so longe, and yf thou durstest, as me thynketh by thyne wordes, this blysse woldest thou blame. But yet I saye, thylke blysse is kyndly good, and hys kyndly place in that wyl to vnbyde. Neuer the later, their cõmyng togyther after kyndes ordynaunce not sodayuly may betyde, it must abide time as kynde yeueth hym leaue for yf a man, as thys wyl medled gonne hym shew, & thylke blysse in hast folowed, so lyghtly commyng shulde lyghtlye cause goynge, longe tyme of thurstyng, causeth drynke to be the more delycious whan it is atasted. Howe is it (q̃ I thã) that so many blysses se I al day at mine eye, in the fyrst moment of a syght with such wyl accorde. Yee, and yet other whyle wyth wyll assenteth, synguleryly by hym selfe there reason fayleth, traueyle was none, seruyce had no tyme. Thys is a queynt mauer thing howe suche doing cometh aboute. O (q̃ she) that is thus, the earth kyndely after seasons & tymes of the yere, bryngeth forth innumerable herbes and trees both profytable and other, but such as men myght leaue, though they were naught in norysshynge to mannes kynde seruen, or els such as turnen soone vnto mennes confusion in ease that therof they atast comen forthe out of the earthe by theyr owne kinde, wythouten any mannes cure or any busynesse in traueyle: and thylke herbes that to mennes lyuelode necessaryly seruen, wythout whyche goodlye in thys lyfe creatures mowen not enduren, and mooste bene nourysshen to mankinde, wythout great traueyle, great tylth, and longe abydyng tyme, comen not out of the earth, and it with seede to forne ordeyned such herbes to make sprig and forth growe. Ryght so the perfite blisse, that we haue in meanyng of duryng time to abyde maye not come so lyghtlye, but wyth great traueyle and ryght besy tylth, and yet good seed to be sowe, for ofte the croppe fayleth of bad seed, be it neuer so wel traueyled. And thylke blysse thou spoke of so lyghtly in cõming, truely is not necessary nor abiding: and but it the better be stamped, and the venomous ieuse out wrongen, it is likely to enpoysonen all tho that therof tasten. Certes ryght bytter bene the herbes ý shewen fyrste the yere of her owne kynde. well the more is the harueſt that yeldeth many graynes, than longe & sore it hath ben traueiled. what woldest thou demẽ if a mã wold yeue thre quarters of nobles of gold, that were a precious gyfte? Yee certes (q̃ I). And what (q̃ she) thre quarters full of peerles? Certes (q̃ I) ý were a rych gift. And what (q̃ she) of as mokel azure? (Quod I) a precious gyfte at ful. were not (q̃ she) a noble gyfte of all these at ones? In good fayth (q̃ I) for wantynge of englysh namynge of so noble a worde, I can not for preciousnesse yeue it a name. Ryghtfully (q̃ she) haste thou demed, and yet loue knytte in vertue, passeth al the golde in thys erth. Good wil accordant to reason, with no maner properte maye be countreuayled, all the azure in the worlde is not to accompt in respecte of reason, loue that wyth good wyll & reason accordeth, wyth no earthly rychesse may not ben amenden. Thys yefte halt thou yeuen I know it my self and thy Magaryte thilke gyft hath receiued, in the which thing to reward she hath her selfe bounde. But thy gyfte as I sayd, by no maner rychesse maye be amended, wherfore wyth thynge ý maye not be amended, thou shalt of thy margarytes rightwisenesse be rewardede. Right suffred yet neuer but euery good dede sõtime to be yolde. Al wold thy Margarite with no reward the quite. Ryght that neuer more dieth thy mede in meryte woll purueyen. Certes such sodaine blysse as thou first nẽpnest, ryght wyl hem reward as the well is worthy, and though at thyne eye it semeth the reward ý desert to passe, right can after sende such bytternes euely it to reward: so ý sodayne blisse by alwaies of reason in great goodnes may not ben accompted, but blisse long, both long it abydeth, & endlesse it wol last. Se why thy wyl is endelesse, for if thou louedest euer, thy

wyll

wyll is euer there tabyde and neuer more to chaunge: euenhed of rewarde must ben done by ryght, than muste nedes thy grace & thys blisse endeles in ioy to vnbide. Euēlich diseſe asketh euēlych ioy, which hastely thou shalt haue. A(q I)it suffiseth not thā a long good wyll, be it neuer so wel with reason medled, but yf it be in good seruice longe trauayled. And so throuz seruice shul men come to ý ioy and this me thynketh shulde be the wexing tree of whiche ye first meued.

VEry trouth (q she) hast thou now cō ceyued of these thinges in thyne hert hastely shalt thou be able very ioye & parfite blysse to receyue. And nowe I wote wel thou desyrest to know ý maner of brauches, that out of the tree shulde spring. Ther of lady (q I) hertely I you pray: for thā leue I woll, that right soone after I shall ataste of the fruite that I so longe haue desyred.

Thou haste herde (quod she) in what wyse this tree to forne this haue I declared, as in grounde and in stocke of wexinge. Firste the grounde shuld be thy frewyl ful in thine hert & the stocke (as I said) shuld be continuaūce in good seruice, by longe time in traueyle, tyl it were in greatnesse right wel woxen. And whan this tree such greatnesse hath caught, as I haue reherſed: the braunches than that the frute shulde forth bring, spech must they be nedes in voice of prayer, in complayning wise vsed. Out alas (q I tho) he is sorouful ly wounded that hydeth his speche and spareth his complayntes to make, what shall I speke ý care: but payne euen lyke to hell, sore hath me assayled, & so ferforthe in payne me throngе, that I leue my tree is seer, & neuer shal it frute forth bringe. Certes he is greatly eased, that dare his prpuy mone discouer to a trewe felowe, that cōninge hath & myzt wherthrough his playnt in any thyng maye be amēded. And mokel more is he ioyed that with herte of hardynesse dare complayne to his Lady, what cares ý he suffreth, by hope of mercy with grace to be auanced. Trewly I saye for me, syth I came this Margaryte to serue, durst I neuer me discouer of no maner diseaſe, and wel the later hathe myne hert hardied such thinges to done, for ý gret bounties & worthy refrechmentes that she of her grace goodly without any deserte on my halue ofte hath me rekened, & nere her goodnesse the more wyth grace and wyth mercy medled, whiche passen al desertes, traueyls, and seruinges, that I in any degree mighte endyte, I wolde wene I shulde be wythout recouer, in gettynge of thys blysse for euer.

Thus haue I stylled my diseaſe, thus haue I couered my care, that I brenne in sorowfull anoy, as gledes and coles wasten a fyre vnder deed ashen. Well the hoter is the fyre, that wyth ashen it is ouerleyn: ryght longe this wo haue I suffred. Lo (q Loue) howe thou farest: me thynketh ý palasy yuel hathe acomered thy wittes, as faste as thou hyest forwarde, anone sodaynly backwarde thou mouest: Shall not yet al thy leudnesse out of thy braynes: dull bene thy skylfull vnderstādynges, thy wyll hath thy wyt so a maystred. woste thou not well (q she) but euerye tree in hys sesonable tyme of burionynge shewe his blomes fro win, in sygne of what frute shulde out of him sprynge, els the frute for ý yere men halte delyuered, be ý grounde neuer so good. And thouz the stock be mighty at the full, and the braunches seer and no burions shewe, farwell the gadiner he may pipe w̄ an yue leafe his frute is failed. wherfore thy braunches must burionen in presēce of thy Lady, yf thou desyre any fruite of thy ladyes grace, but beware of thy lyke, ý thou no wodelaye vse, as in askynge of thynges that stretchen in to shame, for than myghte thou not spede by no waye that I can espy. Uertue woll not suffre vyllanye out of hym selfe to sprynge. Thy woordes maye not be queynt ne of subtell maner vnderstandynge. Free wytted people supposen in suche poesyes to be begyled, in open vnderstaudynge muste euery worde be vsed. Voyce wythout clere vnderstandynge of sentence sayeth Aristotle, ryght naught printeth in herte. Thy wordes than to a byde in herte, & clene in ful sentence of trew meaning plattly must thou shewe & euer be obedient, her hestes and her wyls to perfourme, and be thou set in such a wytte to wete by a loke euer more what she meaneth. And he that lyste not to speke, but stilly his diseaſe suffre: what wōder is it tho he come neuer to his blisse: who ý traueileth vnwyst, & coueyteth thing vnknowe, vnwetinge he shal be quyted, and wyth vnknowe thynge rewarded. Good Lady (q I than) it hath

hath oft ben sene, that wethers & stormes so hugely haue fal in burionynge tyme, and by parte duresse han beaten of the sprynges so clene, wherthroughe the fruite of thylke yere hath fayled. It is a great grace whan burions hã good wethers, their frutes forth to brynge. Alas than after such stormes howe harde is it to auoyde, tyll efte wedrynge and yeres han maked her circute cours al about, er any fruite be able to be tasted he is shente for shame, ỳ foule is rebuked of hys speche. He that is in fyre brenning sore smarteth for disease. Him thynketh ful longe er the water come, that shulde the fyre quenche. Whyle men gone after a leche, the body is buryed. Lo howe semely this frute wexeth, me thinketh that of tho frutes maye no man atasse, for pure bytternesse in sauour. In thys wyse bothe frute and the tree wasten away togyther, though mokel besy occupacion haue be spent to brynge it so ferforth, that it was able to spring. A lyte speche hath maked that al thys labour is in ydel. I not (q̃ she) wherof it serueth thy question to assoyle, me thinketh the nowe duller in wittes, than whã I with the first mette, although a mã be leude cõmenly for a foole he is not demen, but if he no good wol lerne, sottes & fooles let lightly out of mynd, ỳ good that men teacheth hem. I sayde therfore thy stocke muste be stronge and in greatnesse well herted, the tree is full feble that at the fyrste dente faileth: and although frute faileth one yere or two, yet shal suche a seasen come one tyme or other, that shall brynge out frute that is nothynge preterit ne passed there is nothyng future ne cõmyng, but all thinges togyther in that place bene present euerlastynge wythout any meuyng, wherfore to God al thing is as now: and thoughe a thynge be nat in kyndely nature of thinges as yet, and yf it shuld be here after, yet euermore we shulde say God it maketh be time present, and nowe for no future ne preterit in hym maye be founde. wherfore hys wetynge and hys before wetynge, is al one in vnderstandyng. Thã yf wetyng & before wetyng of God putteth in necessite to al thinges whiche he wotte or before wotte ne thyng after eternitie, or els after any time he woll or dothe of libertie but all of necessitie, which thing if thou wene it be ayenst reason not thorowe necessitie to be or not to be, all thynge that God wot or before wot, to be or not to be, & yet nothyng defendeth any thing to be wyst or to be before wyst of hym in our wylles or oure doinges to be done, or els cõmynge to be fore fre arbitriment. whan thou hast these declarations wel vnderstand, thã shalt thou fynde it resonable at proue, & that many thinges be not thorowe necessitie, but thorowe libertie of wyll, saue necessitie of fre wyl, as I to forne sayd: & as me thynketh al vtterly declared. Me thynketh lady (q̃ I) so I shulde you not displease, & euermore your reuerence to kepe, that these thynges cõtrarien in any vnderstanding, for ye sayne somtyme is thorowe libertie of wyll & also thorow necessitie. Of this haue I yet no sauour without better declaration. what wõder (q̃ she) is there in these thynges, sythen al daye thou shalte se at thyne eye, in many thynges receyuen in hem selfe reuers: thorow diuers reasons, as thus. I praye the (q̃ she) whych thinges bene more reuers than commen and gone: For yf I bydde the come to me, & thou come, after whan I bydde the go and thou go, thou reuersest fro thy first commynge. That is soth (q̃ I) & yet (q̃ she) in thy fyrste alone by diuers reason was full reuersynge to vnderstande. As howe (q̃ I) That shall I shewe the (q̃ she) by ensample of thynges that haue kyndely mouynge. Is there anye thinge that meueth more kyndely than doth the heuens eye whyche I clepe the sunne. Sothly (q̃ I) me semeth it moost kyndly to moue. Thou sayest soth (q̃ she). Thã if thou loke to the sunne, in what parte he be vnder heuen, euermore he heigheth him in mouing fro thylke place, and heygheth meuynge towarde thylke same place, to thylke place frõ whyche he goth he heigheth commyng, and wythout any cealynge to that place he neigheth frõ which he is chaunged & withdraw. But now in these thynges after diuersitie of reason, reuers in one thyng may be sey without repugnaunce. wherfore in the same wise wythout anye repugnaunce by my reasons to fore maked, al is one to beleue, somthinge to be thorowe necessitie commynge, for it is cõminge, and yet wyth no necessitie cõstrayned to be commyng, but wyth necessitie that cometh out of fre wyll, as I haue sayd. Tho lyst me a lytle to speke, & gan stynt my penne of my writyng, & sayd in this wyse. Trewly

lady

lady as me thinketh, I can allege authorites great ý contrary your sayenges. Job sayeth of mannes person, thou hast put hys terme, whych thou myght not passe. Then saye I that no man may shorte ne length the day or dayned of hys doyng, altho somtyme to vs it semeth some man to do a thynge of free wyl, wherthorow hys deth he henteth. Naye forsoth (q̃ she) it is nothynge ayenst my sayenge for god is not begyled, ne he seeth nothynge whether it shal come of lyberte or els of necessite, yet it is said to be ordeyned at god immouable, which at mã or it be done may be chaũged. Such thyng also is that Paule the apostel sayth of hem that tofore were purposed to be sayntes, as thus, whych that god before wyst, & hath predestined, conformes of ymages of hys sonne, that he shulde be the fyrste begotten, that is to say, here amonges many brethrẽ, & whom he hath predestyned, hem he hath cleped, and whõ he hath cleped, hem he hath iustifyed, & whom he hath iustified, hem he hath magnifyed. This purpose after whiche they ben cleped sayntes or holy in ý euerlastyng presẽt, wheris neither tyme passed ne tyme cõmynge, but euer it is only presente, & nowe as mokel a momẽt as seuen thousande wynter, & so ayenwarde wythouten any meuyng is nothynge lych temporel presence, for thige ý there is euer present. Yet amõges you mẽ er it be in your presence it is mouable tho rowe lyberte of arbytremẽt. And rygh t as in the euerlastyng present no maner thing was ne shalbe, but only is, & nowe here in your tẽporel tyme, somthyng was & is, & shalbe, but mouynge stoundes, & in thys is no maner repugnaunce. Right so in the euerlastynge presence nothynge may be chaũged: & in your tẽporel tyme other while it is proued mouable by lyberte of wil or it be do, wythoutẽ any incõuenience therof to folowe. In your tẽporel tyme is no such presence as in the tother, for your present is done, when passed & to come gynnẽ entre, whych tymes here amõges you euerych easely foloweth other, but ý presence euerlastyng dureth in onehed, wythout any ymaginable chaũgyng, & euer is present and nowe. Truely the course of the planetes & ouerwhelmynges of the sonne in dayes & nightes, with a new gynnyng of his circute after it is ended, that is to sayne, one yere to folow another. These maken your trãsitory tymes wyth chaũgyng of lyues & mutation of people. But right as your tẽporel presence conueyeth euery place, & al thinges in euery of your tymes be cõteyned, & as now both sey & wyst to goddes very knowynge. Then (q̃ I) me wõdreth why Paule spake these wordes, by voice of significatiõ in tyme passed, that god his saites before wyst, hath predestined, hath cleped, hath iustifyed, & hath magnifyed: Ye thynketh he shulde haue sayde tho wordes in tyme present, & that had be more accordaunt to the euerlastynge present, thẽ to haue spoke in preterit voice of passed vnderstandynge.

O (q̃ Loue) by these wordes I se well thou hast lytel vnderstãdyng of ý euerlastyng presence, or els of my before spoken wordes, for neuer a thing of tho thou hast nẽpned was to fore other or after other, but all at ones euenlych at ý god bẽ, & al together in ý euerlastig present be nowe to vnderstãdyng, the eternal presence, as I sayd, hath enclose together in one, al tymes, in which close & one al thinges ý ben in dyuers tymes & in dyuers places tẽporel wythout posteriorite or priorite be closed therin perpetuel now, & maked to dwel in present sight. But there thou sayest ý Paule shulde haue spoke thilke forsaid sentẽce by tyme present, & that most shulde haue ben accordaunt to the euerlastyng presence, why gabbest thou to thy wordes? Sothly I say Paul moued ý wordes by significatiõ of tyme passed, to shewe fully ý thylke wordes were not put for tẽporel signification, for al thilk tyme were not thilk sentẽce tẽporallich borne whiche that Paule pronounced god haue tofore knowe, & haue cleped then magnifyed, wherthorow it may wel be know that Paule vsed tho wordes of passed significaciõ, for nede & lacke of a word in mãnes bodely spech, betokenyng the euerlastynge presence. And therfore worde is moste semelyche in lykenesse to euerlastynge presence, he toke his sentẽce for thynges that here before ben passed, vtterly be immouable, ylyke to ý euerlasting presẽce. As thylke that ben there neuer mowe not be present, so thinges of time passed ne mowe in no wyse not bẽ passed: but al thinges in your temporal presence that passen in a lytel while shullen ben not present. So then in that it is more similitude to the euerlastyng presence, sygnifycacion of tyme passed, then of tyme temporal present, & so more in accordaunce.

In this maner what thyng of these that ben don thorow fre arbytremēt, or els as necessary, holy wrytte pronoūceth, after eternite he speketh, in which presence is euerlasting soth and nothyng but sothe immouable, not after tyme, in which nought alway ben your wylles & your acts, & right as whyle they be nat, it is not nedeful hem to be: so oft it is not nedfull that somtyme they shulde be. As how (q I) for yet must I be lerned by some ensample Of loue (quod she) woll I nowe ensample make, sythen I know the heed knotte in that yelke. Lo, somtyme thou wrytest no arte, ne arte then in no wyll to wryte. And ryght as whyle thou wrytest not, or els wol not write it is not nedeful the to wryte, or els wylne to wryte. And for to make ý knowe vtterly, that thynges ben otherwyse in ý euerlastyng presence, thē in temporall tyme: se now my good chylde, for somthynge is in the euerlastynge presence, then in temporel tyme, it was not in eternite tyme, in eterne presence shal it not be Then no reason defēdeth, that somthyng ne maye be in tyme temporall mouynge, that in eterne is immouable. Forsothe it is nomore contrary ne reuers for to be mouable in tyme temporal, and mouable in eternite, then not to be in any tyme, and to be alway in eternite and haue to be or els to come in tyme temporel, & not haue be ne nought cōmyng to be in eternite. Yet neuer the later, I saye not somthynge to be neuer in tyme tēporel, that euer is eternite, but al onely in somtyme not to be. For I saye not thy loue to morne in no tyme to be, but to day alone I deny ne it to be, and yet neuer the later it is alwaye in eternite.

Also (quod I) it semeth to me that cōmyng thing or els passed here in your tēporal tyme to be, in eternite euer nowe & presente oweth not to be demed, and yet foloweth nat thylke thynge, that was or els shalbe, in no maner therto ben passed, or els cōmyng: then vtterly shul we deny, for there wythout ceasyng, it is in hys present maner. O (quod she) myne own disciple, now gynnest thou able to haue the name of my seruaunt. Thy wytte is clered, away is now errour of cloude in vnconnyng, awaye is blyndnesse of loue, awaye is thoughtfull study, of medlyng maners hastly shalte thou entre into the ioye of me, that am thyne owne maystres. Thou haste (quod she) in a fewe wordes, wel and clerely concluded mokel of my mater. And ryght as ther is no reuers ne contrariousnesse in tho thynges, ryght so wythoutē any repugnaūce, it is sayd somthyng to be mouable in tyme temporel, & for it be, that in eternite dwelleth immouable not a fore it be or after that it is, but wythout cessyng, for right nought is there after tyme, that same is there euerlastynge, that tēporallyche somtyme nys, and tofore it be it maye not be, as I haue sayd. Nowe sothlye (q I) this haue I wel vnderstāde, so that nowe me thynketh that prescience of god and fre arbytremēt wythouten any repugnaūce acorden, and ý maketh the strength of eternite, which encloseth by presence duryng al tymes, and al thynges that ben, han ben, & shull ben in any tyme. I wolde nowe (q I) a lytel vnderstād sythen that all thyng thus before wot, whether thylke wetynge be of tho thinges, or els thylke thynges ben to ben of goddes wetyng and so of god nothynge is: and yf euery thing be thorowe goddes wetynge, and therof take hys beynge, then shuld god be maker and author of badde werkes, & so he shuld not rightfully punyche yuell doynges of mankynde. (Quod Loue) I shal tel the, thys lesson to lerne myne owne true seruaūt, the noble philosophicall poete, in Englyche, whyche euermore hym beseyeth and trauayleth ryght sore my name to encrese, wherfore al that wyllen me good, owe to do him worship & reuerence both, truely his better ne his pere in schole of my rules coude I neuer fynde: He (q she) in a treatyse ý he made of my seruaūt Troylus, hath this mater touched, and at the full thys questyon assoyled. Certaynly hys noble sayenges can I not amende: In goodnes of gē tyll manlyche speche, wythout any maner of nycite of starieres ymaginacion in wytte and in good reason of sentence he passeth al other makers. In ý boke of Troylus, the answere to thy questyon mayst: thou lerne, neuer the later yet may lyghtly thyne vnderstandynge somdele ben lerned, if thou haue knowyng of these to fornsayd thiges, with that thou haue vnderstandynge of two the last chapiters of thys seconde boke, ý is to say, good to be somthyng, and bad to want al maner beynge, for badde is nothynge els but absence of good, & that god in good, maketh that good dedes be good, in yuel he maketh ý they ben but nauzt that they ben bad: for to nothyng is badnesse

to be

to be. I haue (q I tho) ynough knowig therī, me nedeth of other thinges to here, ý is to say how I shall come to my blysse so lōge desired

N thys mater tofore declared (q loue) I haue well shewed, ý euery man hath fre arbytremēt of thynges in hys power to do or vndo what hym lyketh. Out of thys grounde must come the spire, that by processe of tyme shall in greatnesse sprede, to haue braunches & blosmes of waryng frute in grace, of whych the caste and the sauoure is endlesse blysse in ioy euer to onbyde. Now lady (q I) that tree to set faine wold I lerne So thou shalt (q she) er thou departe hence. The fyrst thynge thou must set thy werke on grounde syker and good, accordaunte to thy spryngs. For yf ÿ desyre grapes, thou goest not to the hasell, ne for to fetchen roses, thou sekest not on okes: and yf thou shalt haue hony soukles, thou leauest the frute of the soure docke. Wherfore yf thou desyre this blysse in parfyte ioye, thou must set thy purpose there vertue foloweth, and not to loke after the bodely goodes, as I sayd when thou were wryting in thy seconde booke. And for thou hast set thy selfe in so noble a place, and vtterly lowed in thyne herte the mysgoyng of thy fyrst purpose, thys secteles is the esyer to spryngs, and the more lyghter thy soule in grace to be blysed. And trewly thy desyre, that is to saye thy wyll, algates mote ben stedfaste in thys mater wythout any chaungynge, for yf it be stedfast, no man maye it voyde. Yes parde (q I) my wyll maye ben turned by frendes, and dyscase of manace & thretnyng in lesynge of my lyfe and of my lymmes, & in many other wyse, that nowe cometh not to mynde. And also it mote ofte ben out of thought, for no remembraunce may holde one thynge continually in herte, be it neuer so lusty desyred.

Nowe se (q she) how thy wyl shal folowe thy frewyl to be groūded cōtinuelly to abyde. It is thy fre wil that thou louest and hast loued, and yet shal louē thys Margaryte perle, and in thy wyl thou thinkest to holde it. Thē is thy wyl knyt in loue, not to chaūge for no newe lust besyde: thys wyll teacheth thyne hert frō al maner varyeng. But thē although thou be thretened in deth or els in otherwyse yet is it in thyne arbitremēt to chose, thy loue to voyde or els to holde: And thylke arbytrement is in a maner a iugement bytwene desyre and thy herte. And yf thou deme to loue thy good wyl fayleth, then arte thou worthy no blysse that good wyl shulde deserue: and if thou chose contynuaunce in thy good seruyce then thy good wyll abydeth, nedes blysse folowig of thy good wil must come by strēgth of thylke iugement: for thy fyrst wyl ý taught thyn hert to abyde, & halte it from theschaūge wyth the reson is accorded. Trewly this maner of wyl thus shal abyd, impossible it were to turne yf thy herte be trewe, & yf euery man dyligently the menynges of hys wyl cōsider, he shall wel vnderstande that good wyl knyt wyth reason, but in a false herte neuer is voyded: for power & myght of kepyng thys good wyl is thorow lyberte of arbytremēt in hert, but goodwil to kepe may not fayle. Eke then yf it fayle, it sheweth it selfe that goodwyl in kepyng is not there. And thus false wyll that putteth out the good, anone constrayneth the herte to accorde in louynge of thy goodwyll, & thys accordaūce bytwene false wyl & thyne herte, in falsyte ben lykened together. Yet a lytel wol I say the, in good wyll thy goodwylles to rayse & strength. Take hede to me (q she) how thy wylles thou shalt vnderstande. Right as ye han in your body dyuers membres, and fyue sondrye wyttes, euerych apart to hys owne doyng, which thinges as instrumētes ye vsen, as your hādes aparte to handle, fete to go, tonge to speke, eye to se: Ryght so ý soule hath in hym certayne sterynges & strengthes whych he vseth as instrumētes to his certayne doynges. Reason is in the soule, which he vseth thīges to know & to proue, & wil, which he vseth to wilne: & yet is neither wyl ne reason al ý soule, but euerych of hem is a thing by him self in ý soule. And right as euerich hath thus singuler istrumētes by hē selfe, they han as well diuers aptes & dyuers maner usynges, & thilke aptes mowē in wyll ben cleped affectiōs. Affectiō is an instrumēt of wyllyng in his apetites. Wherfore mokel folke sayne, if a resonable creatures soule any thing feruētly wylneth, affectuously he wylneth, & thus may wyl by terme of equiuocas in thre wayes be vnderstād: One is instrmēt of wyllyng, another is affectiō of thys instrument: & the thyrd is vse, ý setteth it a werke. Instrumēt of willyng is thilke strēgth of the soule, which ý cōstraineth to wylne, ryght as

reson is instrumēt of reasons, which ye vsen when ye loken. Affection of thys instrument is a thyng, by which ye be drawe desyrouslye any thyng to wylne in coueytous maner, all be it for the tyme out of your mynde: as yf it come in your thought thylke thyng to remēbre, anone ye be wylling thilke to done or els to haue. And thus is instrument wyl, & affection is wyl also, to wylne thynge as I sayd: as for to wylne helth, whē wyl nothing theron thiketh, for anon as it cometh to memorie it is in wyl, and so is affection to wylne slepe whē it is out of mynde, but anone as it is remembred wyl wylneth slepe, when his tyme cometh of ý doynge. For affection of wyll neuer accordeth to sycknesse, ne alway to wake. Right so in a true louers affectiō of willyng instrument, is to wylne truth in hys seruyce, & this affection alway abydeth, although he be sleping or thretned, or els not theron thinkyng, but anon as it cometh to minde, anone he is stedfast in that wil to abyde. Use of this instrument forsoth is another thyng by hym selfe, & that haue ye not but whē ye be doynge in wylled thyng by affect or instrumēt of wil purposed or desyred, & this maner of vsage in my seruice wisely nedeth to be ruled frō wayters w̄ enuy closed, frō spekers ful of iāgelig wordes, from proude folke & hautayne, that lābes & innocentes both scornen & dyspysen. Thus in doyng varieth the actes of willing euerich from other, & yet ben they cleped wil, & the name of wyl vtterly owen they to haue as instrument of wyll is wyl, when ye turne into purpose of any thynge to don, be it to syt or to stande, or any suche thynge els. This instrument maye ben had, although affecte and vsage be lefte out of doynge, right as ye haue syght and reason, and yet alway vse ye greatest wysedome in hem shall he be, and they in god. Nowe then when all false folke be ashamed, which wenen al bestialte & erthly thing be swetter and better to the body, then heuēly is to the soule: thys is the grace & the frute ý I longe haue desyred, it doth me good the sauoure to smel. Christ nowe to the I crye of mercy and of grace, and graunt of thy goodnes to euery maner reder full vnderstādynge in thys leude pamflet to haue, and let no man wene other cause in thys werke, then is verely the soth: For enuy is euer redy all innocētes to shende, wherfore I wolde that good speche enuye euermore hynder. But no man wene thys werke be sufficiently maked, for goddes werke passeth mans, no mās wyt to perfit werke may by no way purvay thende: How shuld I thē so leude, ought wene of perfectiō any ende to get? Neuer the later grace glorie, & laude I yeld & put w̄ worschypful reuerēces to ý sothfast god i thre, with vnite closed which ý the heuy lāgour of my sycknesse hath turned into mirth of helth torecouer: for right as I was sorowed thorow the gloton cloude of manyfolde syckly sorowe, so myth ayen comyng helth hath me gladed & greatly cōforted. I besech & pray therfore, & I crye on goddes gret pyte & on hys mokel mercy, that thys present sorges of my flesche mow make medecyn & lech craft of my inner mans helth, so ý my passed trespas & tenes, throughe weepyng of myne eyen ben wash, & I voyded frō al maner dysese, & nomore to wepe herafter, I now be kept thorow goddes grace: so that goddes hāde whych that mercyably me hath sorged, herafter in good plyte frō thens mercyably me kepe & defēde. In thys boke be many preuy thynges wympled & folde, vnneth shul leude mē the plytes vnwynde, wherfore I pray to the holy goost he lene of hys oyntmētes mens wyttes to clere, and for goddes loue no man wonder why or howe thys question come to my mynde, for my great lustye desyre was of thys lady to be enfourmed, my leudnesse to amende. Certes I knowe not other mennes wyttes what I shuld aske, or in answere what I shulde saye, I am so leude my selfe, that mokel more lernynge yet me behoueth. I haue made therfore as I coud, but not sufficiently as I wolde, & as mater yaue me sentence, for my dull wytte is hyndered by stepmother of forzetynge, & wyth cloud of vnconnynge, that stoppeth the lyghte of my Margarite perle, wherfore it may not shyne on me as it shulde. I desyre not onely a good reder, but also I coueyte & praye a good boke amender, in correction of wordes and of sentence: and onely thys mede I coueyte for my trauayle, that euery inseer and herer of thys leude fantasye, deuoute orisons and prayers to god the great iudge yelden, and prayen for me, in that wyse that in hys dome my synnes mowe ben released & forzeuen: He that prayeth for other, for him selfe trauayleth. Also I pray that euery man parfytly mowe knowe

thorowe

chorowe what intencion of herte this tretyse
haue I drawe. How was it ý syghtfull Mã-
na in deserte to chyldrẽ of Israel was spiritu
all meate: bodely also it was, for mennes bo-
dies it norisheth. And yet neuer ý later Christ
it signifyed. Ryght so a tewell betokeneth a
gemme, & that is a stone vertuous, or els a
perle. Margarite a womã betokeneth grace,
lernyng or wysedõ of god, or els holy church
ýt breed thorow vertue is made holy flesche,
what is that our god sayth: It is the spirete
that yeueth lyfe, the flesche of nothynge it pro
fyteth. Flesche is fleshly vnderstandyng: Flesh
wythout grace and loue nought is worth.
The letter sleeth, ý spirite yeueth lyfelich vn-
derstãdyng. Charite is loue, and loue is cha-
ryte, god graunt vs all therin to be frended.
And thus the Testament of Loue is ended.

Thus endeth the Testament of Loue
And here after foloweth

The lamentatyon
of Mary Magdaleyne.

Longed in the wawe of
mortall dystresse
Alas for wo, to whom shall
I compleyne
Or who shall deuoyde thys
great heuynesse
Fro me wofull Mary, wo-
full Magdaleyne
my lord is gon, alas who wrought this treine
This sodeine chauce, perseth my hert so depe
That nothing can I do, but wayle and wepe

My lorde is gone, ý here in graue was layde
After hys great passion, and deth cruell
who hath hym thus agayne betraydeꝰ
Or what man here about can me tell
where he is become, the prynce of Israell
Jesus of Nazareth, my gostly socour
My parfyte loue, and hope of all honour

what creature hath hym hence caryed
Or howe myght thys so sodeynly befall
I wolde I had here wyth hym taryed
And so shulde I haue had my purpose all
I bought oyntmentes full precious & royall
wherwyth I hoped his corps to anoynted
But he thus gone, my mynde is dyspoynted

whyle I therfore aduertyse and beholde
This pytous chaunce, here in my presence
Ful lytel maruayle though my herte be colde
Consydrynge lo, my lordes absence
Alas that I so full of negligence
Shulde be founde, bycause I come so late
All men may saye I am infortunate

Cause of my sorowe, mẽ maye vnderstande
(Quia tulerunt dominum meum)
Another is, that I ne maye fonde
I wotnere, Vbi posuerunt eum
Thus I muste bewayle, Dolorem meum
wyth herty wepyng, I can no better deserue
Tyl deth approche, my herte for to kerue

My herte oppresst wyth sodeyne auenture
By feruent anguyshe is bewrapped so
That longe thys lyfe I may not endure
Such is my payne, suche is my mortall wo
Neuertheleſſe, to what partye shall I go
In hope to fynde myne owne turtyll true
My lyues ioye, my souerayne lorde Jesu

Syth all my ioye, that I call hys presence
Is thus remoued, nowe I am ful of mone
Alas the whyle, I made no prouidence
For thys myshap, wherfore I sygh & grone
Socour to find, to what place might I gone
Fayne I wolde to some man my herte breke
I note to whom I may complayne or speke

Alone here I stande, ful sorry and ful sadde
which hoped to haue sene my lorde & kynge
Small cause haue I to be mery or gladde
Remembrynge thys bytterfull departynge
In thys worlde is no creature lyuynge
That was to me so good and gracious
Hys loue also then golde more precious

Ful sore I sygh, wythout comforte agayne
There is no cure to my saluation
Hys brẽnyng loue, my herte so doth cõstraine
Alas here is a wofull permutacion
wherof I fynde no ioye nor consolacion
Therfore my payne all onely to confesse
wyth dethe I feare woll ende my heuynesse

Thys wo and anguyshe is intollerable

yf I byde here, lyke can I not sustayne
yf I go hence my paynes be vncurable
wher hi to fynde, I knowe no place certayne
And thus I not of these thynges twayne
whych I maye take, & whych I may refuse
My hert is woūded heron to thynke or muse

A whyle I shall stande in thys mournyng
In hope yf any vysyon wol appere
That of my loue might tel some good tiding
whych into ioy, myght chaūge my weppynge
I trust in his grace & hys mercy dere (chere
But at the leest, though I therwyth me kyll
I shal not spare to wayle and wepe my fyll

And yf that I dye in suche auenture
I can nomore, but welcome as my chaunce
My bones shall rest here in thys sepulture
My lyke, my dethe, is at hys ordinaunce
It shalbe tolde in euerlastyn g remembraūce
Thus to departe, is to me no shame
And also therof I am nothynge to blame

Hope agaynst me hath her course ytake
There is nomore, but thus shall I dye
I se ryght wel my lorde hath me forsake
But in my cōceyte, cause knowe I none why
Though he be farre hence, and nothyng nye
Yet my wofull herte after hym doth seke
And causeth teeres to ren down by my cheke

Thynkyng alas, I haue lost hys presence
whych in this worlde was al my sustenaūce
I crye and cal wyth herty dyligence
But there is no wyght gyueth attendaunce
Me to certifye of myne enquyraunce
wherfore I wyll to al thys worlde bewraye
Howe that my lorde is slayne & borne awaye

Though I mourne it is no great wonder
Syth he is al my ioye in speciall
And nowe I thynke we be so farre a sonder
That hym to se I feare neuer I shall
It helpeth no more after hym to call
Ne after hym to enquyre in any coste
Alas howe is he thus gone and loste.

The iewes I thynke full of mysery
Sette in malyce, by theyr bely cure
wyth force and myght of gylefull trechery
Hath entermyned my lordes sepulture
And borne awaye that precious fygure
Leuynge of it nothynge, yf they haue done so
Marred I am, alas what shall I do

wyth theyr vengeaunce insaciable
Nowe haue they hym entreated so
That to reporte it is to lamentable
They bete hys body from toppe to the too
Neuer man was borne that felte suche wo
They wounded hym alas wyth al greuaūce
The blode downe reyled in most habūdaūce

The blody rowes stremed downe ouer all
They hym assayled so malycyously
wyth theyr scourges and strokes beestyall
They spared not, but smote incessauntly
To satisfye theyr malyce they were full bely
They spit in his face, they smote here & there
He groned ful sore, and swette many a tere

They crowned him w̄ thornes sharpe & kene
The vaynes rent, the blode ran downe apace
wyth bloode ouercome were both hys eyen
And bolne with strokes was his blessed face
They hym entreated, as men without grace
They kneled to hym, & made many a scorne
Lyke helhoundes they haue hym al to torne

Upon a myghty crosse in length and brede
These turnētours shewed theyr cursydnesse
they nayled hym wythout pyte or drede
Hys precious bloode brast out in largenesse
They strayned him alonge, as mē mercylesse
The bery ioyntes all to myne apparence
Ryued asonder, for theyr great vyolence

All thys I beholdyng w̄ myne eyen twayne
Stode there besyde, wyth rufull attendaūce
And euer me thought, he beyng in that paine
Loked on me, wyth deedly conceuaunce
As he had sayd in hys speciall remembraūce
Farewell Magdalen, departe must I nedes
My herte is, Tāquā cera liquescens (hens

whych rufull syght when I gan beholde
Out of my wytte I almost dystraught
Tare my heere, my handes wrange & folde
And of ẏ sight my herte drāke such a draught
That many a fal swounyng there I caught
I bruised my body, fallyng on the grounde
wherof I fele many a greuous woūde

Thē these wretches, full of al frowardnesse
Gaue

Gaue him to drynke eysell tempred with gal
Alas, that poyson full of bytternesse
My loues chere caused than to appall
And yet therof might he nat drinke at all
But spake these wordes, as him thought best
Father of heuen, Consummatum est

Than kneled I downe, in paynes outrage
Clipping ý crosse within myn armes twayn
His bloode distylled downe on my vysage
My clothes eke the droppes dyd distayne
To haue dyed for him I wolde full fayne
But what shulde it auayle yf I dyd so
Sythe he is, Suspensus in patibulo

Thus my lorde full dere was all disgysed
with bloode, payne, and woundes many one
His veynes brast, hys ioyntes all to ryued
Partyng a sonder the flesche fro the bone
But I sawe he hynge nat there alone
For Cum iniquis deputatus est
Nat lyke a man, but lyke a leprous beest

A blynde knyght men called Longias
wyth a speare aproched vnto my souerayne
Launsyng his syde full pytously alas
That his precious herte he claue in twayne
The purple bloode eke fro the hertes vayne
Down rayled right fast, in moste ruful wyse
wyth christal water brought out of paradyse

whan I behelde thys wofull passyon
I wote nat howe, by sodayne auenture
My herte was peersed with very compassyō
That in me remayned no lyke of nature
Strokes of dethe I felte wythout measure
My dethes woūde I caught, w̄ wo oppresst
And brought to poynt as my hert shuld brest

The woūde, hert, and blood of my darlyng
Shall neuer slyde fro my remoriall
The bytter paynes also of tourmentyng
wythin my soule be grauen principall
The speare alas, that was so sharpe withall
So thrilled my herte, as to my felyng
That body and soule were at departyng

As sone as I might I releued vp agayne
My brethe I coude nat very well restore
Felyng my selfe drowned in so great payne
Both body & soul me thought were al to tore
Vyolent falles greued me right sore

I wepte, I bledde, & with my selfe I fared
As one that for his lyfe nothyng had cared

I lokyng vp to that rufull Roode
Sawe first the vysage pale of that fygure
But so pytous a syght spotted wyth bloode
Sawe neuer yet no lyueng creature
So it exceded the boundes of measure
That mānes mynd, with al his wyttes fyue
Is nothynge able, that payne for to discryue

Than gan I there myne armes to vnbrace
Up lyftyng my handes full mournyngly
I syghed and sore sobbed in that place
Both heuen & erth might haue herde me crye
wepyng, and sayd alas incessauntly
Ah my swete herte, my goslly paramour
Alas I may nat thy body socour

O blessed lorde, howe feirse and howe cruell
These cursed wightes nowe hath the slayne
Keruyng alas thy body euerydell
woūde within woūd, ful bytter is thy payne
Nowe wolde that I might to the attayne
To nayle my body fast vnto thy tree
So that of this payne thou might go free

I can nat reporte ne make no rehersayle
Of my demenyng, wyth the circumstaunce
But wel I wote the speare with euery nayle
Thirled my soule by inwarde resemblaunce
whiche neuer shall out of my remembraunce
Duryng my lyfe it woll cause me to wayle
As ofte as I remembre that batayle

Ah ye iewes, worse than dogges rabyate
what moued you thus cruelly him to aray
He neuer displeased you nor caused debate
Your loue and true hertes he coueyted aye
He preched, he teched, he shewed ý right way
wherfore ye lyke tyrantes wode & wayward
Now haue him thus slayne for his rewarde

ye ought to haue remēbred one thing special
His fauour, his grace, and his magnifycence
He was your prince borne, and lorde ouer all
Howe be it ye toke him in small reuerence
He was full meke in suffryng your offence
Neuertheles ye deuoured him w̄ one assent
As hungry wolues dothe the lambe innocēt

where was your pyte, o people mercylesse

Armyng your self with falsheed and treason
On my lord ye haue shewed your woodnesse
Lyke no men, but beestes without reason
Your malyce he suffred all for the season
Your payne wol come, thynke it nat to slacke
Man without mercy of mercy shall lacke

O ye traytours & mayntayners of madnesse
Unto your folly I ascribe all my payne
Ye haue me depriued of ioye and gladnesse
So dealyng with my lorde and souerayne
Nothyng shulde I nede thus to complayne
If he had lyued in peace and tranquillyte
Whom ye haue slayne through your iniquite

Farwel your noblenesse ỳ sõtyme dyd rayne
Farewel your worshyp, glorie and fame
Here after to lyue in hate and disdayne
Maruayle ye nat, for your trespas & blame
Unto shame is turned all your good name
Upon you nowe woll wonder euery nacion
As people of most vyle reputacion

These wycked wretches, these hoũdes of hel
As I haue tolde playne here in this sentence
Were nat content my dere loue thus to quell
But yet they muste embesyle his presence
As I perceyue by couert vyolence
They haue him conueyed to my displesure
For here is lakte but naked sepulture

Wherfore of truthe and rightfull iugement
That their malyce agayne may be acquyted
After my verdyte and auysement
Of false murder they shall be endyted
Of thefte also, whiche shal nat be respyted
And in all haste they shal be hanged & drawe
I woll my selfe plede this cause in the lawe

Alas yf I with true attendaunce
Had styll abydden with my lordes corse
And kept it styll wyth trewe perceueraunce
Than had nat befall thys wofull deuorse
But as for my payne welcome and no force
This shall be my songe where so euer I go
Departyng is grounde of all my wo

I se right wel nowe in my paynes smerte
There is no wounde of so greuous dolour
As is the wounde of my carefull herte
Sythe I haue loste thus my paramour
All swetnesse is tourned in to sour
Myrthe to my herte nothyng may conuey
But he that beareth therof bothe locke & key

The ioye excellent of blysfed paradyse
Maye me alas in no wyse recomforte
Songe of angell nothyng may me suffyse
As in myne herte nowe to make disporte
All I refuse, but that I might resorte
Unto my loue, the well of goodlyheed
For whose longyng I trowe I shalbe deed

Of paynfull labour and tourment corporall
I make therof none exceptioun
Paynes of hell I woll passe ouer all
My loue to fynde in myne affectioun
So great to him is my dilectatioun
A thousande tymes martred wolde I be
His blysfed body ones yf I might se

About this worlde so large in all compace
I shall nat spare to renne my lyfe duryng
My fete also shall nat rest in one place
Tyll of my loue I may here some tidyng
For whose absence my hãdes now I wryng
To thinke on him, cease shal neuer my mynd
O gentyll Jesu where shall I the fynde

Jerusalem wol I sertche place fro place
Syon, the vale of Josophath also
And yf I fynde hym nat in all this space
By mount Olyuet to Bethany woll I go
These wayes woll I wander and many mo
Nazareth, Bethleem, Mountana Jude
No traueyle shall me payne hym for to se

His blysfed face yf I might se and fynde
Sertche I wolde euery coste and countrey
The fardest parte of Egipt or hote Inde
Shulde be to me but a lytell iourney
Howe is he thus gone or taken away
Yf I knewe the full trouthe and certente
Yet from this care released might I be

In to wyldernesse I thynke best to go
Sith I can no more tidynges of him here
There may I my lyfe lede to and fro
There may I dwell, and to no man appere
To towne ne vyllage woll I come nere
Alone in woodes, in rockes, & in caues depe
I may at myne own wil both wayle & wepe

Myne eyen twayne withouten varyaunce

Shall

Shall neuer cease, I promyse faithfully
There to wepe wyth great abundaunce
Bytter teares rennyng incessauntly
The whiche teares medled ful pitously
wyth the very blode euer shall renne also
Expressyng in myne herte the greuous wo

worldly fode and sustenaunce I desyre none
Suche lyueng as I fynde, such woll I take
Rotes that growen on the craggy stone
Shall me suffyse wyth water of the lake
Than thus may I say for my lordes sake
(Fuerunt mihi lachrime mee)
(In deserto panes die ac nocte)

My body to clothe it maketh no force
A mournyng mantell shalbe suffycient
The greuous woundes of hys pytous corse
Shalbe to me a full royall garnement
He departed thus, I am best content
His crosse with nayles and scourges withal
Shalbe my thought and payne speciall

Thus woll I lyue, as I haue here tolde
yf I may any longe tyme endure
But I feare dethe is ouer me so bolde
That of my purpose I can nat be sure
My paynes encrease wythout measure
For of longe lyfe who can lay any reason
All thyng is mortall, and hath but a season

I syghe full sore, and it is ferre yfet
Myne herte I fele nowe bledeth inwardly
The blody teares I may in no wyse let
Sythe of my payne I fynde no remedy
I thanke god of all yf I nowe dye
His wyl perfourmed I holde me content
My soule let hym take that hath it me lent

For lenger to endure it is intollerable
My wofull herte is enflamed so huge
That no sorowe to myne is comparable
Sythe of my mynde I fynde no refuge
Yet I hym requyre as ryghtfull iuge
To deuoyde fro me the inwarde sorowe
Lest I lyue nat to the nexte morowe

wythin myne herte is impressed full sore
His royall forme, his shappe, his semelynesse
His porte, his chere, his goodnesse euermore
Hys noble persone wyth all gentylnesse
He is the welle of all parfytnesse
The very redemer of all mankynde
Him loue I best, with hert, soule and mynde

In his absence my paynes full bytter be
Rightwell I maye it fele nowe inwardly
No wonder is though they hurte or see me
They cause me to crye so rewefully
Myne herte oppressed is so wonderfully
Onely for hym, whiche is so bright of blee
Alas I trowe I shall hym neuer se

My ioye is traslate full farre in exile
My myrthe is chaunged in to paynes colde
My lyfe I thynke endureth but a whyle
Anguyshe and payne is that I beholde
wherfore my handes thus I wrynge & folde
In to this graue I loke, I call, I pray
Dethe remayneth, and lyfe is borne away

Nowe must I walke & wander here & there
God wote to what partes I shall me dresse
wyth quakyng herte, wepyng many a tere
To seke out my loue and all my swetnesse
I wolde he wyst what mortall heuynesse
About myne herte reneweth more and more
Than wolde he nat kepe pyte long in store

wythout hym I may nat long endure
Hys loue so sore worketh wythin my brest
And euer I wepe before thys sepulture
Sighyng ful sore, as myne hert shulde brest
Duryng my lyfe I shall optayne no rest
But mourne & wepe, where that euer I go
Makyng complaynt of all my mortall wo

Fast I crye, but there is no audyence
My commyng hider was him for to please
My soule oppreft is here with his absence
Alas he lyst nat to sette myne hert in ease
wherfore to payne my selfe withall disease
I shall nat spare tyll he take me to grace
Or els shall I sterue here in this place

Ones yf I myght wyth him speke
It were all my ioye, with parfyte plesaunce
So that I myght to him myne hert breke
I shulde anone deuoyde all my greuaunce
For he is the blysse of very recreaunce
But nowe alas, I can nothyng do so
For in stede of ioye naught haue I but wo

His noble corse within myne hertes rote

Depe is graued, whiche shall neuer slake
Nowe is he gone, to what place I ne wote
I mourne, I wepe, and all is for his sake
Sythe he is paste, here a vowe I make
wyth hertely promyse, & therto I me bynde
Neuer to cease tyll I may hym kynde

Unto hys mother I thynke for to go
Of her haply some comforte may I take
But one thyng yet me feareth and no mo
yf I any mention of hym make
Of my wordes she wold trymble and quake
And who coude her blame, she hauig but one
The son borne away, the mother woll mone

Sorowes many hath she suffred trewly
Syth that she fyrst conceyued hym and bare
And seuyn thynges there be most specially
That drowneth her hert in sorowe and care
yet lo, in no wyse may they compare
wyth this one nowe, the which yf she knewe
She wolde her paynes euerichone renewe

Great was her sorowe by mennes sayeng
Whan in the temple Symeon Justus
Shewyng to her, these wordes prophesieng
(Tuam animam pertransibit gladius)
Also whan Herode that tyrant furious
Her chylde pursued in euery place
For his lyfe went neyther mercy ne grace

She mourned whan she knewe hym gone
Ful long she sought or she him founde ayene
whan he went to dethe hys crosse him vpon
It was to her syght a rewefull payne
whã he hong theron, betwene theues twayn
And the speare vnto his hert thrust ryght
She swouned, & to the grounde there pight

Whan deed and blody in her lappe lay
Hys blessed body, both handes & fete all tore
She cryed out and sayd, nowe welaway
Thus arayde was neuer man before
whan haste was made his body to be bore
Unto hys sepulture here to remayne
Unnethes for wo she coude her sustayne

These sorowes seuyn, lyke swerds euerycne
Hys mothers hert wounded fro syde to syde
But yf she knewe her sonne thus gone
Out of this worlde she shuld with deth ryde
For care she coude no lenger here abyde
Hauyng no more ioye nor consolatioun
Than I here standyng in this statioun

Wherfore her to se I dare nat presume
Fro her presence I woll my selfe refrayne
yet had I leuer to dye and consume
Thã his mother shuld haue any more payne
Neuertheleſſe her sonne wold I se ful fayne
His presence was very ioye and swetnesse
Hys absence is but sorowe and heuynesse

There is no more, syth I may him nat mete
whom I desyre aboue all other thyng
Nedes I must take the soure with the swete
For of hys noble corse I here no tydyng
Full ofte I crye, and my handes wryng
Myne herte alas, relenteth all in payne
whyche wol brast bothe senewe and vayne

Alas howe vnhappy was this wofull houre
wherin is thus myspended my seruyce
For myne entente and eke my trewe labour
To none effecte may come in any wyse
Alas I thynke yf he do me dyspise
And lyst nat to take my symple obseruaunce
There is no more, but deth is my fynaunce

I haue him called, Sed non respondit mihi
wherfore my myth is tourned to mourning
O dere lorde, Quid mali feci tibi
That me to cõforte I fynde non erthly thing
Alas, haue compassyon of my cryeng
If fro me, Faciem tuam abscondis
There is no more, but Consumere me vis

wythin myne hert is grounded thy fygure
That all this worldes horryble tourment
May nat it aswage, it is so without measure
It is so brennyng, it is so feruent
Remembre lorde I haue ben dilygent
Euer the to please onely and no mo
Myne herte is with the where soeuer I go

Therfore my dere darling, Trahe me post te
And let me nat stande thus desolate
(Quia non est, qui consoletur me)
Myne herte for the is disconsolate
My paynes also nothyng me moderate
Nowe yf it lyste the to speke with me a lyue
Come in hast, for my hert a sonder wyll ryue

To the I proffer lo my poore seruyce

The for to please after myne owne entent
I offre here, as in deuout sacrifyce
My bore replete with precious oyntment
Myne eyen twayne, weppyng suffycient
Myne herte with anguysche fulfylled is alas
My soule eke redy for loue about to pas

Naught els haue I the to please or pay
For if myne hert were gold or precious stone
It shulde be thyne without any delay
wyth hertely chere ÿ shuldest haue it anone
why suffrest thou me than to stande alone
Thou hast I trowe my weppyng in disdayne
Or els thou knowest nat what is my payne

Yf thou withdrawe thy noble dalyaunce
For ought that euer I displeased the
Thou knowest ryghtwel it is but ignoraũce
And of no knowlege for certaynte
If I haue offended lorde forgyue it me
Gladde I am for to make full repentaunce
Of all thyng that hath ben to thy greuaunce

Myne herte alas, swelleth wythin my brest
So sore oppyrest with anguische & withpayne
That all to peces forsothe it woll brest
But yf I se thy blessed corse agayne
For lyke ne dethe I can nat me refrayne
If thou make delay thou mayst be sure
Myne herte wol leape in to this sepulture

Alas my lord, why farest thou thus with me
My tribulation yet haue in mynde
where is thy mercy? where is thy pyte?
whiche euer I trusted in the to fynde
Sõtyme thou were to me both good & kynde
Lette it please the my prayer to accept
whiche with teares I haue here bewept

On me thou oughtest to haue bery routh
Syth for the is all thys mournyng
For sythe I to the aplyghted fyrst my trouth
I neuer varyed with discordyng
That knowest thou best myne owne darling
why constraynest thou me thus to wayle?
My wo forsoth can the nothyng auayle

I haue endured wythout variaunce
Right as thou knowest, thy louer iust & trew
with hert & thought aye, at thyne ordynaũce
Lyke to the saphire alwaye in one hewe
I neuer chaunged the for no newe
why withdrawest thou my presence
Sith all my thought is for thyne absence

wyth herte entier, swete lorde I crye to the
Enclyne thyne eares to my petycioun
And come, Velociter exaudi me
Remembre myne hertes dispositioun
It maye nat endure in this conditioun
Therfore out of these paynes, Libera me
And where thou arte, Pone me iuxta te

Lette me beholde, O Jesu thy blysfed face
Thy faire glorious angelyke visage
Bowe thyne eares to my complaynt, alas
For to conuey me out of this rage
Alas my lorde, take fro me this dõmage
And to my desyre for mercy condiscende
For non but thou, may my greuaũce amende

Nowe yet good lorde, I the beseche and pray
As thou rayfed my brother Lazarous
Frome dethe to lyke the fourth day
Come ayen in body and soule precious
As great a thyng mayst thou shewe vnto vs
Of thy selfe, by power of thy goodheed
As thou dyd of hym, lyenge in graue deed

Myne hert is wounded with thy charite
It brenneth, it flameth incessauntly
Come my dere lorde, Ad adiuuandum me
Nowe be nat longe my payne to mulpiply
Lest in the meane tyme I departe and dye
In thy grace I put bothe hope and cõfidence
To do as it pleaseth thy hye magnifycence

Floodes of dethe, and tribulatyon
In to my soule I fele entred full depe
Alas that here is no consolatioun
Euer I wayle, euer I mourne and wepe
And sorow hath woũded myne hert ful depe
O dere loue, no marueyle though I dye
(Sagitte tue infixe sunt mihi)

Wandryng in this place, as in wyldernesse
No comforte haue I, ne yet assuraunce
Desolate of ioye, replete with fayntnesse
No ans were receyuyng of myne enquiraũce
Myne herte also graued wyth displesaunce
wherfore I may saye, O deus deus
(Non est dolor sicut dolor meus)

Myne hert expressetb, Quod dilexi multum
I may

I may nat endure though I wolde fayne
For now, Solum superest sepulchrum
I knowe it right well by my huge payne
Thus for loue I may nat lyke sustayne
But o god, I muse what ayleth the
(Quod sic repente precipitas me)

Alas, I se it wyll none otherwyse be
Nowe must I take my leaue for euermore
This bytter payne hath almost discõfyte me
My loues corse I can in no wyse restore
Alas to this wo that euer I was bore
Here at his tombe now muste I dye & starue
Dethe is aboute my herte for to carue

My testament I wolde begyn to make
To god the father, my soule I commende
To Jesu my loue, that dyed for my sake
My herte and all, bothe I gyue and sende
In whose loue my lyfe maketh an ende
My body also to this monument
I here bequeth, bothe bore and oyntment

Of all my wylles, lo nowe I make the last
Right in this place within this sepulture
I wol be buryed whan I am deed and past
And vpon my graue I woll haue this scrip-
Here within resteth a goostly creature (ture
Christes trewe louer, Mary Magdalayne
whose hert for loue, brake in peces twayne

Ye vertuous women, tender of nature
Full of pyte and of compassyoun
Resorte I pray you, vnto my sepulture
To synge my dirige with great deuotioun
Shewe your charyte in this condicioun
Syng with pyte, and let your hertes wepe
Remembring I am deed and layde to slepe

Than whan ye begyn to parte me fro
And ended haue your mournyng obseruaũce
Remembre where so euer that ye go
Alway to sertche and make due enqueraunce
After my loue, myne hertes sustenaunce
In euery towne and in euery byllage
Yf ye maye here of this noble ymage

And yf it happe by any grace at laste
That ye my trewe loue fynde in any cost
Say that his Magdaleyne is deed and past
For his pure loue hath yelded vp the gost
Say that of all thyng I loued him most
And that I might nat this dethe eschewe
My paynes so sore dyde euer renewe

And in token of loue perpetuall
whan I am buryed in this place present
Take out myne hert, the very rote and all
And close it within this bore of oyntment
To my dere loue make therof a present
Knelyng downe with wordes lamentable
Do your message, speke fayre and tretable

Say that to him my selfe I commende
A thousande tymes with herte so free
This poore token say to hym I sende
Pleaseth his goodnesse to take it in gree
It is hys owne of ryght, it is hys fee
whyche he asked, whan he sayd longe before
Gyue me thy herte, and I desyre no more

A due my lorde, my loue so fayre of face
A due my turtel doue so fresche of hue
A due my myrthe, a due al my solace
A due alas, my sauyour lorde Jesu
A due the gentyllest that euer I knewe
A due my most excellent paramour
Fayrer than rose, sweter than Lylly flour

A due my hope of all plesure eternall
My lyfe, my welth, and my prosperite
Myne herte of golde, my peerle orientall
Myne adamant of parfyte charite
My chefe refuge and my felycite
My comforte, and all my recreatioun
Farwell my perpetuall saluatioun

Farewell myne Emperour celestyall
Most beautyful prince of al mankynde
A due my lorde, of herte most lyberall
Farwell my swetest, bothe soule and mynde
So louyng a spouse shall I neuer fynde
A due my souerayne, and very gentylman
Farewell dere herte, as hertely as I can

Thy wordes eloquent flowing in swetnesse
Shall no more alas, my mynde reconforte
wherfore my lyfe must ende in bytternesse
For in this worlde shall I neuer resorte
To the, whiche was myne heuenly disporte
I se alas it woll none other be
Nowe farwell the grounde of all dignite

A due the fayrest that euer was bore

Alas I may not se your blessed face
Nowe welaway that I shal se no more
Thy blessed vysage, so replete wyth grace
wherin is printed my parfyte solace
A due myne hertes roote and al for euer
Nowe farewel, I must from the disceuer

My soule for anguysh is nowe full thursty
I faynt ryght sore for heuynesse
My lorde, my spouse: Cur me dereliquisti.
Syth I for the suffre al thys distresse
what causeth the to seme thus mercylesse
Sith it the pleaseth of me to make an ende,
(In manus tuas) my spirite I cōmende.

¶ Finis.

The Remedy of Loue.

Seyng the manyfolde inconuenience
Fallynge by vnbridled prosperite
which is not tempred with moral prudence
Nothyng more welthy thā youthes freite
Moued I am, both of ryght and equyte
To youthes wele, somwhat to write
wherby he may hym selfe safecondyte

First I note, as thyng moost noyous
Unto youth a greuous malady
Amonge vs called loue encombrous
Vexyng yonge people straungely
Ofte by force causeth hem to dye
Age is eke turmented by loue
Synetj the gyrdle, and not aboue

wherfore thys werke, which is ryght laborous
For age me nede not in hande to take
To youth me oweth to be obsequious
Nowe I begyn thus to worke for hys sake
wyych may the feruence of loue a slake
To the louer, as a mitigatyue
To hym that is none a preseruatyue

That myghty lorde wyych me gouerneth
Youth I meane, measure yf I pace
In euery mater whiche hym concerneth
First as is behoueful, I woll aske grace
And forthwythal in thys same place
Er I begyn, I wol knele and saye
These fewe wordes, and hym of helpe pray

Flourynge youth, wyych hast auauntage
In strength of body in lust and beaute
Also a precellyng haste aboue age
In many a singuler commodite
Howe be it one thyng he hath beyonde the
To thy moost profyte and greatest auayle
which shlud ỳ cōduit, I meane sad counsayle

And yet good lorde, of a presumption
I nyl deprane thy myght and deite
I lyue but vnder thy protection
I am thy subiecte, I weare thy lyuerie
For thou arte grounde of my prosperite
And freshest floure of al my garlonde
My singuler ayde, as I wel understonde

But as he that oweth hys lorde beste seruice
And entyre fayth, his honour to supporte
Ryght so I speke, and in none other wyse
I knowlege my selfe one of the leste sorte
Of thy seruauntes, to our elders comforte
Drawe sadde counsayle to the yf thou lyst
The and thy power, who may than resyst

Fye on age, vnder wordes fewe
And his erronyous opinyon
what spekest of him, wyyche sayth most vntrew
Al youth to be of yl disposition
Dampneth vs al wythout exception
And for a colerable auauntage
He sayth in him resteth counsayle sage

Wel may sadde counsayle in hym rest
But yet hys dedes bene ferre therfro
He may say wyth our paryshe preest
Do as I say, and not as I do
For I my selfe knowe one or two
wel stryken in age, for neyghbourhedde
wol to theyr neyghbours wyues bedde

He wyl in presence of the yonge man
Her clyppe and kysse, yee and downe laye
To bleare hys eye, thus he sayth than
O suffre yet olde Morel to playe

Nowe haue I done that I can or may
Thus he saeth, her husbonde to queme
That he nor no man shulde not misdeme

In worde nor dede, nedeth hym not be coye
It is impossible that he do amysse
If the yonge mã speke, anone he sayeth boye
To rebuke age, besemeth the not ywys
Thus hys olde face aye hys warant is
Al is in hym, sleyght and subtylte
And ferre from reason I tel the

And shortly age is not aboue me
Age is impotent, and of no resistence
Age vnweldy may not fyght nor flye
what were age wythout my defence
Sad counsayle sayst gyueth hym assistence
Reason is freshest where that I ame
wherfore in thy sayeng thou art to blame

Syth reason to me is rather acompanyed
Than vnto age, whyche is the opinyon
Of euery wyse man not to be denyed
And syth sad counsayle procedeth of reason
Sad coũsaile in me hath his chefe mancion
Thys is no naye, but what is the ende
Of thys thy suasion what doest entende

Age to compare vnto thyne excellence
I nyl presume hym so to dignifye
Ye be not egal, howe be it experience
Him auauntageth, for she most certaynly
Him teacheth what thyng to him is cõtrary
And oft to fore se it, and warely eschewe
which thou neuer assaydest yet nor knewe

Experience maketh a man moost certayne
Of any thyng erthly, and of necessite
Sad counsayle requyreth certaynte playne
So ferre to moue thus wherto nede we
But to my purpose, as thou cõmaundest me
Shortly myne entente is thus, & none other
Under thy licence to counsayle my brother

Howe shuldest gyue any counsayle so yonge
Lacking experience vnto thyne owne speche
I report me, I wote wel as for thy tonge
wyl seruе the right wel, but than for to teche
I dout me lest that thy wytte wol not reche
Youth & experience thou sayest be not cõuert
Howe shuldest than teache wel vnexpert

Scripture wytnesseth that god wyl oft shyt
Fro the hye witted man, & shew it to ỳ childe
To hym I meane that of hys owne wyt
Presumeth not, but is debonayre & mylde
By counsayle I entende vertue for to bylde
which of myne elders part haue I borowed
& part of experience, which I haue sorowed

wel than, yf it be as thou lettest fare
Shewe forth thy doctrine be not agast
I wol the suppore, loke thou not spare
Maugre age, though he frete or gnast
To aske age counsayle herin were but wast
Boldely begyn, go forth to thy processe
Feare not syth thou arte of such sureness

Graunt mercy lorde syth it the doth lyke
To licence me, nowe I wol and dare boldly
Assayle my purpose, w̃ scriptures autentike
My werke wol I groũd, vnderset, & fortify
Aspire my begynnyng, O thou woode fury
Allecto wyth thy susters, and in espicial
To the mother of ielousye Juno I call

¶ Explicit prologus.

This werke who so shall se or rede
Of any incongruite do me not impeche
Ordinatly behoueth me fyrst to procede
In deduction thereof, in maner as the leche
His paciẽtes syckenes oweth first for to sech
The which knowẽ, medicyne he shulde aply
And shortly as he can than shape a remedy

Ryght so by coũsayle, wyllyng the to exhort
O yong mã prosperous, which doth aboũde
In thy floures of lust belongeth on the sorte
Ye fyrst to cõsider what is roote & grounde
Of thy mischefe, whiche is playnly founde
woman farced wyth fraude and disceyte
To thy confusyon moost allectyue bayte

Flye the mislwoman, lest she the disceyue
thus sayth Salomõ, which tauzt was fully
the falsheed of womẽ in his daies to cõceyue
The lippes of a strũpet ben sweter thã hony
Her throte he saith suppled w̃ oyle of flatery
Howe be it the ende and effecte of al
Byttrer is than any wormwode or gall

Fly

Flye the mis woman, louyng thy lyke
ware the straungers blande eloquence
Straunge I cal her that is not thy wyfe
Of her beautie haue me no concupiscence
Her countenaunce, pretendyng beneuolence
Beware her signes and eye so amiable
Holde it for ferme, they bene disceyuable

Lo an ensample what women be
In theyr signes and countenaunce shortly
I wol shewe the howe louers thre
Loued one woman ryght entierly
Eche of them knewe others malady
wherfore was al theyr dayly labour
who coude appproche next in her fauour

At sondrye seasons, as fortune requyreth
Seuerally they came to se her welfare
But ones it hapened, loue them so fyreth
To se theyr lady they al wolde not spare
Of others comyng none of them were ware
Tyl al they mette, where as they in place
Of her lady sawe the desyred face

To supper sette, ful finally they ete
Full sobre and demure in countenaunce
For there taryed none of hem for any mete
But on hys lady to gyue attendaunce
And in secrete wyse some signifyaunce
Of loue to haue, whych parceyuyng she
Fetely executed thus her properte

In due season, as she alway espyed
Euery thyng to execute conueniently
Her owne louer fyrst frendly she eyed
The seconde she offred the cuppe curtesly
The thyrde she gaue token secretly
Underneth the borde she trade on hys fote
Through his entrayles tikled the herte rote

By your leue, myght I here aske a question
Of you my maystres that sewe louers trace
To you lykely belongeth the solucion
whych of these thre stode nowe in grace
Clerely to answere ye wold aske long space
The mater is doutful and opinable
To acertayne you I woll my selfe enable

Of the foresayd thre my selfe was one
No man can answere it better than I
Hertely of vs beloued was there none
But wattes packe we bare al by and by
whych at the last I my selfe gan aspye
And time as me thought, thā I left the daūce
O thoughtful hert, great is thy greuaunce

Hence fro me hence, that me for to endyte
Halpe aye here afore, O ye muses nyne
whylō ye were wont to be mine ayde & light
My penne to directe, my brayne to illumyne
No lenger alas may I sewe your doctrine
The freshe lusty meters, ý I wont to make
Haue bene here afore, I vtterly forsake

Come hyther thou Hermes, and ye furies al
which fer ben vnder vs, nigh the nether pole
where Pluto reigneth, O kyng infernal
Send out thine arpies, send anguysh & dole
Misery and wo, leaue ye me not sole
Of right be present must paine & eke turmēt
The pale deth besemeth not to be absent

To me nowe I cal al thys lothsome sorte
my paines encrese, my sorowes to augmēt
For worthy I am to be bare of al comforte
Thus syth I haue consumed and mispent
Not only my daies, but my fiuefolde talent
ý my lorde cōmitted me, I can not recōpence
I may not to derely abye my negligence.

By the path of penaunce yet wol I reuert
To the welle of grace, mercy there to fetche
Dispisest not god the meke contrite hert
Of the cocke crow, alas ý I wolde not retch
And yet it is not late in the seconde wetche
Mercy shal I purchace by incessaunt crieng
The mercyes of our lorde euer shal I syng

But well mayst thou wayle wicked woman
that thou shuldest disceyue thus any innocēt
And in recompence of my synne, so as I can
To al mē wol I make & leue this monumēt
in shewing part of thy falsheed is myn entēt
For al were to much, I can not wel I wote
The cause sheweth playnly he ý thus wrote

If al the erth were parchement scribable
Spedy for the hande, and al maner wode
were hewed & proportioned to pennes able
Al water ynke, in damme or in stode
Euery man beyng a perfyte scribe & good
The cursednesse yet and disceyte of women
Coude not be shewed by the meane of penne

I flye al odyous resemblaunces
The dyuels bronde cal women I myght
wherby man is encensed to mischaunce
Or a stynkyng rose that fayre is in syght
Or deedly empoyson, lyke the suger whyte
whych by hys swetnesse causeth man to tast
and sodaynly sleeth & brigeth him to his last

It is not my maner to vse such langage
But thys my doctrine, as I may laufully
I wol holy grounde wyth auctoritie sage
wyllynge both wysdom and vertue edify
wyne and women in to apostasy
Cause wyse men to fall, what is that to say
Of wysdome cause them to forget the way

wherfore the wyse man dothe the aduyse
In whose wordes can be founde no leasyng
wyth the straunger to sytte in no wyse
which is not thy wyfe, fal not in clyppyng
wyth her, but beware eke of her kyssyng
Kepe wyth her in wyne no altercacion
Lest that thyne hert fal by enclination

May a man thynkest hyde and safe lay
Fyre in his bosom, wythout enpayrement
& brēnynge of his clothes, or wheder he may
walke on hotte coles, his fete not brent
As who sayth nay, and wherby is ment
Thys foresayd prouerbe and similitude
But that thou rydde the playnly to denude

From the flatterers forgettynge her gyde
The gyde of her youth, I meane shāfastnes
which shulde cause her maydenheed to abide
Her goddes behest eke she ful rechelesse
Not retchyng, cōmitteth it to forgetfulnesse
Neyther god ne shame in her hauynge place
Nedes must such a woman lacke grace

And al that neygh her in way of syn
To turne of grace shal lacke the influence
The pathes of lyfe no more to come in
wherfore fyrst frende the wyth sapience
Remembryng god, and after with prudence
To thyne owne wele that they the kepe
Unto thyne herte, leste her wordes crepe

In his boke where I take my most grounde
And in hys prouerbes sage Solomon
Telleth a tale, whych is playnly founde
In the fyfth chapiter, wheder in dede don
Or mekely feyned to our instruction
Let clerkes determyne, but thus I am sure
Much lyke thyng I haue had in vre

At my wyndowe sayth he I loked out
Fayre yonge people, where I sawe many
Amonge hem all, as I loked about
To a yonge man fortuned I lent myne eye
Estraunged from his mynde it was lykely
By ý strete at a corner, nygh his owne hous
He went about wyth eye ryght curyous

whā that the day his lyght gan wythdrawe
And the nyght approched in the twynlyght
Howe a woman came and met him I sawe
Talkyng with him vnder shade of the night
Nowe blyssed be god (q̃ she) of his myght
whych hath fulfylled myne hertes desyre
Aslaked my paines, which were hote as fire

And yet myne auctour, as it is skyl
To folowe, I must tel her arayment
She was ful nyce, soules lyke to spyl
As nyce in countenaunce yet as in garment
For ianglyng she was of rest impacient
wandryng styl in no place she stode
But restlesse nowe and nowe out she yode

Nowe in the house, nowe in the strete
Nowe at a corner she stondeth in awayte
Incessauntly besy her praye for to gete
To bryngе to the lure whom she dothe layte
Now where I left, vnto my mater strayte
I wol turne agayne, howe she hym mette
Swetely kyssed, and frendly hym grette

With wordes of curtesy many and diuerse
Ryght as in parte I haue before tolde
Nowe as I can I purpose to reherse
How she flateryng sayd wyth bysage bolde
I haue made bowes & offringes manifolde
For thy sake, O myne hert, O my loue dere
This day I thāke god al perfourmed were

Therfore I came out, and made thus astert
Very desyrous your welfare to se.
Now I haue sene you, pleased is myne hert
In fayth shall none haue my loue but ye
As trewe as I am to you be to me
I praye you hertely dere herte come home
No man shulde be to me so welcome

And

And in good fayth, the soth for to say
Your comynge to me ranne in my thought
Harke in your eare, my bed freshe and gay
I haue behanged w̃ tapettes newe bought
Frõ Egypt, & from ferre countrees brought
Steyned wyth many a lusty freshe hue
Exceedyng golde or Jasper in value

My chãbre is strowed with myrre & ensence
With sote sauoring aloes, & with synamome
Breathyng an aromatyke redolence
Surmountyng olybane, in any mans dome
Ye shall betwene my brestes rest yf ye come
Let vs haue our desyred halsyng
For we maye safe be tyl in the mornyng

Myne husbonde is not at home, he is went
Forth in hys iourney, a ferre way hence
A bagge with money he hath w̃ him hent
As hym thought nedeful for hys expence
Unto my worde gyue fayth and credence
Nowe is the mone yonge, & of syght dulle
Er he come home it woll be at the fulle

Thus craftely hath she hym besette
Wyth her lyme roddes, panter, and snare
The sely soule caught in her nette
Of her sugred mouth, alas nothyng ware
Thus is he lefte graceless and bare
Of helpe, comforte, and goostly socour
And furthermore as sayth myne auctour

As a beest ledde to hys deth doth pant
Thys yonge man foloweth her in ꝑ stoũde
And as a wanton lambe ful ignorant
Howe he is puiled and drawen to be boũde
Unto the tyme he hath his dethes wounde
And lyke a byrde that hasteth to the grynne
Not knowyng the peryll of his lyfe therin

Now gentle sõne saith Salomon take hede
My wordes in thy brest kepe and make fast
Let her not thy minde in her wayes mislede
Be not disceyued, lese not thy tast
Many hath she woũded, many downe cast
Many stronge by her hath lost theyr breth
Her wayes, wayes of hel leadyng to deth

And in thys lytle naration precident
The womans manyfolde gylt I attende
The yonge man alas howe she hath shent
Disceyued her husbãde, her owne next frẽde
In these both her God she doth offende
To breke her spousayle, to her is of no weyst
Furdermore to shew womans craft & sleight

A woman at her dore sate on a stal
To se folkes passe by stretes of the cite
Wyth eye & countenaunce eke she gan cal
If there be any prety one, come nere to me
Come hyther ye pygges nye, ye lytle babe
At last she sayd to a yonge man hertelesse
Of her disceyte vnware and defenceless

Much swetter she sayth, & more acceptable
Is drynke whan it is stolen priuely
Than whã it is taken in fourme auowable
Breed hyd and gotten ieoperdously
Must nedes be swete, and semblably
Venyson stolne is aye the swetter
The ferther the narower fette the better

And whõ thys womã sayth Solomõ testes
The yong mã woteth not whõ she doth fede
Of the derke depenesse of hel bene her gestes
Beware yonge man therfore I the rede
And howe be it chefely for thy good spede
This werke to cõpile, I haue take in charge
I must of pyte my charyte enlarge.

Wyth the sely man which is thus begyled
Her husband I meane, I wol wepe & wayle
His payneful infortune, wherby reuyled
Causeless he is, neuer to conuayle
Euery man yonge & olde wyl hym assayle
With wordes of occasyon, with ꝑ loth name
And alas good soule, he nothynge to blame

But she that coude so yl do and wolde
Hers be the blame for her demeryte
And leaue that opprobrous name cokolde
To aprope to hym as in dispyte
Ransake yet we wolde yf we myght
Of thys worde the trewe ortography
The very discent and ethymology

The wel and grounde of the kyrst enuention
To knowe the ortography we must deryue
Whych is coke and colde, in composicion
By reason, as nyghe as I can contryue
Than howe it is written we knowe belyue
But yet lo, by what reason and grounde
Was it of these two wordes compounde

As of one cause to gyue very iugement
Themylogy let vs fyrst beholde
Eche letter an hole worde doth represent
As C, put for colde, and O, for olde
K, is for knaue, thus diuers men holde
The fyrst part of thys name we haue foūde
Let vs ethymologyse the secounde

As the fyrst fynder mente I am sure
C, for calot, for of, we haue O
L, for leude, D, for demeanure
The crafte of the inuentour ye may se lo
Howe one name signifyeth persons two
A colde olde knaue, cokolde him self wening
And eke a calot of leude demeanyng

The seconde cause of thymposycion
Of thys forsayde name was ielousye
To be ielouse is greatest occasyon
To be cokolde, that men can aspye
And though the passyon be very fyrye
And of contynuel feruence and hete
The pacient aye suffreth colde on hys fete

And who that is ielous, and aye in a drede
Is ful of melancoly and gally yre
Hys wyues nose yf she misse trede
He wolde cutte of, ye and conspyre
His death who that wol her desyre
whych she perceyuyng brasteth hys gal
And anone hys great wodenesse doth fal

As sone as she hath knytte him that knot
Nowe is he tame that was so ramagious
Mekely sytteth he downe and taketh his lot
Layd bene nowe hys lokes so furyous
And he but late as a cocke bataylous
Hote in hys quarel, to auenge hym bolde
Nowe is he called both coke and colde

Thys sayeng, to al curtesy dissonant
whych semeth that it of malyce grewe
In this rude treatyse I wol not plant
As parcel therof, but onely to shewe
The opinion of the talcatyse shrewe
whych in yl sayeng is euer mery
No man as I therof so wery

But I as parcel of thys my boke
woll grafke in some sadde counsayle wherby
The wedded man, yf he daigne to loke
In it, the better shal mowe him gye
And proued for hys sayd infortunye
whyche as I haue sayd, with hym cōplayne
I wol, as partener of hys great payne

As moost expedient to hys wele
I wolde al ielousy were abiecte
If he be ielous, that he it concele
And in his labour be circumspecte
To knowe her wayes, yf they seme suspecte
And not for to breke, for one worde broken
She wol not mysse but she wol be wroken

Forbyd her not, that thou noldest haue done
For loke what thinge she is forbood
To that of al thynges she is moost prone
Namely yf it be yl and no good
Tyll it be executed she is nygh wood
Such is woman, and such is her feate
Her crafte by crafte, labour to defeate

If thou herafter, nowe a syngle man
Shuldest be ielous yf thou haddest a wyfe
wedde not but yf thou can trust woman
For els shuldest lede a carefull lyfe
That thou moost lothest shulde be full ryfe
yet I nyl gaynsay matrimony
But Melius est nubere quam vri.

That is to saye, better is in wedlocke
A wyfe to take, as the church doth kenne
Than to be vnder the fleshes yoke
In fleshly lust alwaye for to brenne
But as I sayd, for all ielous men
So they lyue chaste, I holde it lasse yll
That they wedde not, than them selfe spyll

The syngle man whych is yet to wedde
And not the wedded man, thus I rede
To warne him nowe he is to farre spedde
It is to late him for forbede
But let him take as for his owne nede
Such counsayle as is hym before tolde
These wordes folowyng eke she beholde

Thy water to kepe the wyse man doth teche
That thou in no wyse let it haue issue
At a narowe ryfte, way it wol seche
And semblably the woman vntrewe
To gyue her frewalke in all wyse eschewe
If she at large, not at thyne hande walke
she wol the shame, thou shalt it not balke

wedded

wedded or syngle, thus sayth the wyse man
Her that both day and nyght euermore
Lyth in thy bosome, wyke or yet lemman
Loue not to hote, lest thou repent sore
Lest she the bryng into some yll lore
Thy wyke not to loue yet I nyll supporte
But that thou dote not, thus I the exhort.

Lo, if thou loue her, loue eke thyne honestie
Be she not ydle, for what woll betyde
Yf she syt ydle, of very necessitie
Her mynde woll serche ferre and eke wyde
Namely yf she be not accompanyde
How accōpanyed: not with yonge men
But with maydens I meane, or women

Mayden seruauntes be ryght conuenient
In house to helpe to do her seruyce
In whom she maye vse her cōmaundement
In the season at her owne deuyse
To teache hem good, yeue her thyne aduyce
To make them huswyues, thus besynesse
May yet restrayne her from ydlenesse.

But byd her not that thou wolt haue do
Of thyne entent that mygbt be lettyng
But craftely encourage her therto
By other meanes, as by cōmendyng
And not to moche, but duly mengyng
Both prayse and blame, and in thy reason
Fyrst prayse wysely the place and season

Of faythfull wyll and herte full tendre
One thynge I call into remembraunce
Agayne, which though my wyt be slendre
After my power and suffysaunce
I purpose to make a purueyaunce
Syth women of nature ben chaungeable
Frayle, not ware, also disceyuable.

Be it that thy wyke be excellently good
That none be better of disposicion
In proces of tyme she might turn her mode
By some myslyuers instigation
Dyuers men to thylke occupacion
Applyen dayly, mynde and eke herte
From her goodnesse women to peruerte.

Yf thou espye any suspect person
Drawe to thy wyke, beware in all wyse
To hym nor her of thy suspection
Breke not one word, thouz thy herte agryse
Kyndle no fyre, no smoke woll aryse
Though he be of a corrupt entent
Sye paraduenture is not of assent.

Explicit.

The complaynt of Mars and Venus.

Laddeth ye louers in the morowe graye
Lo venus rissē amōg you rowes rede
And floures fresh honour ye this daye
For whan ý sunne vp rist thā wil they spred
But ye louers that ly in any drede
Flyeth, lest wycked tonges you espye
Lo yonde the sunne, the candle of ielousye

with teres blewe, and with a woūded hert
Taketh your leue, & w̄ saint John tobozow
Apeseth somwhat of your sozowes smert
Tyme cōmeth eft, ý cessen shal your sozowe
The glad nyght is worth an heuy mozowe
Saynt Valentyne a foule thus herd I sing
Upon thy day or sunne gan vp sprynge.

Yet sange this foule, I rede you all awake
And ye that haue not chosen in humble wise
without repentyng cheseth your make
Yet at the leest, renoueleth your seruyce
And ye that haue full chosen as I deuyse
Confermeth it perpetually to dure
And pacyently taketh your auenture.

And for the worshyp of this hye feest
Yet wol I in my bryddes wyse synge
The sentence of the complaynt at the leest
That wofull Mars made at the departing
Fro fresh Venus in a morowonyng
whan Phebus with his fyry torches rede
Ransaked hath euery louer in his drede.

whylom the thre heuens lorde aboue

As well by heuenlyche reuolution
As by desert hath won Venus his loue
And she hath take hym in subiection
And as a maystresse taught hym his lesson
Cōmaundynge hym neuer in her seruyce
He were so bolde no louer to dispyse

For she forbade hym ielousye at all
And crueltie and boste and tyrannye
She made hym at her lust so humble & tall
That whā she dayned to cast on him her eye
He toke in pacience to lyue or dye
And thus she brydleth hym in her manere
with nothing, but w̄ scornyng of her chere.

who raygneth now in blysse but Venus
ý hath this worthy knyght in gouernaunce
who singeth now but Mars ý serueth thus
The fayre Venus, causer of pleasaunce
He bynt hym to perpetual obeysaunce
And she bynt her to loue hym for euer
But so be that his trespasse it disceuer

Thus be they knyt, and reignen as in heuen
By lokyng most, as it fel on a tyde
That by her both assent was set a steuen
That Mars shall entre as fast as he maye
Into her next paleys to abyde (glyde
walkyng his course tyl she had hym atake
And he prayed her to haste her for his sake.

Than sayd he thus, my hertes lady swete
Ye knowe wel my myschefe in that place
For sykerly tyl that I with you mete
My lyfe stant there in auenture and grace
But whan I se the beautye of your face
There is no drede of deth may do me smerte
For all your lust is ease to myne hert

She hath so great cōpassyon of her knyght
That dwelleth in solytude tyl she come
For it stode so that thylke tyme no wyght
Counsayled hym, ne sayd to hym welcome
That nygh her wyt for sorowe was ouercō
wherfore she sped as fast in her way
Almost in one day as he dyd in twaye

The great ioye that was betwyxt hem two
whan they be met, there may no tonge tell
There is nomore, but vnto bed they go
And thus in ioye and blysse I let hem dwel
This worthy Mars ý is of knyghthod wel
The flour of fairnesse happeth in his armes
And venus kysseth Mars ý god of armes

Soiorned hath this Mars, of which I rede
In chambre amydde the palays priuely
A certayne tyme, tyl hym fel a drede
Through Phebus that was comen hastely
within the palays yates sturdely
with torch in hand, of which ý stremes bryst
On venus chambre knocketen ful lyght

The chambre there as lay this fresshe quene
Depaynted was with whyte boles grete
And by ý lyght she knewe that shon so shene
That Phebus came to bren hem w̄ his hete
This selly Venus me dreynt in teares wete
Embraceth Mars, and sayd alas I dye
The torch is com ý al this world wyl wrye

Up stert Mars, hym lyst not to slepe
whan he his lady herde so complayne
But for his nature was not for to wepe
In stede of teares from his eyen twayne
The fyry sparcles sprongen out for payne
And hent his hauberke ý lay hym beside
Flye wold he nought, ne might him self hyde.

He throweth on his helme of huge weyght
And gyrt hym w̄ his swerde, & in his hond
His mighty spere as he was wōt to fyght
He shaketh so, that it almost to wonde
Full heuy was he to walken ouer londe
He may not holde with Venus company
But bad her flyen lest Phebus her espye

O woful Mars alas, what mayst ý̄ sayne
That in the palays of thy disturbaunce
Art left behynde in peryl to be slayne
And yet therto is double thy penaunce
For she ý hath thyne hert in gouernaunce
Is passed halfe the stremes of thyne eyen
That ý̄ nere swykt, wel mayest thou wepe & (cryen

Now flyeth Venus into Ciclinius tour
with voyde corse, for feare of Phebus lyght
Alas, and there hath she no socour
For she ne foūde ne sey no maner wyght
And eke as there she had but lytle myght
wherfore her seluen for to hyde and saue
within the gate she fled into a caue.

Darke was this caue, and smokig as ý hell

Nat

Nat but two paas within the yate it stode
A naturel day in darke I let her dwell
Now wol I speke of mars furious & wode
For sorow he wolde haue sene his hert blod
Syth ý he might haue done her no cõpanye
He ne rought not a myte for to dye

So feble he wext for hete and for his wo
That nigh he swelt, he might vneth endure
He passeth but a ster in dayes two
But neuertheleſſe, for al his heuy armure
He foloweth her that is his lyues cure
For whose departyng he toke greater yre
Than for all his brennyng in the fyre

After he walketh softely apace
Complaynyng, that it pytie was to here
He sayd, O lady bryght Venus alas
That euer so wyde a cõpas is my sphere
Alas, whan shall I mete you hert dere
This twelue dayes of Apryll I endure
Through ielous Phebus this mysauẽture

Now god helpe sely Venus alone
But as god wolde it happed for to be
That whil ý weping venus made her mone
Ciclinius rydyng in his chyuauche
Fro Venus Valanus might his paleys se
And venus he saluetb, and maketh chere
And her receyueth as his frende ful dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in his aduersitie
Complaynyng euer in her departyng
And what his cõplaynt was remẽbreth me
And therfore in this lusty morownyng
As I best can, I wol it sayne and synge
And after that I woll my leaue take
And god yeue euery wyght ioy of his make

¶ The complaynt of Mars.

The ordre of complaynt requyreth skylfully
That yf a wyght shall playne pytouslye
There mote be cause wherfore ý mẽ playne
Or men may deme he playneth folyly
And causeles alas that am not I
wherfore ý grounde & cause of al my payne
So as my troubled wyt may it attayne
I wol reherse, not for to haue redresse
But to declare my grounde of heuynesse

The fyrst tyme alas, that I was wrought
And for certayne effectes hyder brought
By hym that lordeth eche intelligence
I yaue my true seruyce and my thought
For euermo how dere I haue it bought
To her that is of so great excellence
That what wight ý sheweth first her offẽce
whan she is wroth, & taketh of him no cure
He may not longe in ioye of loue endure

This is no fayned mater that I tell
My lady is the very sours and well
Of beautie, lust, fredome and gentyllesse
Of ryche araye how dere men it sell
Of all disport in which men frely dwel
Of loue and play, and of benigne hũblesse
Of sowne of instrumentes, & of al swetnesse
And therto so well fortuned and thewed
ý through ý worlde her goodnes is shewed

what wonder is than though that I beset
My seruyce on such one that may me knet
To wele or wo, sith it lyth in her myght
Therfore myne hert for euer I vnto her het
Ne truly for my deth, shal I not let
To ben her truest seruaunt & her knyght
I flatter not, that may wete euery wyght
For this day in her seruyce shall I dye
But grace be, I se her neuer with eye

To whom shal I playne of my distresse
who may me help, who may my hert redres
Shall I complayne vnto my lady free
Nay certes, for she hath suche heuynesse
For feare and eke for wo, that as I gesse
In lytle tyme it wolde her bane be
But were she safe, it were no force of me
Alas that euer louers mote endure
For loue so many perylous auenture

For though so be, that louers be as trewe
As any metall that is forged newe
In many a case hem tydeth oft sorowe
Somtyme her ladyes wol not on hem rew
Somtyme yf that ielousye it knewe
They myght lyghtly lay her heed to borow
Somtyme enuyous folke ẃ tanges horow
Deprauen hem alas, whom may they plese
But he be false, no louer hath his ease.

But what auayleth suche a longe sermoun
Of auentures of loue vp and downe

I woll

I woll retourne, and speken of my payne
The poynt is this of my destructioun
My ryght lady, my saluacioun
Is in a fray, and not to whom to playne
O hert swete, O lady soueraynе
For your disese I ought wel swoun & swelt
Though I none other harme ne drede felt

To what fyne made the god that syt so hye
Beneth hym loue other company
And strayneth folke to loue maugre her heed
And than her ioye, for ought I can espye
Ne lasteth not the twynklyng of an eye
And some haue neuer ioye tyll they be deed
what meaneth this, what is this mystihed
wherto constrayneth he his folke so fast
Thynge to desyre, but it shulde last

And though he made a louer loue a thyng
And maketh it seme stedfast and duryng
Yet putteth he in it suche misauenture
That rest nys there in his peuyng
And that is wondre that so iust a kynge
Doth suche hardnesse to his creature
Thus whether loue breke or els dure
Algates he that hath with loue to done
Hath ofter wo than chaunged is the mone

It semeth he hath to louers enmitie
And lyke a fysher as men maye all daye se
Bayteth his angle hoke with some plesaũce
Tyl many a fysh is wode to that he be
Ceased therwith, and than at erst hath he
Al his desyre, and therwith al mischaunce
And though ỳlyne breke he hath penaunce
For with that hoke he wounded is so sore
That he his wages hath for euermore

The broche of Thebes was of suche kynde
So full of rubies and of stones of Inde
That euery wyght that set on it an eye
He wende anon worth out of his mynde
So sore the beautie wolde his hert bynde
Tyl he it had, him thought he must dye
And whan that it was his than shulde he
Such wo for dred ay, while ỳ he it had (dry
That welnygh for the feare he shuld mad

And whan it was fro his possessyon
Than had he double wo and passyon
That he so fayre a iewel hath forgo
But yet this broche as in conclusyon
was not the cause of his confusyon
But he that wrought it enfortuned it so
That euery wyght ỳ had it shulde haue wo
And therfore in the worcher was the vyce
And in the coueyture that was so nyce

So fareth it by louers, and by me
For though my lady haue so great beautie
That I was made to, I had get her grace
She was not cause of myne aduersitye
But he that wrought her, as mote I the
That put suche a beautye in her face
That made me coueyten and purchace
Myne owne deth hym wyte I that I dye
And myne vnwyt ỳ euer I clambe so hye.

But to you hardy knyghtes of renowne
Syth that ye be of my deuysyoun
Al be, I nat worthy to so great a name
Yet sayne these clerkes I am your patrone
Therfore ye ought haue some compassioun
Of my disease, and take it nat a game
The proudest of you may be made full tame
wherfore I pray you of youre gentylesse
That ye complayne for myne heuynesse

And ye my ladyes that ben true and stable
By way of kynde ye ought to ben able
To haue pytye of folke that ben in payne
Now haue ye cause to cloth you in sable
Syth that your empres the honorable
Is desolate, wel ought ye to playne
Now shulde your holy teares fal & rayne
Alas your honour and your emprice
Nygh deed for drede, ne can her not cheuyce

Complayneth eke ye louers al in fere
For her that with vnfayned humble chere
was euer redy to do you socour
Cõplayneth her that euer hath be you dere
Cõplayneth beautye, fredome and, manere
Cõplayneth her that endeth your labour
Cõplayneth thylke ensample of al honour
That neuer dyd but gentlenesse
Kytheth therfore in her some kyndnesse.

¶ The complaynt of Venus.

Here nys so hygh comfort to
my pleasaunce
whan that I am in anye he-
uynesse
As for to haue layser of re-
membraunce
Upon the manhode and the worthynesse
Upon the trouth and on the stedfastnesse
Of hym whose I am all whyle I may dure
There ought to blame me no creature
For euery wight prayseth his gentylesse

In hym is bountie, wysdome & gouernaũce
wel more than any mans wyt can gesse
For grace hath wolde so farforth him anaũ-
That of knyghthode he is parfyt ryches (ce
Honour honoureth hym for his noblesse
Therto so wel hath fourmed him nature
That I am his for euer I hym ensure
For euery wyght prayseth his gentylesse

And notwithstandyng all his suffysaunce
His gentle hert is of so great humblesse
To me in worde, in werke & in countenaũce
And me to serue is all his besynesse
That I am set in very sykernesse
Thus ought I blysse wel myne auenture
Syth that hym lyst me seruen & honoure
For euery wyght prayseth his gentylesse

Now certes loue it is ryght conenable
That men full dere abye thy noble thynges
As wake a bed, and fasten at the table
Weping to laugh, & syng in complayninges
And downe to cast visage and lokynges
Often to chaunge vysage & countenaunce
Playe in slepyng, & dremen at the daunce
All the reuers of any glad felynge

Ielousye he hanged by a cable
Sthe wolde al knowe through her espyinge
There doth no wyght nothyng so resonable
That all nys harme in her ymaginyng
Thus dere abought is loue in yeuyng
Which oft he yeueth without ordinaunce
As sorowe ynough, and lytle of plesaunce
All the reuers of any glad felynge

A lytle tyme his yefte is agreable
But full accombrouse is the vsyng
For subtel ielousye the disceyuable
Ful often tyme causeth distourbyng
Thus ben we euer in drede and suffryng
In no certayne, we languyshen in penaunce
And haue wel oft many an harde mischaũce
All the reuers of any glad felyng

But certes, loue (I saye) not in suche wyse
That for to scape out of your lace I ment
For I so longe haue ben in your seruyce
That for to lete of wyll I neuer assent
No force though ielousye me tourment
Suffyseth me to se hym whan I may
And therfore certes to myne endyng day
To loue hym best shal me neuer repent

And certes loue, whan I me wel auyse
Of any estate that men may represent
Than haue ye made me through your fraũ-
Chese the best that euer in erth went (chyse
Now loue wel hert and loke thou neuer stẽt
And let the ielous put it in assaye
That for no payne woll I not say nay
To loue hym best, shal I neuer repent

Herte to the it ought ynough suffyse
That loue so hye a grace to you sent
To chose the worthyest in all wyse
And moost agreable vnto myne entent
Seke no ferther, neyther way ne went
Syth ye haue suffisaunce vnto my paye
Thus wol I ende this cõplayninge or this
To loue hym best shal I neuer repent. (laye

¶ Lenuoye.

Rynces receyueth this com-
playnyng in gree
Unto your excellẽt benignite
Dyrecte after my lytle suffy-
saunce (leth me
For elde, that in my spirit dul
Hath of indytyng al the subtiltie
welnygh beraft out of my remẽbraunce
And eke to me it is a great penaunce
Syth ryme in englysh hath suche scarcitie
To folowe worde by worde the curiositie
Of Granson stoure, of hem that make in
(Fraunce.

¶ Explicit.

Here

Thereafter foloweth the letter of Cuppde.

Cuppde, vnto whose commaundement
The gentyl kynred of goddes on hye
And people infernall bene obeddyent
And al mortall folke seruē busylye
Of the goddesse sone Cythera onely
To all tho that to our deitie
Ben subiectes, hertely gretyng sende we

In generall we wolde that ye knowe
That ladyes of honour and of reuerence
And other gentylwomen hauen sowe
Suche seed of cōplaynt in our audyence
Of men that do hem outrage and offence
That it our eares greueth for to here
So pytous is theffect of this matere

Passyng al londes on the lytle yle
That cleped is Albyon, they most cōplayne
They say that there is crop and rote of gyle
So con tho men dissymule and fayne
With standyng dropes in her eyen twayne
Whan that her hertes feleth no distresse
To blynden women with her doublenesse.

Her wordes spoken be so syghingly
With so pytous chere and countenaunce
That euery wyght that meneth truly
Demeth they in hert haue suche greuaunce
They say so unportable is her penaunce
That but her lady lust to shewe hem grace
They ryght anon must sterueu in the place

Ah lady myne they saye, I you ensure
As doth me grace, and I shall euer be
Wyple that my lyfe may last and endure
To you as humble and lowe in eche degree
As possyble is, and kepe al thinges as secre
Ryght as your selfe lyst that I do
And els myne hert mote brast in two

Ful harde it is to knowe a mans hert
For outwarde may no mā the trouth deme
Whan worde out of mouth may none sterte
But it by resō semed euery wyght to queme
So it is sayde of hert as it wolde seme
O faythful woman ful of innocence
Thou art disceued by false apparence

By proces moueth oft womans pytie
Wenyng all thyng were as these men say
They graunt hem grace of her benignitie
For that men shulde not for her sake dey
And with good hert set hem in the wey
Of blysful loue, kepe it yf they con
And thus otherwhyle women beth ywon

And whan this man ý pan hath by the stele
And fully is in his possessyoun
With that woman kepeth he nomore to dele
After yf he may fynde in the toun
Any woman his blynde affectioun
Unto bestowe, euyl mote he preue
A man for al his othes is harde to beleue

And for that euery falseman hath a make
As vnto euery wight is lyght to knowe
Whā this traitour this womā hath forsake
He faste spedeth him vnto his felowe
Tyl he be there his herte is on a lowe
His false descete may him nat suffyse
But of his trayson telleth al the wyse

Is this afayre auaunt? is this honour?
A man hym selfe accuse thus and diffame
Is it good to confesse hym selfe a traytour
And bryngе a woman to sclaundros name
And tell howe he her body hath do shame
No worschyp may he thus to hym conquer
But great disclaundre vnto hym and her

To her nay, yet was it no repreke
For al for vertue was that she wrought
But he that brewed hath al this mischeke
ý spake so fayre, & falsly inward thought
His be the sclaundre, as it by reason ought
And vnto her thanke perpetuel
That in suche a nede helpe can so well

Although through mens sleyght & subteltie
A sely symple and innocent woman
Betrayde is, no wondre syth the cytie
Of Troye, as the story tell can
Betrayde was through the disceyte of man
And set on fyre, and al downe ouerthrowe
And finally destroyed as men knowe.

Betraye

Betray nat men cytes great and kynges
what wight is it that can shape remedy
Ayenst these falsely purposed thynges
who can the crafte suche craftes tespy
But man, whose wytte is euer redy taply
To thyng that sownyng in to falsehede
women bethe ware of false men I rede

And furthermore haue these men in vsage
That where they nat lykely ben to spede
Suche as they ben, with a double visage
They procuren for to pursewe her nede
He prayeth him in his cause to procede
And largely guerdoneth he his trauayle
Lytell wote women howe men hem assayle

Another wretche vnto his felowe sayth
Thou fyschest faire, she that the hath fyred
Is false, inconstaunt, and hath no fayth
She for the rode of folke is so desyred
And as an horse fro day to day she is hyred
That whan thou twynnest fro her company
Cometh another, and blered is thyne eye

Nowe pricke on fast, and ryde thy iourney
while thou art there, for she behynd thy backe
So lyberall is, she woll nothyng withsey
But smartly of another take a smacke
Thus fare these women all the packe
who so hem trusteth hanged mote he be
Euer they desyre chaunge and nouelte

Wherof procedeth this but of enuy.
For he him selfe her ne wynne may
He speketh her repreue and vyllany
As mannes blabbyng tong is wont alway
Thus dyuers men full ofte make assay
For to distourbe folke in sondrye wyse
For they may nat eschewe her emprye

Many one eke wolde for no good
That hath in loue hys tyme spent and vsed
Wen wyst ý his lady hys asking withstode
Er that he were of her playnly refused
Or waste and bayne all that he had mused
wherfore he can none other remedy
But on his lady shapeth hym to lye

Euery woman he saythe is lyght to gete
Can none say nay, yf she be well ysought
who so may leyser haue wyth her to trete
Of hys purpose shall he fayle nought
But he on madnesse be so depe brought
That he shende all wyth open homlynesse
That louen women, they doten as I gesse

To sclaũder women thus what may profyte
To gentyllesse namely that hem armeshulde
In defence of women, and hem delyte
As that the ordre of gentyllesse wolde
If that a man lyst gentyll to be holde
He muste all eschewe that therto is contrary
A sclaundrous tonge is hys great aduersary

A foule vyce is of tonge to be lyght
For who so moche clappeth gabbeth ofte
The tonge of man so swykte is and so wight
That whan it is reysed vp on lofte
Reason is shewed so slowly and softe
That it hym neuer ouertake may
Lorde so these men ben trusty in assay

All be it that men fynde one woman nyce
Inconstaunt, recheleſſe, and varyable
Deignous, proude, fulfylled of malyce
wythout faythe or loue, and disceyuable
Slye, queynt, false, in all vntrust coulpable
wycked, keirse, or full of cruelte
Yet foloweth it not that suche all women be

Whan the hyghe god aungels fourmed had
Amonge hem all, were there none
That founden was malicious and bad.
Yes all men wote there were many one
That for her pryde fyll fro heuen anone
Shuld me for thy yeue al angels proude na-
Nay, he that ý susteyneth is to blame (me

Of twelue apostels, one a traytour was
The remenante yet good were and trewe
So yf it happe men fynde percas
O woman false, suche good is to eschewe
And deme not ý they al therfore be vntrewe
I se well mennes owne falsenesse
Hem causeth woman to trust the lesse

O euery man ought haue an herte tendre
Unto a woman, and deme her honourable
where hys shape be thycke or slendre
Or he be good or badde, it is no fable
Euery wight wote ý wytte hath resonable
That of a woman he discended is
Than is it shame of her to speke amysse

A wicked tre good frute may non forthbring

For suche the frute is as is the tre
Take hede of whō thou toke thy begynning
Let thy mother be myrrour vnto the
Honour her, yt thou wolte honoured be
Dispyse her than not in no manere
Lest that therby thy wyckednesse apere

In olde prouerbe sayd is in englyshe
That byrde or foule is full dishonest
what that he be, and holde full churlyshe
That vseth to defoule hys owne nest
Yen to say well of women it is the best
And naught to dispyse hem ne deprauе
If they woll her honour kepe or saue

The ladyes euer complayne hem on clerkes
That they haue made bokes of her diffame.
In which they dispyse women & her werkes
And speke of hem great reprofe and shame
And causelesse yeue hem a wicked name
Thus they dispysed be on euery syde
Disclaundred and blowen on full wyde

Tho sory bokes maken mencion
Howe women betrayde in especiall
Adam, Dauid, Sampson, and Salomon
And many one mo, who may reherce hem al
The treyson that they haue do and shall
The worlde her malyce may not cōprehende
As clerkes sayne, for it hath none ende

Ouyde in hys boke called Remedye
Of loue, great reproke of women writeth
wherin I trowe he dyd great folye
And euery wight ý in such case him delyteth
A clerkes custome is whan he endyteth
Of women, be it prose, ryme, or vers
Say they be wycked, all know he the reuers

And ý boke scholers lerned in her chyldhede
For they of women beware shulde in age
And to loue hem euer be in drede
Sythe to disceyue is set all her corage
They say of perel mē shuld cast thauaūtage
Namely of suche as men haue in bewrapped
For many a man by women hath mishapped

No charge is what so these clerkes sayne
Of all her writyng I do no cure
All her labour and trauayle is in vayne
For bytwene me and my lady nature
Shall not be suffred, while ý world may dure

Thus these clerkes by her cruell tyrannye
On sely women kythen her maystrye

Whylom for many of hē were in my cheyne
Tyed, and nowe for vnweldy age
And vnlust, may not to loue atteyne
And sayne now that loue is but very dotage
Thus for they hem selfe lacken corage
They folke excyte by her wicked sawes
For to rebell ayenst me and my lawes

But maugre hem that blame women moste
Suche is the force of myne impressyon
That sodaynly I can fell her boste
And all her wrouge ymaginacion
It shall not be in her election
The foulest slutte in all the towne to refuse
If that me luste, for al that they conne muse

But her in herte as brennyngly desyre
As though she were a duchesse or a quene
So can I folkes hertes set on fyre
And as me lyst sende hem ioye or tene
They that to women be whet so kene
Yy sharpe persyng strokes how they smyte
Shul fele & know howe they kerue and byte

Yarde this clerke, this subtyll Ouyde
And many an other disceyued haue be
Of women, as it is knowe full wyde
what no men more, and that is great deynte
So excellent a clerke as was he
And other mo that couden full well preche
Betrapped were, for aught ý they coude tech

And trusteth well that it is no meruayle
For women knowen playnly her entent
They wyste howe softly they coude assayle
Hem, and what falsheed they in herte mente
And thus they clerkes in her daunger hente
wyth o venym an other is distroyed
And thus these clerkes ofte were anoyed

These ladyes, ne these gentyls neuertheless
were none of tho that wrought in this wyse
But suche as were vertuelesse
They quytten thus these olde clerkes wyse
To clerkes lesse ought suffyse
Than to dispraue women generally
For worshyp shull they none get therby

If that these men, that louers hem pretende

To women

To women were faythfull, good, and trewe
And dredde hem to disceyue, or to offende
women to loue hem wolde not eschewe
But euery day hath man an herte newe
Jt on one abyde can no whyle
what force is it suche a wight to begyle

Men beare eke women vpon honde
That lightly and without any payne
They womē be, they can no wight wstonde
That his disease lyst to hem complayne
They be so freele, they may hē not refrayne
But who so lyketh hem may lightly haue
So be her hertes easy in to graue

To mayster Johan de Moone, as J suppose
Than it was a leude occupacioun
Jn makyng of the Romante of the rose
So many a slyghe ymagynacioun
And perylles for to rollen vp and doun
The longe processe, so many a slyght cautell
For to disceyue a sely damosell

Naught can J say, ne my wytte comprehēde
That arte, payne, and subtylte shulde sayle
For to conquere, and sone make an ende
whan men a feble place shall assayle
And sone also to venquishe a batayle
Of whiche no wight may make resystence
Ne herte hath none to make any defence

Than mote folowe of necessyte
Sythe arte asketh so great engyn & payne
A woman to disceyue what so she be
Of cōstaunce be they not so barayne
As that some of these clerkes sayne
But they be as women ought to be
Sadde, constante, and fulfylled of pyte

Howe frendly was Medea to Jason
Jn conquerynge of the fleece of golde
Howe falsely quyt he her trewe affection
By whom vyctorie he gate as he wolde
Howe may this man for shame be so bolde
To falsen her, that fro his dethe and shame
Him kept, and gate him so great prise & name

Of Troy also the traytour Eneas
The faithlesse wretch, how he him forswore
To Dydo, that quene of Cartage was
That him releued of hys smertes sore
what gentyllesse might she haue do more
Than she with herte vnfayned to him kydde
And what mischefe to her therof after be-
(tydde
Jn my legende of natures may men fynde
who so lyketh therin for to rede
That othe ne behest may man bynde
Of reprouable shame haue they no drede
Jn mannes herte trouth hath no stede
The soyle is nauyt, there may no trouth gro-
To women namely it is not vnknowe (we

Clerkes sayne also there is no malyce
Unto womans wycked crabbydnesse
O woman, how shalt thou thy selfe cheuyce
Sythe men of the suche harme wytnesse
Beth ware women of her fykelnesse
Kepe thyne owne, what men clappe or crake
And some of hem shal smerte J vndertake

Malyce of women what is it to drede
They slee no man, distroye no cytees
Ne oppresse folke, ne ouerlede
Betray empires, realmes, or duchees
Ne bryeuen men her londes ne her mees
Enpoyson folke, ne houses set on fyre
Ne false contractes make for no hyre

Trust, parfyte loue, entyre charyte
Feruent wyll, and entalented corage
All thewes good, as sytteth well to be
Haue women euer of custome and vsage
And wel they conne mānes yre aswage
with soft wordes, discrete & benigne (signe
what they be inward they shew outward by

womans herte vnto no cruelte
Enclyned is, but they be charytable
Pytous, deuoute, full of humylite
Shamefaste, debonayre, and amyable
Dredefull, and of wordes measurable
what women these haue not, parauenture
Foloweth not the way of her nature

Men sayne our fyrst mother natheleſſe
Made all mankynde lese his lyberte
And naked it of ioye deutlesse
For goddes heste disobeyed she
whan she presumed to taste of the tre
That god forbade, that she eate therof sholde
And ne had the dyuell be, nomore she wolde

The enuyous swellynge, ỳ the fende our foe

Had vnto man in herte for hys welth
Sent a serpent, and made her for to go
To disceyue Eue, & thus was mans welthe
Byrafte hym by the fende in a stelthe
The woman not knowyng of that disceyte
God wote ful ferre was it from her conceyte

Wherfore I say, this good woman Eue
Our father Adam disceyued nought
There may no man for disceyte it preue
Properly, but that she in herte and thought
Had it compassed fyrst or she it wrought
And for suche was not her impressyon
Men may it call no disceyte of her by reason

Ne no wight disceyueth, but he purpose
The fende this disceyte caste, & nothynge she
Than is it wronge to deme or suppose
That of hys harme she shulde the cause be
wyte the fende, and hys be the maugre
And excused haue her innocence
Saue onely that she brake obedyence

And touchyng this, full fewe men there be
Unnethes any dare I safely say
Fro day to day, as men may all day se
But that the heste of god they disobay
Haue this in mynde syrs I you pray
If that ye be discrete and resonable
Ye woll her holde the more excusable

And where men say in man is stedfastnesse
And woman is of her corage vnstable
who may of Adam beare suche a wytnesse
Telleth me this, was he not chaungeable
They bothe weren in o case semblable
Saue wyllyng the fende disceyued Eue
And so dyd she not Adam by your leue

yet was this synne happy to mankynde
The fende disceyued was for all hys sleyght
For aurt he coude him i his sleyghtes wynde
For hys trespace came fro heuen on heyght
God, to discharge man of hys weyght
Fleshe and bloode toke of a virgyne
And suffred dethe, hym to delyuer of pyne

And god, to whō there may nothyng hyd be
If he in woman knowen had suche malyce
As men recorde of hem in generalte
Of our lady of lyke reperatryce
Nolde haue be borne, but that she of vyce
was boyde, and full of vertue well he wyste
Endawed, of her to be borne hym lyste

Her heaped vertue hath suche excellence
That all to leane is mannes faculte
To declare it, and therfore in suspence
Her dewe prayseyng put nedes must be
But thus I say, verely that she
Next god, best frende is that to man longeth
The key of mercy by her gyrdle hongeth

And of mercy hath euery man suche nede
That resyng that, farwell the ioy of man
And of her power now taketh rizt good hede
Sye mercy may wel, and purchace can
Displeseth her not, honoureth that woman
And other women all for her sake
And but ye do, your sorowe shall awake

In any boke also where can ye fynde
That of the werkes of dethe or of lyfe
Of Jesu, spelleth or maketh any mynde
That women hym forsoke for wo or stryfe
where was there any wight so ententyfe
Aboute hym as woman, proued none
The apostels hym forsoken euerychone

women forsoke hym not for all the faythe
Of holy churche in woman lefte onely
This is no lees, for thus holy writte saythe
Loke and ye shall so fynde it hardely
And therfore I may well preue therby
That in woman reigneth stable constaunce
And in men is the chaunge of varyaunce

Thou precious gēme of martyrs Margarete
That of thy bloode dredest none effusyon
Thou louer trewe, thou mayden mansuete
Thou constante woman in thy passyon
Ouercame the fendes temptacion
And many a wight conuerted thy doctryne
Unto the faythe of holy god thou vyrgyne

But vnderstādeth this, I onely cōmende her
By encheson of her virgynyte (nought
Trusteth it came neuer in thought
For euer werre I ayenst chastyte
And euer shall, but lo this meueth me
Her louyng herte, and constante to her lay
Drive out of remembraunce I ne may

Nowe holdeth this for ferme, and for no lye
That

That this trewe and iuste commendation
Of women tell I for no flatterye
Ne bycause of pryde or elation
But onely lo, for this entention
To yeue hem corage of perseueraunce
In vertue, and her honour to auaunce

The more vertue, the lasse is the pride
Vertue so digne is and so noble in kynde
That vyce and he woll not infere abyde
He putteth vyces clene out of hys mynde
He flyeth fro hem, he leaueth hem behynde
O woman that of vertue arte hostresse
Great is thy honour and thy worthynesse

Than woll I thus conclude and defyne
We you commaunde our mynistres echone
That redy ye be our hestes to enclyne
That of these false men our rebel fone
Ye do punishment and that anone
Voyde hem our court, & banysh hem for euer
So that therin more come they neuer

Fulfylled be it, ceasyng all delaye
Loke there be none excusacion
Wrytten in the lusty monthe of Maye
In our paleys where many a millyon
Of louers trewe haue habytacion
The yere of grace ioyfull and ioconde
A thousande foure hundred and seconde.

Explicit.

Thus endeth the letter of Cupyde, and here after foloweth a balade in commendation of oure Lady.

(∴)

Thousande storyes coude I mo reherce
Of olde poetes, touchyng thys matere
Howe that Cupyde ŷ hertes gan so perce
Of his seruauntes settyng hem in fere
Lo here the kyne of therrour and the fere
Lo here of loue the guerdon and greuaunce
That euer with wo her seruaũtes do auaũce

wherfore now playnly I wol my style dresse
Of one to speke, at nede that woll not fayle
Alas for dole I ne can ne may expresse
Her passyng prise, and that is no meruayle
O wynde of grace, now blow vnto my sayle
O auryate lycour of Cleo for to write
My penne enspyre of that I woll endyte

Alas, vnworthy I am and vnable
To loue suche one, all women surmountyng
But she be benigne to me and merciable
That is of pyte the welle and eke the spryng
wherfore of her in laude and in prayslyng
So as I can, supported by her grace
Ryght thus I say, knelyng tofore her face

O sterre of sterres with thy stremes clere
Sterre of the see, to shypmen lyght and gyde
O lusty lyuyng moste plesaunt to apere
whose bryzt beames ŷ cloudes may not hyde
O way of lyfe to hem that go or ryde
Hauen after tempest surest vp to ryue
On me haue mercy for thy ioyes fyue

O rightfull rule, o bote of holynesse
And lyghtsome lyne of pyte for to playne
Original begynnyng of grace & al goodnesse
And clenest cõduyt of vertue most souerayne
Mother of mercy, our trouble to restrayne
Chambre and closet clennest of chastyte
And named herbrough of the deyte

O closed garden all voyde of wedes wycke
Crystallyn welle, of clerenesse clere cõsigned
Fructyfyed olyue of foyles fayre and thycke
And redolẽt cedre most dereworthly digned
Remembre on synners that to ŷ be assigned
Or wicked fendes her wrath on hem wreche
Lanterne of lyght, thou her lyues leche

Paradyse of plesaunce, gladsome to all good
Benigne braunchelet of the pyne tre
Vynarie enuermayled, refresher of our bote
Lycour ayen al langour ý palled may not be
Blyffull blomy blosome, bydyng in bounte
Thy mantell of mercy on our myserie sprede
And er wo awake wrappe vs vnder thy wed

O rody rosyer, flouryng without spyne
Foũtayne al fylthlesse, as byrel currant clere
Sõe drop of thy graceful dew to vs propyne
O light without nebule, shining i thy sphere
Medecyne to mischeues, pucelle wout pere
Flambe downe the dolefull lyght of thyne influence
Remẽbring thy seruãtes for thy magnifycẽce

Of al christen protectryce and tutele
Returne of exiled put in the prescripcion
To hem that erren in the pathe of her sequele
To wery forwandred tent and paulyon
To faynte and to fresche the paulacion
Vnto vnresty, bothe rest and remedye
Frutefull to all tho that in her affye

To hem that rennen thou arte itenerarie
O blyffull brauie to knightes of thy werre
To wery werkmen she is diourne denarie
Mede vnto maryners that haue sayled ferre
Laureate crowne stremyng as a sterre
To hem that put hem in palastre for thy sake
Cours of her cõquest, thou white as any lake

O myrthe of martyrs, swetter than sytole
Of confessours also rychest donatyfe
Vnto virgynes eternall lauriole
Afore all women hauyng prerogatyfe
Mother and mayde, bothe wydowe & wyfe
Of all the worlde is none but thou alone
Nowe syth thou may, be socour to my mone

O trusty turtle truefastest of all trewe
O curteyse columbe, replete of all mekenesse
O nyghtyngale with thy notes newe
O popyniay pured wyth all clennesse
O laueroke of loue, syngyng with swetnesse
Phebus awaytyng tyll on thy brest he lyght
Under thy wynge at domesday vs dyght

O rubye rubifyed in the passyon
Of thy sonne, vs haue amonge in mynde
O stedfast dyametre of duracion
That fewe feres any tyme might thou fynde
For none to him was foundẽ halfe so kynde
O hardy herte, o louyng creature
what was it but loue that made ý so endure

Semely saphre, depe loupe and blew ewage
Stable as the loupe ewage of pyte
This is to say the freshest of vysage
Thou louest vnchaunged hem that seruẽ the
And yf offence or varyeng in hem be
Thou arte aye redy vpon her wo to rewe
And hem receyuest wyth hert full trewe

O goodly gladed whan that Gabriell
wyth ioye the grette, that may not be nũbred
Or halfe the blysse who coude write or tell
whan the holy goste to the was obumbred
wherthrough fendes were bytterly encũbred
O wemlesse mayde embelyshed in his byrth
That man and aungel therof hadden myrth

Lo here the blosme and the budde of glorie
Of whiche ý prophete so longe spake before
Lo here the same that was in memorie
Of ysaye, so longe or she was borne
Lo here of Dauid the delycious corne
Lo here the grounde of lyfe in to bylde
Becomyng man our raunsom for to yelde

O glorious byole and byte inuyolate
O firy Tytan, persyng with thy bemes
whose vertuous brightnes was i brest vbrate
That all ý world embelyshed with ý lemes
Cõseruatryce of kynges, dukes, and realmes
Of ysayes fede swete sunamyte
Mesure my mourning myn own margaryte

O soueraignest sought out of Syon
Cockle w̃ golde dewe from aboue berayned
Dewe bushe vnbrent, fyrelesse fyre set on
Flãbyng with feruẽce, not with hete payned
Duryng daysye that no wether stayned
Fleece vndefouled of gentylest Jedeon
And fructifyeng fayrest the yerde of Aaron

The mighty arche, probatyfe piscyne
Laughyng aurore, and of peace olyue
Columpne & base, vp bearyng from abyme
why nere I connyng here to discryue
Chosen of Joseph, whom he toke to wyue
Vnknowyng hym, chyldyng by myracle
And of our manly fygure the tabernacle

I haue

I haue none Englyche conuenient & dygne
Myne hertes heale lady the wyth to honour
Inoric cleane, therfore I wol resygne
Into thyne hande, tyl thou lyst socour
To helpe my makynge both florysche & flour
Then shulde I shewe in loue how I breude
In songes makynge, thy name to cōmende

For yf I coude before thyne excellence
Syngen in loue I wolde what I fele
And euer standen lady in thy presence
To shewe in open howe I loue you wele
And syth although your hert be made of stele
To you wythouten any dysceueraunce
Jay en vous tout ma fiance

where myght I loue euer better beset
Then in thys lylye lykyng to beholde
The lace of loue, the bonde so wel thou knyt
That I maye se the or myne herte colde
And or I passe out of my dayes olde
Tofore syngyng euermore vtterly
Your eyen two woll slee me sodaynly

For loue I langour, blysled be such sycknesse
Syth it is for you my hertely suffysaunce
I can not els say in my dystresse
So fayre one hath myne hert in gouernaūce
And after that I begynne on esperaunce
with feble entune, though it thyne hert perce
Yet for thy sake thys letter I do reherce

God wote on musyke I can not, but I gesse
Alas why so, that I myght saye or synge
So loue I you myne owne souerayne mai-
And euer shal wythout departyng (stres
Myrrour of beute, for you out shuld I ryng
In remembraunce eke of your eyen clere
Thus kerre frō you my souerayne lady dere

So wolde god your loue wolde me slo
Syth for your sake I synge day by day
Herte why nylte thou breake a two
Syth wyth my lady dwell I ne may
Thus many a roundel and many a virelay
In freshe englyche, when I me layser fynde
I do recorde, on you to haue mynde

Nowe lady myne, syth I you loue and drede
And you vnchaunged euer fynde in o degre
whose grace ne may flye fro your womāhede
Dysdayneth not for to remembre on me
Myne herte bledeth for I may not you se
And syth ye wotte my meanyng desyrous
Plures pur moy si vous playst amorous

what maruayle is though I in payne be
I am departed from you my souerayne
Fortune alas, dont vient la destenie
That in no wyse I can ne may attayne
To se the beaute of your eyen twayne
wherfore I say, for trystesse doth me grame
Tant me fait male departyr de ma dame

why nere my wyshyng brought to such esploit
That I myght say for ioye of your presence
Ore a mon cuer ce quil deuilloit
Ore a mon cuer, the hyghest excellence
That euer had wight, & syth myne aduertēce
Is in you, reweth on my paynes smerte
I am so sore wounded to the herte

To lyue wel mery two louers were yfere
So may I saye wythouten any blame
yf any man to wylde were
I coude hym teche for to be tame
Lette hym go loue and se where it be game
For I am brydled vnto soberness
For her that is of women chefe princesse

But euer whē thought my herte shuld enbrace
Then vnto me is best remedy
when I loke on your goodly freshe face
So mery a myrrour coude I neuer espye
And yf I coude I wolde it magnifye
For neuer none was so fayre yfounde
To reken hem all, and also Rosamounde

And fynally wyth mouthe and wyl present
Of double eye wythout repentaunce
Myne herte I yeue you lady in thys entent
That ye shall holy therof haue gouernaūce
Takynge my leaue wyth hertes obeysaunce
(Salue regina) syngynge last of al
To be our helpe when we to the cal

All our loue is but ydelnesse (attayne
Saue your loue alone, who might therto
who so wol haue a name of gentylnesse
I counsayle hym in loue that he not fayne
Thou swete lady, refute in euery payne
whose mercy moste to me auayleth
To gye by grace, when that fortune fayleth

Nought may be tolde wythouten any fable
Your hygh renome, your womanly beaute
Your gouernaunce to al worschyp able
Putteth euery herte in ease in hys degree
O violet, o floure desyree
Syth I am for you so amerous
Estreynes moy de cuer ioyous

with feruēt herte my brest hath brost on fyre
Lardant espoir que mō cuer poynt est mort
Dauoir lamour de celle que ie desyre
I meane you swete moste plesaunt of porte
Et ie say bien que ceo nest pas mon tort
That for you synge, so as I maye for mone
For your departynge, alone I lyue alone

Though I myght I woll none other chese
In your seruyce I wolde be founden sadde
Therfore I loue no labour that ye lese
when in longyng sorest ye be stadde
Loke vp ye louers and be rygh gladde
Ayenst saynt Valentynes daye
For I haue chese that neuer forsake I may.

Explicit.

Johan Gower, vnto the worthy and noble Kynge Henry the fourth.

Noble worthy kyng Henry the ferthe
In whome the glad fortune is befall
The people to gouerne here vpon erthe
God hath the chosen in comforte of vs all
the worschip of this lāde which was doun fal
Now stant vpryzt thzugh grace of thy good-
which euery man is holde for to blesse (nesse

The hygh god of his iustice alone
The rygh whych longeth to thy regaly
Declared hath to stande in thy persone
And more then god may no man iustifye
Thy tytel is knowe vpon thyne auncestrye
The landes folke hath eke thy right affirmed
So stante thy reygne, of god & mā cōfyrmed

There is no man may saye in otherwyse
That god hym selfe ne hath ỳ rygh declared
wherof the lande is bounde to thy seruyce
whych for defaute of helpe hath longe cared
But nowe there is no mannes herte spared
To loue and serue, and worche thy plesaunce
And all thys is through goddes purueyaūce

In all thynge whych is of god begonne
There foloweth grace yf it be wel gouerned
Thus tellen they whych olde bokes conne
wherof my lord I wote well thou art lerned
Aske of thy god, so shalt thou not be warned
Of no request whych is reasonable
For god vnto the good is fauourable

kyng Salomon whiche had at hys askynge
Of god, what thyng him was leuest craue
He chase wysedom vnto gouernynge
Of goddes folke, the whiche he wolde saue
And as he chase it fyll him for to haue
For through his wyt while ỳ his reigne last
He gate him peace and rest in to his last

But Alexander as telleth hys storie
Unto the god besought in other wey
Of all the worlde to wynne the vyctorie
So that vnder hys swerde it myght obey
In warre he had al that he wolde prey
The mighty god behight him that behest
The worlde wanne, and had it of conquest

But though it fyll at thylke tyme so
That Alexander his askyng hath atcheued
This synfull worlde was all paynem tho
was none which hath the highe god beleued
No wōder was though thilk world was gre
Though a tyrāt his purpose mizt wyn (ued
All was vengeaunce and in fortune of syn

But nowe the faith of Christ is come a place
Among the princes in this erthe here
It sytte hem well to do pyte and grace
But yet it must be temprel in manere
For they kynden cause in the matere
Upon the poynt, what afterwarde betyde
The lawe of right shall nat be layde a syde

So may a kynge of warre the voyage
Ordayne and take, as he therto is holde
To clayme & aske hys ryghtfull heritage
In all places where it is wyth holde

But

But otherwyse yf god hym selfe wolde
Affyrme loue and peace betwene the kynges
Peace is the best aboue al erthly thynges

Good is to eschewe warre, and nathelees
A kynge may make warre vpon hys ryght
For of batayle the fynall ende is pees
Thus stant the lawe that a worthy knyght
Vpon hys trouth may go to the fyght
But yf so were that he myght chese
Better is the peace of whych may no mã lese

To stere peace ought euerych on lyue
Fyrst for to set hys liege lorde in rest
And eke these other men that they ne stryue
For so thys lande maye stande at best
what kynge that wolde be the worthyest
The more he myght our deedly warre cease
The more he shuld his worthynesse encrease

Peace is the chefe of al the worldes welth
And to the heuen it ledeth eke the waye
Peace is of soule and lyfe the mannes helth
Of pestilence, and doth the warre awaye
My liege lorde take hede of that I saye
yf warre may be lefte, take peace on hande
whych may not be wythout goddes sande

wyth peace stante euery creature in rest
wythout peace there may no lyfe be gladde
Aboue all other good peace is the best
Peace hath hym selfe whẽ werre is al bestad
The peace is sake, the warre is euer adrad
Peace is of al charite the kay
whych hath the lyfe and soule for to way

My liege lorde yf that thy lyst to seche
The soth ensãples what ỳ war hath wrought
Thou shalt wel here of wyse mẽnes speche
That deedly warre tourneth into nought
For yf these olde bokes be wel ysought
There myght ỳ se what thing ỳ war hath do
Both of conquest and conquerour also

For vayne honoure, or for the worldes good
They that whylom the strõge warres made
wher be they now, bethinke wel in thy mood
The day is gone, the nyght is derke & fade
Hir cruelte whych made hem then glade
They sorowẽ now, & yet haue nauȝt ỳ more
The blode is shad, whych no mã may restore

The warre is mother of the wronges all
It sleeth the preest in holy church at masse
Forlyth the mayde, & doth her flour to fall
The warre maketh the great cyte lasse
And doth the lawe hys rules ouerpasse
Ther is nothig wherof myschefe may grow
whych is not caused of the warre I trowe

The warre bringeth in pouerte at hys heles
wherof the cõmen people is sore greued
The warre hath set his cart on thylk wheles
where that fortune may not be beleued
For when men wene best to haue acheued
Full ofte it is all newe to begyn
The warre hath nothỹng syker tho he wyn

For thy my worthy prince in Christes halue
As for aparte whose faith thou hast be gyde
Ley to this olde sore a newe salue
And do the warre away what so betyde
Purchace peace and set it by thy syde
And suffre not thy people be deuoured
So shal thy name euer after stãde honoured

yf any man be nowe or euer was
Ayen the peace thy preuy counsaylour
Let god be of thy counsayle in thys caas
And put away the cruel warryour
For god whych is of man the creatour
He wolde not men slough hys creature
wythout cause of deedly forfayture

where nedeth most, behoueth most to loke
My lorde, howe so thy warres be wythout
Of tyme passed, who that hede toke
Good were at home to se ryght wel about
For euermore the worst is for to doute
But yf thou myghtest parfyte peace attayne
There shulde be no cause for to playne

About a kyng good counsayle is to preyse
Aboue al other thynges moste vaylable
But yet a kynge wythin hym selfe shal peyse
And sene the thynges that be resonable
And therupon he shall hys wyttes stable
Amonge the men to sette peace in euen
For loue of hym whych is the kyng of heuen

A, well is hym that shedde neuer blode
But yf it were in cause of ryghtwysenesse
For yf a kyng the peryl vnderstode
what is to slee the people, then I gesse

The deedly warres and the heuynesse
wherof peace dystourbed is full ofte
Shulde at some tyme cesse and were softe

O kyng fulfylled of grace and knyghthode
Remembre vpō this poynt for Christes sake
yf peace be profered vnto thy manhode
Thyne honour saue, let it not be forsake
Though ȳ the warres darste wel vndertake
After reason yet temper thy courage
For lyke to peace there is none auauntage

My worthy lorde, thynke well how so befall
Of thylke lore, as holy bokes sayne
Christ is the heed, and we be membres all
As well the subiecte as the souerayne
So syt it wel that charite be playne
whych vnto god hym selfe moste accordeth
So as the lore of Christes worde recordeth.

In tholde lawe or Christ him selfe was bore
Amonge the .x. cōmaundementes I rede
Howe that manslaughter shulde be forbore
Suche was the wyl that tyme of ȳ godhede
But afterward whē Christ toke hys māhede
Peace was the fyrst thynge he let do crye
Ayenst the worldes rancour and enuy

And or Christ went out of thys erth here
And stygheed to heuen, he made hys testamēt
where he bequath to hys dyscyples there
And yaue hys peace, which is the foūdemēt
Of charite, wythout whose assent
The worldes peace may neuer wel be tryed
Ne loue kepte, ne lawe iustifyed

The iewes wyth ȳ paynyms hadden werre
But they amōge hem self stode euer in peace
why shulde then our peace stande out of erre
which christ hath chose to his owne encrese
For Christ is more then was Moses
And Christ hath set the parfyte of the lawe
The whych shuld in no wyse be wythdrawe

To yeue vs peace was cause why christ dyde
wythout peace may nothynge stāde auayled
But nowe a man may se on euery syde
Howe Christes fayth is euery daye assayled
wyth the paynems destroyed & so batayled
That for defaute of helpe and of defence
Unneth hath Christ hys due reuerence

The ryght fayth to kepe of holy churche
The fyrst poynt is named of knyghthode
And euery man is holde for to wurche
Upon the poynt that stante to hys manhode
But nowe alas, the fame is spred so brode
That euery man thys thynge complayneth
And yet is there no mā that helpe ordayneth

The worldes cause is wayted ouer all
There be the warres redy to the full
But Christes owne cause in speciall
There ben the swerdes and the speres dull
And wyth the sentence of the popes bul
As for to done the folke payne obey
The churche is turned all another wey

It is wonder aboue any mannes wyt
wout warre howe Christes fayth was won
And we that be vpon thys erth yet
Ne kepe it not as it was fyrst begon
To euery creature vnder the sonne
Christ badde hym selfe that we shulde preche
And to the folke hys Euangely teche

More lyght it is to kepe then to make
But that we founden made to fore honde
we kepe not, but lette it lyghtly slake
The peace of christ hath all to broke his bōde
we rest our selfe, and suffren euery londe
To slee eche other, as thyng vndefended
So stant the warre, & peace is not amended

But though the heed of holy church aboue
Ne do not al hys hole busynesse
Amonge the people to set peace and loue
These kynges oughten of her rightwysnesse
Her owne cause amonge hem selfe redresse
Tho Peters shyp as now hath loste his stere
It lyeth in hem the barge for to stere

yf holy churche after the dewte
Of Christes worde ne be not all auysed
To make peace, accorde, and vnite
Amonge the kynges that be nowe deuysed
Yet natheles the lawe stante assysed
Of mannes wytte to be so resonable
wythout that to stande hym selfe stable

Of holy church we ben chyldren all
And euery chylde is holde for to bowe
Unto the mother, howe that euer it fall
Or els he muste reason dysalowe

And

And for that cause a knyght shal first auowe
The ryght of holy church to defende
That no man shal the priuylege offende

Thus were it good to sette al in euen
The worldes princes, and the prelates both
For loue of hym which is the kynge of heuen
And yf men shuld algate waxen wrothe
The Sarazins, whych vnto Christ ben loth
Let men be armed ayenst hem to fyght
So may the knyght hys dede of armes right

Upō thre pointes stāt Christes peace oppressed
First holy church in her selfe deuyded (sed
whych ought of reason first to be redressed
But yet so hygh a cause is not desyded
And thus when humble pacience is pryded
The remnaunt whych that they shulde rule
No wonder is though it stande out of rule

Of that the heed is syck the lymmes aken
These reignes that to Christes peace belōgē
For worldes good these deedly warres makē
whych helplesse, as in balaunce hongen
The heed aboue hem hath not vnderfongen
To sette peace, but euery man sleeth other
And in thys wyse hath charite no brother

The two defautes bryngen in the thyrde
Of myscreauntes that sene howe we debate
Betwene the two, they fallen in amydde
where nowe al daye they fynde an open gate
Lo, thus the deedly werre stante algate
But euer I hope of kynge Henries grace
That he it is, whych shal the peace embrace

My worthy noble prynce and kynge anoynt
whome god hath of hys grace so preserued
Beholde and se the worlde vpon this poynt
As for thy part, that Christes peace be serued
So shal thy hygh mede be deserued
To hym whych all shall quyte at laste
For thys lyke here may no whyle laste

Se Alexander, Hector, and Julius
Se Machabeus, Dauid, and Josue
Se Charlemayne, Godfray, and Arthus
Fulfylled of warre and of mortalite
Her fame abytte, but all is but vanite
For deth, whych hath the warres vnder fote
Hath made an ende, of whych ther is no bote

So many a mā the soth wete and knowe
That peace is good for euery kynge to haue
The fortune of the warre is euer vnknowe
But where peace is, ther is the marches saue
That nowe is vp, to morow is vnder graue
The myghtye god hath all grace in hande
wythout hym men may not longe stande

Of the tennes to wynne or lese a chace
May no lyke wete or that the bal be ronne
Al stant in god what thing mē shal purchace
Thende is in hym or that it be begonne
Men sayne the wolle when it is well sponne
Doth that the cloth is stronge & profytable
And els it maye neuer be durable

The worldes chaunces vpon auenture
Ben euer sette, but thylke chaunce of pees
Is so behouely to the creature
That is aboue al other peerles
But it may not beget natheles
Amonge the men to laste any whyle
But where the herte is playne without gyle

The peace is as it were a sacrament
Tofore the god, & shall wyth wordes playne
wythout any double entendement
Be treated, for the trouth can not fayne
But yf the men wythin hem selfe ben vayne
The substaūce of the peace may not be trewe
But euery day it chaungeth vpon newe

But who that is of charite parfyte
He voydeth al fleyghtes ferre awaye
And sette hys worde vpon the same plyte
where that his hert hath foūde a syker waye
And thus when conscience is trewly waye
And that these ben handled wyth the wyse
It shall abyde, and stande in all wyse

The Apostle sayth, ther may no lyke be good
whych is not grounded vpon charite
For charite ne shedde neuer blood
So hath the warre as there no properte
For thylke vertue whych is sayd pyte
wyth charite so ferforth is acquaynted
That in her may no false sēblant be paynted

Cassodore, whose wrytynge is authorised
Sayth: where that pyte reygneth is grace
Thrugh whych ý peace hath al his weith al
So ý of warre he dredeth no manace (sysed
where

where pyte dwelleth in the same place
There maye no deedly cruelte soiourne
wherof that mercy shulde hys way tourne

To se what pyte forth wyth mercy doth
The cronique is at Rome in thylke empyre
Of Constantyne, whych is a tale sothe
when hym was lyuer hys owne deth desyre
Then do the yonge chyldren to martyre
Of crueltie he lefte the quarele
Pyte he wrought, and pyte was hys hele

For thylke mannes pyte whych he dede
God was pytous, and made hym hole at all
Sylvester came, and in the same stede
Yaue hym baptyme fyrst in special
whych dyd awaye the synne origynall
And all hys lepre it hath so purifyed
That hys pyte for euer is magnifyed

Pyte was cause why thys Emperour
was hole in body and in soule bothe
And Rome also was sette in thylke honour
Of Christes fayth, so that the leue of loth
whych hadden be wyth Christ tofore wroth
Receyued were vnto Christes lore
Thus shall pyte be prayfed euermore

My worthy liege lorde Henry by name
whych Englande haste to gouerne & ryght
Men ought well thy pyte to proclame
whych openlyche in all the worldes syght
Is shewed, wyth the helpe of god almyght
To yeue vs peace which lōg hath be debated
wherof thy pryse shal neuer be abated

My lorde, in whom hath euer yet be founde
Pyte, wythout spotte of violence
Kepe thylke peace alwaye wythin bounde
whych god hath planted in thy conscience
So shall the cronyque of thy pacience
Amonge the sayntes be taken into memorye
To the legende of perdurable glorye

And to thyne ert hely pryse, so as I can
whych euery man is holde to cōmende
I Gower, whych am all thy liege man
Thys letter vnto thyne excellence I sende
As I whych euer vnto my lyues ende
woll pray for the state of thy persone
In worshyppe of thy sceptre and thy throne

Not onely to my kynge of peace I wryte
But to these other prynces christen all
That eche of hem hys owne herte endyte
And sese the warre or more myschefe fall
Sette eke the ryghtful puppe vpon hys stall
Kepe charite, and drawe pyte to hande
Mainteyn lawe, and so the peace shal stande

Explicit carmē de pacis cōmēdatione quod ad laudem et memoriā serenissimi principis domini regis Henrici Quarti, suus humilis orator Johannes Gower composuit.

Electus Christi, pie rex Henrice fuisti
Qui bene venisti, cum propria regna petisti
Tu mala vicistiqz bonis bona restituisti
Et populo tristi, noua gaudia contribuisti
Est mihi spes lata, qd adhue per te renouata
Succedent fata, veteri probitate beata
Est tibi nam grata, gratia sponte data
Henrici quarti, primus regni fuit annus
Quo mihi defecit visus ad acta mea
Dia tēpus habent finem natura ministrat
Quem virtute sua frangere nemo potest
Vltra posse nihil quāuis mihi velle remansit
Amplius vt scribam non mihi posse manet
Dū potui scripsi, sed nūc quia curua senectus
Turbauit sensus scripta relinquo scolis
Scribat qui veniet post me discretior alter
Ammodo namqz manus et mea penna silent
Hoc tamen in fine verborum queso meorum
Prospera quod statuat regna futura deus.

Explicit.

Of the Cuckow & the nightyngale.

THe god of loue, ah benedicite
How myghty and howe great a lorde is he
For he can make of lowe hertes hye
And of hye lowe, & lyke for to dye
And harde hertes he can maken free

He can make within a lytle stounde
Of sycke folke hole, fresh and sounde
And of hole he can make seke
He can bynde and vnbynden eke
That he wol haue bounden or vnbounde

To tel his myght my wyt may not suffyse
For he can make of wyse folke ful nyce
For he may do al that he wol deuyce
And lythy folke to destroyen byce
And proude hertes he can make agryse

Shortly all that euer he wol he may
Agaynst hym dare no wyght say naye
For he can glad & greue whom hym lyketh
And who that he wol he loweth or syketh
And most his might he shedeth euer in may

For euery true gentle hert free
That with hym is or thynketh for to be
Agayne May now shal haue some sterynge
Or to ioye or els to some mournyng
In no season, so moche as thynketh me

For whan they may here the byrdes synge
And se the floures and the leues sprynge
That bryngeth into her remembraunce
A maner ease medled with greuaunce
And lusty thoughtes full of great longyng

And of that longyng cometh heuynesse
And therof groweth oft great sycknesse
And for lacke of that that they desyre
And thus in May ben hertes set on fyre
So that they brennen forth in gret distresse

I speke thys of felyng trewly
If I be olde and vnlusty
Yet I haue felt of the sicknes through May
Both hote and colde, and axes euery day
How sore ywys there wote no wight but I

I am so shaken with the feuers whyte
Of al thys May slepe I but a lyte
And also it is not lyke to me
That any hert shulde slepy be
In whom that loue his firy dart wol smyte

But as I laye thys other nyght wakyng
I thought howe louers had a tokenyng
And amonge hem it was a comune tale
That it were good to here the nyghtyngale
Rather than the leude cockowe syng

And than I thought anone as it was daye
I wolde go somwhere to assay
If that I myght a nyghtyngale here
For yet had I none herde of al that yere
And it was tho the thyrde nyght of May

And anone as I the day aspyde
No lenger wolde I in my bedde abyde
But vnto a woode that was fast by
I went forth alone boldely
And helde the way downe by a broke syde

Tyl I came to a launde of whyte and grene
So fayre one had I neuer in bene
The groud was grene, ypoudred w̃ daysye
The floures and the greues lyke hye
Al grene and whyte, was nothyng els sene

There sate I downe among ÿ fayre floures
And saw ÿ byrdes trippe out of her bowres
There as they rested hem al the nyght
They were so ioyful of the dayes lyght
They began of Maye for to done houres

They coude that seruice al by rote
There was many a louely note
Some songe loude as they had playned
And some in other maner voice yfayned
And some al out wyth the ful throte

They proyned hem, & made hem ryght gay
And daunseden and lepten on the spray
And euermore two and two in fere
Ryght so as they had chosen hem to yere

In Feuerere vpon saynct Valentynes daye

And the ryuer that I sat vpon
It made suche a noyse as it ron
Accordaunt with the byrdes armony
Me thought it was the best melody
That myght ben yherde of any mon

And for delyte I wot neuer how
I fel in suche a slombre and a swowe
Nat all asleepe ne fully wakyng
And in ý swowe me thought I herde synge
The sorry byrde the leude cuckowe

And that was on a tree ryght fast by
But who was than euyl apayde but I
Now god (q I) that dyed on the croys
Yeue sorowe on the, and on thy leude voys
Full lytle ioye haue I now of thy crye

And as I w̃ the cuckowe thus gan chyde
I herde in the next bush besyde
A nyghtyngale so lustely synge
That with her clere voyce she made ryng
Through all the grene wood wyde

Ah, good nyghtyngale (q I then)
A lytle hast thou ben to longe hen
For here hath ben the leude cuckowe
And sõgen songes rather than hast thou
I pray to god euyll fyre her bren

But now I wol you tel a wondre thyng
As longe as I laye in that swownyng
Me thought I wyst what the byrdes ment
And what they sayd, & what was her entẽt
And of her speche I had good knowynge

There herde I the nyghtyngale say
Now good cuckowe go some where awaye
And let us that can syngen dwellen here
For euery wyght eschueth the to here
Thy songes be so elenge in good fay

what (q he) what may the aylen nowe
It thynketh me, I synge as wel as thou
For my songe is both true and playne
And thaugh I can not crakel so in vayne
As thou dost in thy throte, I wot neuer (howe
And euery wyght may vnderstand me
But nyghtyngale so may they not done the

For thou hast many a nyce queynt crye
I haue the herde sayne, ocy ocy
How might I knowe what that shulde be

Ah foole (q she) wost thou not what it is
whan that I say, ocy ocy ywys
Than meane I that I wolde wondre fayne
That all they were shamefully yslayne
That meanen ought agayne loue amys

And also I wolde that al tho had the dede
That thynke not in loue her lyke to lede
For who so ý woll not the god of loue serue
I dare wel say he is worthy to sterue
And for that skyll, ocy ocy I grede

Eye (q the cuckowe) this is a queynt lawe
That euery wight shal loue or be to drawe
But I forsake al suche company
For myne entent is not for to dye
Ne neuer whyle I lyue on loues yoke to (drawe
For louers ben the folke that ben on lyue
That moost disease haue, & moost wnthryue
And most endure sorowe, wo and care
And lest felen of welfare
what nedeth it ayenst trouth to stryue

what (q she) thou art out of thy mynde
How myght thou in thy churlenesse kynde
To speke of loues seruauntes in this wyse
For in this worlde is none so good seruyce
To euery wyght that gentle is of kynde

For therof truly cõmeth all goodnesse
All honour and al gentlenesse
worshyp, ease, and al hertes lust
Parfyte ioye, and ful assured trust
Iolytie, pleasaunce and freshnesse

Lowlyhed, largesse, and curtesye
Semelyhed, and trewe company
Drede of shame for to done amys
For he that truly loues seruaunt is
were lother be shamed than to dye

And that this is soth that I sey
In that beleue I wyll lyue and dey
And cuckow so I rede that thou do ywys
Than (q he) let me neuer haue blysse
Yf euer I vnto that counsayle obey

Nyghtyngale thou spekest woundre fayre
But for al that is the soth contrayre
For loue is in yonge folke but rage
And in olde folke a great dotage
Who most it vseth most shal enpayre

For thereof cōmeth disease and heuynesse
So sorowe & care & many a great sykenesse
Despyte, debate, angre and enuy
Deprauyng, shame, vntrust and ielousye
Pryde, mischefe, pouertie & wodnesse

Louyng is an offyce of dispayre
And one thyng is therin that is not fayre
For who that getteth of loue a lytie blysse
But yf he be alway therwith ywys
He may ful sone of age haue his heyre

And nyghtyngale therfore holde the nye
For leue me wel, for al thy queynt crye
Yf thou be farre or longe fro thy make
Thou shalt be as other that ben forsake
And than thou shalt hoten as do I

Fye (q̃ she) on thy name and on the
The god of loue ne let the neuer ythe
For ỳ art worse a thousandfolde thā wood
For many one is ful worthy and ful good
That had be nought ne had loue ybe

For euermore loue his seruauntes amēdeth
And from all yuyl taches hem defendeth
And maketh hem to bren ryght in a fyre
In trouth and in worshypful desyre
And whā hem lyketh, ioye ynough hem sen-
(deth
Thou nyghtyngale he sayd be styll
For loue hath no reason, but it is wyll
For oft tyme vntrue folke he easeth
And trewe folke so bytterly he displeaseth
That for default of corage he let hym spyll

Than toke I of the nyghtingale kepe
How she cast a sygh out of her depe
And sayd, alas that euer I was bore
I can for tene not say one worde more
And ryght with that worde she brast out to
wepe
Alas (q̃ she) my hert woll to breke
To heren thus this leude byrde speke
Of loue, and of his worshypful seruyce
Now god of loue thou helpe me in somwise
That I may on this cuckowe ben awreke

Me thought than he sterte vp anon
And glad was I that he was agon
And euermore the cuckowe as he flaye
Sayd, farewel farewel poppyngaye
As though he had scorned me alone

And than came the nyghtyngale to me
And sayd, frende forsoth I thanke the
That thou hast lyked me to rescowe
And one auowe to loue make I nowe
That all this May I woll thy synger be

I thanked her, and was ryght well apayde
Ye (q̃ she) and be thou not dismayde
Tho thou haue herde ỳ cukowe erst than I
For yf I lyue it shal amended be
The next May, yf I be not afrayde

And one thyng I wyll rede the also
Ne leue thou not the cukow ne his loues so
For all that he hath sayd is stronge lesyng
Nay (q̃ I) therto shal nothyng me bryngе
For loue, and it hath do me moche wo

Ye vse (q̃ she) this medicyne
Euery day this May or thou dyne
Go loke vpon the fresh daysye
And though thou be for wo in poynt to dye
That shal full greatly lessen the of thy pyne

And loke alwaye that thou be good & trewe
And I woll synge one of the songes newe
For loue of the, as loude as I may crye
And than she began this songe full hye
I shrewe all hem that ben of loue vntrewe

And whan she had songe it to the ende
Now farewel (q̃ she) for I mote wende
And god of loue, ỳ can ryght wel and maye
As moche ioye sende the this day
As any yet louer he euer sende

Thus taketh ỳ nyghtingale her leaue of me
I praye to god alwaye with her be
And ioye of loue he sende her euermore
And shylde vs fro the cuckowe and his lore
For there is not so false a byrde as he

Forthe she stewe the gentle nyghtyngale
To all the byrdes in that were that dale

And gate hem all into a place in fere
And besoughten hem that they wold here
Her disease, and thus began her tale

The cuckowe, well it is not for to hyde
How the cuckowe and I fast haue chyde
Euer sythen it was day lyght
I praye you al that ye do me ryght
Of that foule false vnkynde bride

Than spake o byrde, for al by one assent
This mater asketh good auysement
For we ben byrdes here in fere
And soth it is, the cuckowe is not here
And therfore we wol haue a parlyment

And therat shal the egle be our lorde
And other peres that ben of recorde
And the cuckowe shalbe after sent
There shalbe yeue the iugement
Or els we shal fynally make accorde

And this shalbe without nay
The morow after sayn̄t Valentynes day
Under a maple that is fayre and grene
Before the chambre wyndowe of the quene
At wodstocke vpon the grene laye

She thanked hem, and than her leaue toke
And into an hauthorne by that broke
And there she sat and songe vpon that tree
Terme of lyfe loue hath withholde me
So loude that I with that songe awoke

Explicit.

Leude booke wyth thy foule rudenesse
Syth thou hast neither beautie ne eloquence
who hath the, caused or yeue the hardynesse
For to appeare in my ladyes presence:
I am ful syker thou knowest her beneuolēce
Ful agreable to al her abeying
For of all good she is the best lyuyng

Alas that thou ne haddest worthynesse
To shewe to her some pleasaunt sentence
Syth that she hath through her gentylesse
Accepted ꝑ seruaūt to her digne reuerence
O, me repenteth that I ne had science
And leyser als, to make the more florishinge
For of al good she is the best lyuyng

Beseche her mekely with all lowlynesse
Though I be ferre from her in absence
To thinke on my trouth to her & stedfastnes
And to abrege of my sorowes the violence
which caused is, wherof knoweth your sapi-
she lyke amōg to notify me her lykinge(ence
For of all good she is the best lyuyng.

Lenuoye.

Aurore of gladnesse, and daye of lustynesse
Lucerne, a nyght with heuēly influence
Illumined, rote of beutie and goodnesse
Sulpyres which I effunde in scilence
Of grace I beseche alege let your wrytyng
Now of all good, syth ye be best lyuynge.

Explicit.

Scogan vnto the lordes and gentlemen of the kynges house.

Y noble sonnes, and eke
my lordes dere
I your father, called vnworthely
Sende vnto you this lytyll treatyse here
wrytten with myne own hande full rudely
Although it be that I not reuerently
Haue wrytten to your estates, I you pray
Myne vncounyng taketh benignely
For gods sake, and herken what I say

I cōplayne me sore whan I remembre me
The sodayne age that is vpon me fall
But more I cōplayne my mispent iuuētute
The which is impossyble ayen for to call
But certaynly the most cōplaynt of all
Is to thynke that I haue be so nyce
That I ne wolde vertues to me call
In al my youth, but vyces aye cheryce.

Of which I aske mercy of the lorde
That art almyghty god in maiestie
Besekyng to make so euen accorde
Betwyxe the and my soule that vanitie
worldly lust, ne blynde prosperitie
Haue no lordshyp ouer my flesh to frele
Thou lorde of rest and parfyte vnitie
Put fro me vyce, and kepe my soule hele

And yeue me myght whyle I haue lyfe and
Me to cōfyrme fully to thy pleasaūce (space
Shewe to me aboundaunce of thy grace
and in good werkes graūt me perseueraūce
Of all my youth forget the ignorauncе
Yeue me good wyl to serue ý aye to queme
Set all my lyfe after thyne ordinaunce
And able me to mercy or thou deme

My lordes dere, why I this cōplaint wryte
To you whom I loue moost enterely
Is for to warne you, as I can endyte
That tyme lost in youth folyly
Greueth a wyght bodily and ghostly
I meane hem that to luste & vyce entende
wherfore lordes I praye you specially
Your youth in vertue shapeth to dyspende

Plante the rote of youthe in such a wyse
That in vertue your growynge be alway
Loke alwaye goodnesse be in your exercyse
That shall you myghty make at eche assay
The fende to wythstande at eche affray
Passeth wysely thys perylous pylgrymage
Thynke on thys worde, & werke it euery day
That shall you yeue a parfyte floured age

Taketh also hede howe ý these noble clerkes
wrytten in her bokes of great sapience
Sayeng ý fayth is deed wythouten werkes
And ryght so is estate wyth negligence
Of vertue, and therfore wyth diligence
Shapeth of vertue so to plante the rote
That ye therof haue full experience
To worshyp of your lyfe and soules bote

Taketh also hede that lordshyp ne estate
wythout vertue may not longe endure
Thynketh eke howe vyces & vertue at debate
Haue ben & shall whyle the worlde may dure
And euer the vycious by auenture
Is ouerthrowe, and thynketh euermore
That god is lorde of al vertue, and fygure
Of all goodnesse, & therfore folowe his lore

My mayster Chaucer, god hys soule saue
That in hys langage was so curious
He sayd that ý father whych is deed & graue
Byqueth nothynge hys vertue w̄ his house
Unto hys chyldren, and therfore laborouse
Ought ye be, besekynge god of grace
To yeue you myght for to be vertuous
Through whych ye might haue parte of his place

Here may se that vertuous noblesse
Cometh not to you by way of auncestrye
But it cometh by leful besynesse
Of honest lyfe, and not by slogardrie
wherfore in youth I rede you ye edifye
The house of vertue in suche a manere
That in your age may you kepe and gye
Fro the tempest of worldes wawes here

Thynketh howe betwyxe vertue and estate
There is a parfyte blessed mariage
Vertue is cause of peace, vyce of debate

In mans soule the which be full of corage
Cherysheth than vertue, vyces to outrage
Driueth hē away, let hem haue no wōning
In your soules leseth not the heritage
which god hath yeue to vertuous lyuyng.

Taketh hede also, how men of pore degree
Through vertue haue be set ingreat honour
And euer haue lyued in great prosperitie
Through cherysshyng of vertuous labour
Thynketh also how many a gouernour
Called to estate, hath be set full lowe
Through mislysyng of ryght, and of errour
And therfore I coūsel you vertue to knowe

thus by your aūcestres ye may nothig claim
As ý my master Chaucer sayth expresse
But tēporal thig, ý men may hurt or maym
Than is god stocke of vertues noblesse
And syth that he is lorde of blyssednesse
And made vs al, and for vs all deyde
Foloweth hym in vertue with full besynesse
And of this thing herk how my master seyd

The fyrst stocke, father of gentylnesse
what man that claymeth gentle for to be
Must folow his trace, & al his wyttes dres
Vertue to loke, and vyces for to flye
For vnto vertue longeth dignitie
And not the reuers, sakely dare I deme
All weare he mytre, crowne or dyademe

The fyrst stocke was full of ryghtwysnesse
True of his worde, sobre pytous and free
Clene of his ghost, and loued besynesse
Ayenst the vyce of slouth in honestie
And but his heyre loue vertue as dyd he
He is not gentle though he ryche seme
All weare he mytre, c rowne or dyademe

Vyce may be an heyre to olde rychesse
But there may no man, al men may se
Byqueth his heyre his vertuous noblesse
That is appropred vnto no degree
But to the fyrst father in maiestie
that maketh his heyres hem ý cā hi queme
Al weare he mytre, crowne or dyademe

Lo here this noble poete of Bretayne
How lyghtly in vertuous sentence
The losse on youth of vertue can cōplayne
And therfore I pray you with your diligēce
For your profyte and gods reuerence
Temprethfully vertue in your mynde
That whā ye come to your inges presence
Ye be not vertulesse than behynde.

Many lordes haue a maner now adayes
Though one shewe hem a vertuous matere
Her feruent youth is of so false alayes
That of that arte they haue no ioy to here
But as a shyp that is without a stere
Dryueth vp & downe without gouernaūce
wenyng that calme wolde laste yere by yere
Ryght so fare they for very ygnorauncе.

For very shame knowe they not by reason
ý after an ebbe there cōmeth a floud ful rage
In ý same wyse whā youth passeth his seō
Cōmeth croked and vnweldy palled age
And sone after cōmen ý kalendes of dotage
And if ý her youth haue no vertue prouided
All men wol say, fye on her vassalage
Thus hath her slouth fro worshyp hem de-
(uyded
Boetius the clerke, as men may rede and se
Sayth in his boke of Consolation
what man desyreth of vyne or tree
Plenteous frute in reapyng season
Must euer eschue to do oppressyon
Vnto the rote whyle it is yonge and grene
Thus may ye se wel by that inclusyon
That youth vertulesse doth moche tene

Now seeth there ayenst howe vertuous no-
Roted in youth wō good perseueraūce (blesse
Dryueth away al vyces and wretchednesse
As slogardrye, ryote, and distaunce
Seeth eke how vertue causeth sufficaunce
Seeth eke how vertue voydeth al vyse
And who so hath vertu hath al abūdaunce
Of wele, as ferre as reason can deuyse,

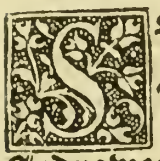
Taketh hede of Tullius Hostylius
That fro pouerte came to hygh degree
Through vertue, redeth eke of Julius
The conquerour, howe poore a man was he
Yet through his vertue and his humilitie
Of many countrie had he gouernaunce
Thus vertue bringeth a man to great degre
Eche wyght that lust to do him entēdaunce

Rede here ayenst now of Nero vertulees
Taketh hede also of proude Baithasare
They

They hated vertue, equyte and pees
And loke howe Antyochus fyl fro his chare
That he his skyn and bones al to tare
Loke what mischaũce they had for her vices
who so wol not by these signes beware
I dare wel say infortunate and nyce is

I cã no more nowe say, but herby may ye se
Howe vertue causeth perfyte sykernesse
And vices exilen al prosperite
The best is eche man to chose as I gesse
Doth as you lyst, I my excuse expresse
I wolde be ryght sory yf that ye mischese
God confirme you in vertuous noblesse
So that through negligence ye not it lese.

¶Explicit.



Somtyme the worlde so stedfast was and stable
That mannes worde was an obligation
And nowe it is so false and disceyuable
That worde and dede as in conclusion
Is nothyng lyke, for turned is vp so downe
Al the worlde, through mede and fykelnesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse

what maketh the worlde to be so variable
But lust that men haue in discention
For amonge vs a man is holde vnable
But yf he can by some collusion
Do his neighbour wronge and oppression
what causeth this but wylful wretchednesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse

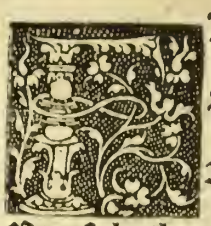
Trouth is put downe, reason is holde fable
Vertue hath nowe no domination
Pite is exiled, no man is merciable
Through couetyse is blente discretion
The worlde hath made a permutation
fro ryght to wrong, fro trouth to fykelnesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

¶Lenuoye.

Prince desyre to be honourable
Cherysh thy folke, and hate extorcion
Suffre nothyng that may be reprouable
To thyne estate done in thy region
Shewe forth the yerde of castigation
Drede god, do law, loue trouth & worthines
And wedde thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse.

¶Explicit.

¶Good counsayle of Chaucer.



Lye ye fro the prease & dwell wyth sothfastnesse
Suffice vnto thy good yf it be smal
For horde hathe hate, & clymbynge tykelnesse
Prease hath enuye, and wele is blent ouer al
Sauour no more than the behoue shall
Rede wel thy selfe that other folke shal rede
And trouth the shal delyuer it is no drede

Payne the not eche croked to redresse
In trust of her that turneth as a balle
Great rest stondeth in lytle besynesse
Beware also to spurne agayne a nalle
Stryue not as doth a Crocke wyth a walle
Deme thy selfe that demest others dede
And trouth the shal delyuer it is no drede

That the is sent receyue in buxomnesse
The wrastlyng of this worlde asketh a fal
Here is no home, here is but wyldernesse
Forth pylgrym, forth beest out of thy stal
Loke vpon heygh and thanke god of al
weyue thy lust and let thy goost the lede
And trouth the shal delyuer it is no drede

¶Explicit.

¶Balade of the vyllage wythout payntynge.

¶Playntyfe to fortune.

Hys wretched worldes transmutation
As wele & wo now pore and nowe honour
Wythout order or dew discretion
Gouerned is by fortunes errour
But nathlesse the lacke of her fauour
Ne may not do me singe though that I dye
Jay tout pardu mon temps et labour
For finally fortune I defye.

Yet is me lefte the syght of my reasoun
To knowe frende fro foe in thy myrrour
So much hath yet thy turnyng vp & doun
I taught me to knowen in an hour
But trewly no force of thy reddour

To hym that ouer hym selfe hath maystry
My suffisaunce shalbe my socour
For finally fortune I defye

O Socrates thou stedfast champion
She myght neuer be thy turmentour
Thou neuer dreddest her oppression
Ne in her chere founde thou no fauour
Thou knewe the disceyte of her colour
And that her moost worshyp is for to lye
I knowe her eke a false dissimulour
For finally fortune I defye

¶ The answere of fortune.

No man is wretched but hym selfe it wene
He that hath hym selfe hath suffisaunce
why sayst thou than I am so to the kene
That hast thy selfe out of my gouernaunce
say thus, graũt mercy of thyne abundaunce
That thou hast lent or this, ꝑ shalt not striue
what wost ꝓ yet howe I wyl the auaunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende on lyue

I haue the taught diuisyon betwene
Frende of effecte, and frende of coũtenaunce
The nedeth nat the galle of an hyne
That cureth eyen derke for her penaunce
Nowe seest thou clere ꝓ were in ignorauncе
Yet holt thyne anker, & yet thou maist ariue
there bounte bereth the key of my substaũce
And eke thon hast thy best frende alyue

Howe many haue I refused to sustene
Syth I haue the fostred in thy pleasaunce
wolt thou than make a statute on thy quene
That I shalbe aye at thyne ordynaunce
Thou borne arte in my reigne of baryaunce
Aboute ꝓ whele with other must thou dryue
My lore is bette, thã which is thy greuaũce
And eke thou hast thy best frende a lyue

¶ The answere to fortune.

Thy lore I dampne, it is aduersite
My frende mayst ꝓ not reue blynd goddesse
That I thy frendes knowe I thanke it the
Take hem agayne, let hem go lye a presse
The nygardes in kepyng her rychesse
Pronostyke is thou wolt her toure assayle
wicke appetyte cometh aye before syckenesse
In general thys rule may not fayle

¶ Fortune.

Thou pynchest at my mutabilyte
For I the lent a droppe of my rychesse
And nowe me lyketh to wythdrawe me
why shuldest thou my royalte oppresse
The see may ebbe and flowe more and lesse
The welkẽ hath mixt to shyne, rayne & hayle
Ryght so must I kyth my brotylnesse
In general thys rule may not fayle

¶ The playntyfe.

Lo, the execution of the maieste
That al purueyeth of hys ryghtwysenesse
That same thyng fortune clepen ye
ye blynde beestes ful of leudnesse
The heuen hath properte of sykernesse
Thys worlde hath euer restlesse trauayle
The laste day is ende of myne entresse
In general thys rule may not fayle

¶ Thenuoye of fortune.

Princes I pray you of your gentylnesse
Let not thys man on me thus crye & playne
And I shal quyte you thys besynesse
And yf ye lyst releue hym of hys payne
Pray ye hys best frende of his noblesse
That to some better estate he maye attayne

¶ Lenuoye.

O broken ben the statutes hye in heuen
That create were eternally tendure
Syth ꝓ I se the bryght goddes seuen
Nowe wepe and waile and passion endure
As maye in earth a mortal creature
Alas, fro whence may thys thynge procede
Of which errour I dye almost for drede

By worde eterne whilom was it shape
That fro the fyfth cercle in no manere
Ne myght of teares downe escape
But nowe so wepeth Venus in her sphere
that wyth her teares she wol drench vs here
Alas Skogan thys is for thyne offence
Thou causest thys deluge of pestilence

Hast ꝓ not sayd in blasphème of the goddis
through pride, or through thy gret rekilnesse
such thinges as in ꝓ lawe of loue forbode is
That for thy lady sawe not thy distresse
Therfore thou yaue her vp at Wyghelmesse
Alas Skogon of olde folke ne yonge
was neuer erst Skogã blamed for his tong

Thou

Thou drewe in scorne Cupide eke to recorde
Of thilke rebel worde that thou hast spoken
For which he wol no lenger be thy lorde
And Skogan though hys bow be not brokē
He wol not wyth his arowes ben ywroken
On the ne me, ne none of our figure
We shal of him haue neyther hurte ne cure

Now certes frend I drede of thine vnhappe
Lest for thy gylt the wretche of loue procede
On al hem ý bene hore and rounde of shappe
That bene so lykely folke to spede
Than we shal for our labour haue our mede
But wel I wotte thou wolte answere & say
Lo olde grysel lyst to renne and play

Nay Skogan say not so, for I me excuse
God helpe me so, in no ryme doutles
Ne thynke I neuer of slepe wake my muse
That rusteth in my sheth styl in pees
Whyle I was yong I put her forth in prees
But al shal passe that men prose or ryme
Take euery man his tourne as for his tyme

Skogan thou knelest at the stremes heed
Of grace, of al honour, and of worthynesse
In thende of whych I am dul as deed
Forgoten in solatary wyldernesse
Yet Skogan thinke on Tullius kindenesse
Mynde thy strende there it may fructify
Farewel, & loke thou neuer efte loue defye

Explicit.

O forthe kynge, rule the by sapience
Bysshoppe be able to ministre doctrine
Lorde to trewe counsayle yeue audience
Womanheade to chastyte euer enclyne
Knyght let thy dedes worshyp determyne
Be ryghtous iuge in sauyng thy name
Rych do almesse, lest thou lese blysse w̄ shame

People obey your kyng and the lawe
Age be thou ruled by good religion
Trew seruaūt be dredeful & kepe ý vnder awe
And thou poor fye on presumption
Inobedience to youth is vtter destruction
Remembre you howe god hath set you lo
And do your parte as ye be ordayned to.

Chaucer vnto hys empty purse.

To you my purse and to none other wight
Complayne I, for ye be my lady dere
I am sory nowe that ye be lyght
For certes ye nowe make me heuy chere
Me were as lefe be layde vpon a bere
For which vnto your mercy thus I crye
Be heuy agayne or els mote I dye

Nowe vouchsafe thys daye or it be nygt
That I of you the blyssful sowne may here
Or se your colour lyke the sunne bryght
That of yelownesse had neuer pere
Ye be my lyfe, ye be my hertes stere
Quene of comforte and of good company
Be heuy agayne, or els mote I dye

Nowe purse that arte to me my lyues lyght
And sauiour, as downe in thys worlde here
Out of thys towne helpe me by your myght
Syth that ye wol not be my treasourere
For I am shaue as nygh as any frere
But I pray vnto your curtesye
Be heuy agayne, or els mote I dye

Explicit.

Chaucer vnto the kynge.

O conquerour of Brutes Albyon
Whych that by lyne and free election
Bene very kynge, thys to you I sende
And ye that maye al harmes amende
Haue mynde vpon my supplycation.

Explicit.

Onsyder wel euery circūstaunce
Of what estate so euer thou be
Rych, stronge, or myghtye of puissaunce
Prudent or wyse discrete or bely
The dome of folke in soth thou maye not flye
What euer thou dost trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

For

For in thy porte or in thyne apparayle
If thou be cladde and honestly be seyne
Anone the people of malice wol not fayle
wythout aduyce or reason for to sayne
That thyn array is made & wrought in vaine
what suffre hem speke, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

Thou wolde to kynges be equiuolent
wyth great lordes euyn and peregal
And yf thou be torne and al to rent
Than wol they say, and iangle ouer al
That thou art a slogarde ý neuer thriue shal
Yet suffre hem speke, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If it befal that thou take a wyfe
They wol falsly say in theyr entent
That thou art lykely euer to lyue in stryfe
Voyde of al rest, wythout alegement
wyues hem maystren, thys is their iugemēt
Yet suffren theyr speche, and trust well thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be fayre and excellent of beaute
Yet wol they say that thou arte amerous
If thou be foule and vglye on to se
They woll affirme that thou art vicious
The peoples langage is so dispytous
Suffre al theyr speche, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If so be that thou of parfyteneſſe
Haue auowed to lyue in chastite
Than wol folke of thy person expresse
that thou art impotēt tengēdre in thy degre
And thus whether thou be chast or delauie
Suffre hem speke, and truste wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alwaye say amys

If thou be fatte or corpulent
Than woll they say thou art a gloton
A deuourer, or els bynolent
If thou be megre or leane of fashyon
Cal the a nygarde in theyr opinyon
Yet suffre them speke, and truste wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be ryche, some wol yeue the laude
And saye it cometh of prudent gouernaunce
And some wol say it cometh of fraude
Or by sleyght, or by false cheuysaunce
To say the worst, folke haue so gret plesaūce
what suffre hem say, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be sadde or sobre of countenaunce
Men wol say thou thynkest some treason
And yf thou be glad of dalyaunce
Men wol deme it dissolution
Callyng fayre speche adulation
Yet let hem speke, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

And who that is holy by perfection
Men of malyce wol cal hym an ypocrite
And who that is mery of clene entencion
Mē say in ryot he him doth delyte (white
some mourne in black, some lauze in clothes
what suffre hem say, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

who speketh much is holden prudent
And who debateth, mē saye that he is hardy
And who ý sayth lytle wyth great sentemēt
Some men yet wol wyte hym of foly
Trouth is put downe, & nowe goth flattery
& who ý lyst playnly know ý trouth of thys
It is a wycked tong, ý alway sayth amys

For though a man were as pacient
As was Dauid thorowe humilitie
Or with Salomon in wisdome as prudent
Or in knyghthode egal with Josue
Or manly proued, as Judas Machabe
Yet for al that, trust ryght wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

And though a mā had the hygh prowesse
Of worthy Hector, Troyes champion
The loue of Troylus, or the kyndnesse.
Or of Cesar the famous hygh renoun
wyth al Alysaunders domination
Yet for al that trust ryght wel thys
Some wycked tonge of hym wol say amys

Or though a man of hyghe or lowe degre
Of Tullius had the sugred eloquence
Or of Seneca the great moralite
Or of Caton the foresyght and prouidence
the cōquest of Charles Artures magnificēce
Yet for al that trust ryght well thys
Some wycked tonge wol say of hym amys

The

The wyſely trouth of Penelope
Though they it had in her poſſeſſion
Holyneſſe, beautie, the kyndeneſſe of Medee
The lyke vnfeyned of Martia Caton
Or of Alceſt the trewe affection
Yet dare I ſay, and truſt ryght well thys
A wycked tonge wol ſay of her amys

Than ſythen it is ſo, no man may eſchewe
The ſwerde of tonge, but it kerue and byte
Ful harde it is a man for to renewe
Out of theyr daunger him for to aquyte
wo to the tonges that hem ſo delyte (thys
To hynder or ſclaunder, & ſet theyr ſtudye in
And theyr pleaſaunce to do and ſay amys

Mooſt noble princes, cherylhers of vertue
Remembreth you of hygh diſcrecyon
The fyrſt vertue and moſt pleaſyng to Jeſu
(By the wrytyng and ſentence of Caton)
Is a good tonge in hys opinyon
Thaſtyſe the reuerſe, & of wyſdome do thys
withdraw your hering frō al ỳ ſaine amys.

¶ Et ſic eſt finis.

¶ Thus endeth the workes of Geffray Chaucer, Prynted at London. The yere of our lorde. 1542.

¶ Epitaphiū Galfridi Chaucer, per poetam lauriatum Stephanum Surigonum Mediolanenſem in decretis licentiatum.

Yerides muſe ſi poſſint numina fletus
Fundere, diuinas atq; rigare genas.
Galfridi vatis Chaucer crudelia fata
Plāgite: ſit lachrymis abſtinuiſſe nephas.
Nos coluit viuēs: at vos celebrate ſepultū
Reddatur merito gratia digna viro.
Grāde decus vobis ē docti muſa Maronis,
Qua didicit melius lingua latina loqui.
Grāde, nouūq; dec' Chaucer, famāq; pauit
Heu quantū fuerat priſca Britanna rudis
Reddidit inſignē maternis uerſibus, vt iam
Aurea ſplendeſcat, ferrea facta prius.
Hūc latuiſſe virū nil, ſi tot opuſcula vertes,
Dixeris, egregiis que decorata modis,
Socratis ingenium, vel fōtes philoſophie,
Quicquid et archani dogmata ſacra ferūt.
Et quaſcūq; velis, tenuit digniſſimus artes
Hic vates, paruo conditus hoc tumulo.
Ah laudis ōptū preclara Britannia perdis.
Dum rapuit tantum mors odioſa virū,
Crudeles parce, crudelia fila ſorores,
Non tamen extincta corpore, fama perit.
Viuet ineternum, viuent dum ſcripta poete:
Viuant eterno tot monumenta die.
Si qua bonos tāgit pietas, ſi carmie dign'
Carmia qui cecinit tot cumulata modis,
Hec ſibi marmoreo ſcribāt verba ſepulchro
Hec maneat laudis ſarcina ſumma ſue.
Galfridus Chaucer vates, et fama poeſis
Materne, hac ſacra ſum tumulat' humo.

¶ Poſt obitum Caxton voluit te viuere cura
willelmi, Chaucer clare poeta tui,
Nam tua nō ſolū cōpreſſit opuſcula formis
Has quoq; ſed laudes iuſſit hic eſſe tuas.