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CHAUCER'S CANTERBURY TALES
CHAUCER'S
CANTERBURY TALES

EDITED
WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTION
BY
ALFRED W. POLLARD

VOL. II

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MACMILLAN AND CO.
AND NEW YORK
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THE CANTERBURY TALES

GROUP D

The Prologe of the Wyves Tale of Bathe

"EXPERIENCE, though noon auctoritee
Were in this world, were right ynogh to me
To speke of wo that is in mariage;
For, lordynges, sith I twelf yeer was of age,—
Y-thonked be God, that is eterne on lyve!
Housbondes at chirchë dore I have had fyve;
For I so ofte have y-wedded bee;
And alle were worthy men in hir degree.
But me was toold certeyn, nat longe agoon is,
That sith that Crist ne wente nevere but onis
To weddyng, in the Cane of Galilee,
By' the same ensample taughte he me

Group D. In the Ellesmere M.S.
this group follows the
Man of Law's Tale,
but the mention of
Sittingbourne (l. 847)
shows that it must come
after the Monk's Tale

with its reference to
Rochester.

6. at chirche dore, where the
first part of the service
used to be read.

7. have y-wedded, H® might
have weddid.

12. taughte he, E thoughte.
That I ne sholdé wedded be but ones.
Herkne, eek, which a sharpe word for the none,
Beside a wellé Jhesus, God and man,
Spak in repreeve of the Samaritan:
‘Thou hast y-had fyve housbondes,’ quod he,
‘And that ilk man the which that hath now thee
Is noght thy housbonde;’ thus seyde he certeyn.
What that he mente therby, I kan nat seyn;
But that I axé why the fifté man
Was noon housbonde to the Samaritan?
How manye myghte she have in mariage?
Yet herde I nevere tellyn, in myn age,
Upon this nombré diffinicioun.
Men may devyne, and glossen up and doun,
But wel I woot, expres, withouté lye,
God bad us for to wexe and multiplye;
That gentil text kan I wel understonde.
Eek, wel I woot, he seydé myn housbonde
Sholde leté fader and mooter, and také me;
But of no nombré menciouñ made he,
Of bigamye, or of octogamye;
Why sholdé men speke of it vileynye.

"Lo, heere the wise kyng daùn Salomon;"
I trowe he haddé wyves mo than oon;
As, wolde God, it were leveful unto me
To be refresshed half so ofte as he!
Which gifte of God hadde he for alle hise wyvys!
No man hath swich that in this world alyve is.
God woot this noble kynge, as to my wit,
The firsté nyght had many a myrie fit
With ech of hem, so wel was hym on lyve.

"Y-blessed be God, that I have wedded fyve!"
Welcome the sixté, whan that evere he shal,
For sothe I wol nat kepe me chaast in al.
Whan myn housbonde is fro the world y-gon,
Som cristen man shal wedde me anon;
For thanne, thapostle seith, I am free
To wedde, a Goddes half, where it liketh me.
He seith to be wedded is no synne,—
‘Bët is to be wedded than to brynne.’
What rekketh me thogh folk seye vileynye
Of shrewëd Lameth, and his bigamye?
I woot wel Abraham was an hoply man,
And Jacob eek, as feforth as I kan,
And ech of hem hadde wyves mo than two,
And many another holy man also.
Whanne saugh ye evere in any manere age
That hye God defended mariage
By expres word? I pray you telleth me;
Or where comanded he virginitee?

50. a Goddes half, on God’s part, i.e. with His consent.
54. his, E² of.
58. holy, om. E².
60. defended, forbad.
I woot as wel as ye, it is no drede,
Thapostel whan he speaketh of maydenhede,
He seyde that precept ther-of hadde he noon.
Men may conseille a womman to been oon,
But conseillyng is nat comandemént.
He putte it in oure owene juggling;
For hadde God comanded maydenhede
Thanne hadde he damned weddyng with the dede;
And certein, if ther were no seed y-sowe,
Virginitee, wher-of thanne sholde it growe?
Poul ne dorste nat comanden, atté leeste,
A thyng of which his maister gaf noon heeste.
The dart is set up of virginitee,
Cacche who so may, who renneth best lat see!
"But this word is nat taken of every wight,
But ther as God lust gyve it of his myght.
I woot wel that the Apostel was a mayde,
But nathéelles, thogh that he wroot and sayde
He wolde that every wight were swich as he,
Al nys but conseil to virginitee;
And for to been a wyf he gaf me leve
Of indulgence, so it is no repreve
To wédé me, if that my make dye,
Withouten excepcioun of bigamye,
Al were it good no womman for to touche,—
He mente as in his bed or in his couche;

64. Thapostel whan he, E
    Whan thapostel.
73. ne, om. all but E.H.
79. that, om. E.
85. make, husband.
86. withouten, H² withoute.
For peril is bothe fyr and tow tasseble;
Ye knowe what this ensample may resemble.
This is al and som, he helde virginitee
Moore profiteth than weddyng in freletee;
Freeltee clepe I, but if that he and she
Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.

"I graunte it wel I havē noon envie
Thogh maydenhede preferrē bigamy;
Hem liketh to be cleīné, body and goost.
Of myn estaat I nyl nat make no boost,
For wel ye knowe a lord in his houshold
He nath nat every vessel al of gold;
Somme been of tree, and doon hir lord servyse.
God clepeth folk to hym in sondry wyse,
And everich hath of God a propre gifte,
Som this, som that, as hym liketh to shifte.

"Virginitee is greet perfeccion,
And continence eek, with devocioun;
But Crist, that of perfeccion is welle,
Bād nat every wight sholdē go selle
All that he hadde, and gyve it to the poore,
And in swich wisē folwe hym and his foore.
He spak to hem that wolde lyve parfitly,
And, lordynges, by youre leve, that am nat I.
I wol bistowē the flour of myn age
In the actēs and in fruyt of mariage.
“Telle me also, to what conclusioun
Were membres maad of generacioun,
And for what profit was a wight y-wroght?
Trusteth a right wel, they were nat maad for noght.
Glose who so wole, and seye bothe up and doun,
That they were makyd for purgacioun
Of uryne and oure bothe thynge's smale,
And eek to knowe a femele from a male,
And for noon oother causè,—sey ye no?
The experience woot wel it is noght so;
So that the clerkè's be nat with me wrothe,
I sey, yis, that they beth maked for bothe;
This is to seye, for office, and for ese
Of engendrure, ther we nat God displese.
Why sholde men ellès in hir bookès sette
That man shal yeldè to his wyf hire dentte?
Now wher-with sholde he make his paièment,
If he ne used his selè instrument
Thanne were they maad upon a créature,
To purge uryne and eek for engendrure.

“But I seyè noght that every wight is holde,
That hath swich harneyes as I to yow tolde,
To goon and usen hem in engendrure,—
Thanne shuld men take of chastitee no cure.
Crist was a mayde and shapen as a man,
And many a seınt sith the world bigan,
Yet lyved they evere in parfit chastitee.
I nyl nat envye no virginitee,
Lat hem be breed of puréd wheté seed,
And lat us wyves hoten barly breed,
And yet with barly breed Mark tellé kan
Oure Lord Jhesu refresshéd many a man.

“In swich estaat as God hath clepéd us
I wol persévere, I nam nat precius ;
In wyfhode I wol use myn instrument
As frely as my Makere hath it sent.
If I be daungerous, God geve me sorwe ;
Myn housbonde shal it have bothe eve and morwe,
Whan that hym list com forth and paye his dette.
An housbonde I wol have, I nyl nat lette,
Which shal be bothe my dettour and my thral,
And have his tribulacioun with al
Upon his flessh, whil that I am his wyf.
I have the power, durynge al my lyf,
Upon his propre body, and noght he.
Right thus the Apostel tolde it unto me,
And bad oure housbondes for to love us weel ;
Al this sentence me liketh every deel.”

Up stirte the Pardoner, and that anon ;
“Now, dame,” quod he, “by God and by Seint John !
Ye been a noble prechour in this cas.
I was aboute to wedde a wyf, allass !
What, sholde I bye it on my flessh so deere ?
Yet hadde I levere wedde no wyf to-yeere !”

144. hoten, be called ; H^4 ete ! 146. Jhesu, om. EH^2.
“Abye,” quod she, “my tale is nat bigonne. Nay, thou shalt drunken of another tonne
Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale;
And whan that I have toold thee forth my tale
Of tribulacioun in mariag,
Of which I am expert in al myn age,—
This to seyn, my self have been the whippe,—
Than maystow chesé whethier thou wolte sippe
Of thilké tonné that I shal abroche.
Be war of it, er thou to ny approche,
For I shal tell ensamples mo than ten,
‘Whoso that nyl be war by othere men,
By hym shul othere men corrected be;’
The samé wordes writeth Protholomee;
Rede in his Almageste and take it there.”

“Dame, I wolde praye youw, if youre wyl it were,”
Seydé this Pardoner, “as ye bigan
Telle forth youre talé; spareth for no man,
And teche us yongé men of youre praktike.”

“Gláedly, sirés, sith it may yow like;
But yet I praye to al this compaignye,
If that I speke after my fantasye,
As taketh not agrief of that I seye,
For myn entente is nought but for to pleye.”

172. thee, om. E³.
173. in, E³ that is in.
177. thilke, E³ that.
182. Protholomee, Ptolemy.
No one has yet verified the references to the Almagest here and in 1. 324.
183. in, E³ it in.
184. youw, om. E³.
188. sires, H³ quod sche.
'Now, sire, now wol I tellé forth my tale.
As evere moote I drynken wyn or ale,
I shal seye sooth of housbondes that I hadde, 195
As thre of hem were goode, and two were badde.
The thre were goodé men and riche, and olde;
Unnethé myghté they the statut holde
In which that they were bounden unto me;
Ye woot wel what I meene of this, pardee! 200
As help me God, I laughé whan I thynke
How pitously a-nyght I made hem swynke!
And, by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor;
They had me geven hir lond and hir tresoor,
Me neded nat do lenger diligence
To wynne hir love, or doon hem reverence;
They lovéd me so wel, by God above,
That I ne tolde no deynette of hir love!
A wys womman wol sette hire evere in oon
To gete hire lové ther as she hath noon; 210
But sith I hadde hem hooly in myn hond,
And sith they hadde me geven all hir lond,
What sholde I taken heede hem for to plese,
But it were for my profit and myn ese?
I sette hem so a werké, by my fey,
That many a nyght they songen "weilawey!"
The bacoun was nat fet for hem, I trowe,
That som men han in Essexè at Dunmowe.
I governed hem so wel after my lawe,
That ech of hem ful blisful was and fawe
To brynge me gayè thynges fro the fayre;
They were ful glad whan I spak to hem faire,
For, God it woot, I chidde hem spitously.

"Now herkneth hou I baar me proprely,
Ye wisè wyvès that kan understonde.

"Thus shul ye speke, and beren hem on honde,
For half so boldély kan ther no man
Swerè and lyè as kan a womman.
I sey nat this by wyvès that been wyse,
But if it be whan they hem mysavyse.
I-wis a wyf, if that she kan hir good,
Shal berè hym on hond the cow is wood,
And takè witnesse of hir owene mayde
Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde.

"Sire, oldè kaynard, is this thyn array?
Why is my neighèborès wyf so gay?
She is honòurèd over al ther she gooth;
I sitte at hoom, I have no thrifty clooth.
What dostow at my neighéborés hous?
Is she so fair? artow so amorous?  240
What rowne ye with oure mayde?  *Benedicite!*
Sire, oldé lecchour, lat thy japés be!
And if I have a gossib or a freend,
Withouten gilt thou chidest as a feend,
If that I walke or pleye unto his hous.  245
Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous
And prechest on thy bench with yvel preef:
Thou seist to me it is a greet meschief
To wedde a pouré womman for costage;
And if she be riche and of heigh parage,
Thanne seistow it is a tormentrie
To suffre hire pride and hire malencolie;
And if that she be faire, thou verray knave,
Thou seyst that every holour wol hire have;
She may no while in chastitée abyde
That is assailéd upon eché syde.

"Thou seyst som folk desire us for richesse,
Somme for oure shapé, somme for oure fairnesse,
And som for she kan synge and daunce,
And som for gentillesse, and daliaunce,
Som for hir handés, and hir armés smale,—
Thus goth al to the devel by thy tale!"
Thou seyst men may nat kepe a castel wal,
It may so longe assailed been over al.

"And if that she be foul, thou seist that she
Coveiteth every man that she may se,
For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe,
Til that she fyndé som man hire to chepe;
Ne noon so grey a goos gooth in the lake,
As, seistow, wol been withoute make;
And seyst it is an hard thyng for to welde
A thyng that no man wole, his thankés, helde.
Thus seistow, lorel, whan thow goost to bedde,
And that no wys man nedeth for to wedde,
Ne no man that entendeth unto hevene.
With wildé thonder dynt and fiery levene
Mooté thy welked nekké be to-broke!

"Thow seyst that droppyng houses, and eek
smoke,
And chidyng wyvés, maken men to flee
Out of hir owene hous, a benedicite! 

What eyleth swich an old man for to chide?

"Thow seyst we wyvés wol oure vices hide
Til we be fast, and thanne we wol hem shewe,—
Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrew.

"Thou seyst that oxen, asses, hors, and houndes,
They been assayéd at diversé stoundes;
Basyns, labourés, er that men hem bye,
Spoonés and stooles, and al swich housbondrye,
And so been pottës, clothës, and array;
But folk of wyvës maken noon assay 290
Til they be wedded,—oldé dotard shrewè!
Thanne, seistow, we wol oure vices shewe.

"Thou seist also that it displeseth me
But if that thou wolt preysé my beautee,
And but thou poure alwey upon my face,
And clepe me 'fairë dame' in every place;
And but thou make a feeste on thilké day
That I was born, and make me fressh and gay;
And but thow do to my norice honour,
And to my chamberere withinne my bour,
And to my fadrës folk and hisë allyes,—
Thus seistow, oldé bareful of lyes!

"And yet of oure apprentice Janékyn,
For his crispe heer, shynynge as gold so fyn,
And for he squiereth me bothe up and doun,
Yet hastow caught a fals suspecioun,—
I wol hym noght, thogh thou were deed to-morwe!

"But tel me this, why hydestow with sorwe
The keyës of thy cheste, awey fro me?
It is my good, as wel as thyn, pardee! 310
What! wenestow make an ydiôt of oure dame?
Now, by that lord that callëd is Seint Jame,
Thou shalt nat bothë, thogh thou werë wood,
Be maister of my body, and of my good;
That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne eyen!

299. norice, nurse.
300. chamberere, E chambrere, etc.
308. this, om. EH; H reading wherfor for whi.
311. make, E to make.
What nedeth thee of me to enquire or spyen? 316
I trowe thou woldest loke me in thy chiste;
Thou sholdest seyë, 'Wyf, go wher thee liste;
Taak youré disport, I wol leve no talys;
I knowe yow for a trewé wyf, dame Alys.' 320
We love no man that taketh kepe, or charge,
Wher that we goon; we wol ben at our large.

"Of allé men y-blessed moot he be,
The wise astrologien, Daun Protholome,
That seith this proverbe in his Almageste, 325
'Of allé men his wysdom is the hyeste
That rekketh nevere who hath the world in honde.'
By this proverbe thou shalt understonde,
Have thou ynoh, what thar thee recche or care
How myrily that othere folkés fare?

For certeyn, oldé dotard, by youre leve,
Ye shul have queynté right ynoh at eve.
He is to greet a nygard that wolde werne
A man to lighte his candle at his lanterne.
He shal have never the lassé light, pardee!

Have thou ynoh, thee thar nat pleyné thee.

"Thou seyst also, that if we make us gay
With clothynge, and with precious array,
That it is peril of oure chastitee;
And yet with sorwe thou most enforce thee,
And seye thise wordés in the Apostles name:
'In habit maad with chastitee and shame,
Ye wommen shul appareille yow,' quod he,
'And noght in tresséd heer, and gay perree, 344.
As perlès, ne with gold, ne clothés riche.'

After thy text, ne after thy rubriche,
I wol nat wirche as muchel as a gnat.

"Thou seydest this, that I was lyk a cat;
For whoso woldé senge a cattés skyn,
Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his in;
And if the cattés skyn be slyk and gay,
She wol nat dwelle in housé half a day;
But forth she wolde, er any day be dawed,
To shewe hir skyn, and goon a caterwawed;
This is to seye, if I be gay, sire shrewë,
I wol renne out my borel for to shewe.

"Sire, oldé fool, what eyleth thee to spyen?
Thogh thou preye Argus with his hundred eyen
To be my wardécors, as he kan best,
In feith, he shal nat kepe me but me lest;
Yet koude I make his berd, so moot I thee!

"Thou seydest eek, that ther been thyngës thre
The whiché thyngës trobolen al this erthe,
And that no wight ne may endure the ferthe.
O leewe sire shrewë, Jhesu shorte thy lyf!
Yet prechestow and seyst an hateful wyf
Y-rekened is for oon of thise meschances.
Been ther none othere of thy resemblances
That ye may likne youre parables unto,
But if a sely wyf be oon of tho?

344. perree, jewellery.
350. in his in, i.e. at home.
357. eyleth, H6 helphith.
359. wardecors, body-guard.
361. make his berd, cheat him.
364. ne, from Pet. 2; rest om.
368. of thy, om. E.
"Thou likenest wommenes love to helle,
To bareyne lond, ther water may nat dwelle;
Thou likenest it also to wilde fyr,
The moore it brenneth the moore it hath desir
To consumen every thyng that brennt wole be;
Thou seyst, right as wormes shende a tree,
Right so a wyf destroyeth hire housbond;
This knowe they that been to wyves bonde."

Lordynges, right thus as ye have understonde
Baar I stifly myne olde housbondes on honde,
That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse;
And al was fals, but that I took witnesse
On Janekyn, and on my nece also.
O Lord, the peyne I dide hem and the wo!
Ful gilteles, by Goddes sweete pyne!
For as an hors I koudé byte and whyne;
I koudé pleyne, thogh I were in the gill,
Or ellés often tyme hadde I been spilt.
"Who so first cometh to the mille first grynt;"
I pleynde first, so was oure werre y-stynt;
They were ful glad to excusen hem ful blyve
Of thyng of which they nevere agilte hir lyve.

Of wenches wolde I beren hem on honde,
Whan that for syk unnethes myghte thay stonde;
Yet tikled it his herté, for that he
Wende that I hadde of hym so greet chiertee!
I swoor that al my walkynge out by nyghte

371. likenest; E likeness. 376. shende, harm.
377. that first to mylle cometh
    first grynt. 379. From H; Heng. Whoso
389. From H; Heng. Whoso
393. hem, E hym. 394. thay, E he.
Was for tespýe wenches that he dighete.
Under that colour hadde I many a myrthe,
For al swich witte is geven us in oure byrthe,—
Deceité, wepyng, spynnyng, God hath geve 401
To wommen kyndely whil they may lyve;
And thus of o thyng I avaunte me,
Atte ende I hadde the bettre in ech degree,—
By sleighte, or force, or by som maner thyng, 405
As by continueel murmure or grucchyng.
Namely abedde hadden they meschaunce;
Ther wolde I chide and do hem no plesaunce;
I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,
If that I felte his arm over my syde, 410
Til he had maad his raunsoun unto me;
Thanne wolde I suffre hym do his nycetee;
And therfore every man this tale I telle,—
Wynne who so may, for al is for to selle;
With empty hand men may none haukés lure. 415
For wynnyng wolde I al his lust endure
And makè me a feynéd appetit,
And yet in bacoun hadde I nevere delit;
That madè me that evere I wolde hem chide;
For thoghe the pope hadde seten hem bistide 420
I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord,
For, by my trouthe, I quitte hem word for word.
As helpe me verray God omnipotent,
Though I right now sholde make my testament,
I ne owe hem nat a word that it nys quit.
I broghte it so aboutè by my wit.
That they moste geve it up as for the beste,
Or ellës hadde we nevere been in reste ;
For thogh he lookëd as a wood leoun,
Yet sholde he faille of his conclusioun.

Thanne wolde I seyë, "Goodë lief, taak keepe,—
How mekely looketh Wilkyn, ourë sheepe !
Com neer, my spouse, lat me ba thy cheke ;
Ye sholdë been al pacient and meke,
And han a sweetë, spicëd conscience,
Sith ye so preche of Jobës pacënce.
Suffreth alwey, syn ye so wel kan preche,
And, but ye do, certein we shal yow teche
That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.
Oon of us two moste bowen, doutëlees,
And sith a man is moorë resonable
Than womanis, ye mostë been sufferable.
What eyleth yow to grucche thus and grone ?
Is it for ye woldë have my queynte allone ?
Wy, taak it al ! lo, have it every deel !
Peter ! I shrewë yow, but ye love it weel ;
For if I woldë selle my belë chose
I koudë walke as fresh as is a rose ;
But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth.
Ye be to blame, by God ! I sey yow sooth."
Swiche manere wordës haddë we on honde.

Now wol I spelen of my fourthe housbonde.

429. wood, mad. 433. ba, kiss.
My fourthe housbonde was a revelour;
This is to seyn, he hadde a paramour;
And I was yong and ful of ragerye,
Stibourne and strong and joly as a pye.
Wel koude I dauncée to an harpé smale,
And synge, y-wis, as any nyghtyngale,
Whan I had dronke a draughte of sweeté wyn.

Metellius, the foulé cherl, the swyn!
That with a staf biraste his wyf hire lyf,
For she drank wyn; thogh I hadde been his wyf
He sholdé nat han daunted me fro drynke!
And after wyn on Venus moste I thynke,
For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,
A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl.
In wommen vionlent is no defence,—
This knowen lechhours by experience.

But, Lord Crist! whan that it remembrith me
Upon my yowthe, and on my jolitee,
It tikleth me aboute myn herté roote!
Unto this day it dooth myn herté boote
That I have had my world, as in my tyme.
But Age, alas! that al wol envenyme,
Hath me biraste my Beautee and my pith,—
Lat go, fare wel, the devel go therwith!
The flour is goon, ther is namoore to telle,
The bren, as I best kan, now moste I selle;
But yet to be right myrie wol I fonde.
Now wol I tellen of my fourthe housbonde.

I seye I hadde in herté greet despit

60. Metellius, the story is from Valerius Maximus, Bk. vi. ch. 3.
That he of any oother had delit;
But he was quit, by God, and by Seint Joce!
I made hym of the samé wode a croce.
Nat of my body in no foul manere,
But certeinly I madé folk swich cheere,
That in his owene grece I made hym frye
For angre, and for verry jalousye.
By God, in erthe I was his purgatorie,
For which I hope his soulé be in glorie!
For God it woot, he sat ful ofte and song
Whan that his shoo ful bitterly hym wrong.
Ther was no wight save God and he that wiste
In many wise how sooré I hym twiste.
He deyde whan I cam fro Jerusalem,
And lith y-grave under the roode beem,
Al is his tombé noght so curyus
As was the sepulcre of hym Daryus,
Which that Appelles wroghté subtilly;
It nys but wast to burye hym preciously.
Lat hym fare wel, God geve his soulé reste,
He is now in his grave and in his cheste!

Now of my fifté housbonde wol I telle.
God lete hise soulé nevere come in helle!
And yet was he to me the moosté shrewé;
That feele I on my ribbes al by rewe,

483. Seint Joce, Saint Judocus,
a Breton hermit of the 7th century.
486. certeinly, E certein.
491. ofte, H stille.
498. Daryus, the tomb which

Apelles wrought for Darius by Alexander's order is described in the 6th book of the Alex-
andreis of Gualtier de Lille.
506. by rewe, in a row.
And evere shal, unto myn endyng day;
But in oure bed he was so fresh and gay;
And therwhile he wel koude he me close,
When that he woldé han my belé chose,
That thogh he hadde me bet on every bon,
He koude wynne agayn my love anon.
I trowe I loved hym besté for that he
Was of his lové daungerous to me.
We wommen han, if that I shal nat lye,
In this matere a queynté fantazyé;
Wayté! what thyng we may nat lightly have
Ther after wol we crie al day and crave.
Forbede us thyng, and that desiren we;
Preesse on us faste and thanne wol we fle.
With dauunger outé we al oure chaffare;
Greet prees at market maketh deeré ware,
And to greet cheepe is holde at litel prys;
This knoweth every womman that is wys.

My fifté housbonde, God his soulé blesse!
Which that I took for love, and no richesse,
He somtyme was a clerk of Oxenford,
And hadde left scole and wente at hom to bord
With my gossip, dwellynge in oure toun;
God have hir soule, hir name was Alisoun.
She knew my herte, and eek my privéte,
Bé than oure parisshe preest, as moot I thee.
To hire biwreyéd I my conseil al,
For hadde myn housbonde pisséd on a wal,
Or doon a thyng that sholde han cost his lyf,
To hire, and to another worthy wyf,
And to my necé, which that I loved weel,
I wolde han toold his conseil every deel;
And so I dide ful often, God it woot,
That made his face often reed and hoot
For verray shame, and blamed hymself, for he
Had toold to me so greet a pryvétee.
And so bifel that onés in a Lente,
So often tymes I to my gossyb wente,—
For evere yet I lovéd to be gay,
And for to walke in March, Averill and May,
Fro hous to hous to heeré sondry talys,—
That Jankyn clerk, and my gossyb dame Alye
And I myself into the feeldés wente.
Myn housbonde was at London al that Lente; 550
I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye,
And for to se, and eek for to be seye
Of lusty folk. What wiste I wher my grace
Was shapen for to be, or in what place?
Therfore I made my visitaciouns
To vigilies and to processiouns,
To prechyng eek, and to thise pilgrimages,
To pleyes of myracles, and to mariages,
And wered upon my gayé scarlet gytes.
Thise wormes, ne thise motthes, ne thise mytes, 561
Upon my peril frete hem never a deel.
And wostow why? For they were uséd weel.
    Now wol I tellen forth what happéd me.
I seye that in the feeldés walked we,
Till treweley we hadde swich daliance, 565
This clerk and I, that of my purveiance
I spak to hym, and seyde hym how that he,
If I were wydwé, sholdé weddé me;
For certeinly,—I sey for no bobance,—
Yet was I nevere withouten purveiance 570
Of marıage, nof uthere thyngés eek.
I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek
That hath but oon hole for to sterté to,
And if that faillé thanne is al y-do.
    I bar hym on honde he hadde enchanted
me,— 575
My damé taughté me that soutiltee,—
And eek I seyde, I mete of hym al nyght,
He wolde han slayn me as I lay up right,
And al my bed was ful of verray blood;
But yet I hope that he shal do me good, 580
For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was taught;
And al was fals, I dremed of it right naught,
Bút I folwed ay my damês loore,
As wel of this as of uthere thyngés moore.

561. frete, devour.
567. hym, om. H³.
569. bobance, boast.
571. nof, ne of.
575-584. H and many other MSS. omit this para-
graph.
577. mette, dreamed.
583. But, four MSS. But as.
But now, sire,—lat me se,—what I shal seyn?
A ha! by God, I have my tale ageyn.
586

Whan that my fourthé housbonde was on beere
I weepè algate and madè sory cheere,
As wyvès mooten, for it is usage,
And with my coverchief covered my visage;
590
But, for that I was purveyed of a make,
I wepte but smal, and that I undertake!

To chirche was myn housbonde born a morwe
With neighëbores, that for hym maden sorwe,
And Jankyn, ourë clerk, was oon of tho.
595
As help me God, whan that I saugh hym go
After the beere, me thoughte he hadde a paire
Of leggës and of feet so clene and faire,
That al myn herte I gaf unto his hoold.
He was, I trowe, a twenty wynter oold,
And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth;
600
But yet I hadde alwey a coltës tooth.
Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me weel,
I hadde the prente of seint Venus seel.
As help me God, I was a lusty oon,
605
And faire and riche, and yong, and wel bigon,
And trewely, as myne housbondes toldë me,
I hadde the beste quonyam myghtë be;
For certës, I am al Venerien
In feelynge, and myn herte is Marcien;
610
Venus me gaf my lust, my likerousnesse,
GROUP D    WIFE OF BATH’S PROLOGUE

And Mars gaf me my sturdy hardynesse. Myn áscendent was Taur and Mars therinne; Allas, allas! that evere love was synne!
I folwed ay myn inclinacioun
By vertu of my constellacioun,
That madé me I koudé noght withdrawe
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.
Yet have I Martés mark upon my face, And also in another, privee, place,
For God so wys be my savacioun,
I ne loved nevere by no discrecioun, But evere folwed myn appetit,—
Al were he short, or long, or blak, or whit;
I took no kepe, so that he likéd me,
How poore he was, ne eek of what degree.
    What sholde I seye, but at the monthés ende
This joly clerk, Jankyn, that was so hende,
Hath wedded me with greet solemnitye,
And to hym gaf I all the lond and see,
That evere was me geven ther-bifoore;
But afterward repented me ful soore.
He noldé suffre nothyng of my list;
By God, he smoot me onés, on the lyst,
For that’ I rente out of his book a leef,
That of the strook myn eré wax al deef.
Stibourne I was as is a leonesse,
And of my tonge a verryang jangleresse;
And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,
From hous to hous, although he had it sworn; 640

628. hende, prompt.    634. lyst, edge (of the ear).
For which he often tymès woldé preche,
And me of oldé Romayn geestés teche;
How he, Symplicius Gallus, lefte his wyf,
And hire forsyk for terme of al his lyf,
Noght but for open-heveded he hir say
Lokyng out at his dore upon a day.

Another Romayn tolde he me by name
That, for his wyf was at a someres game
Withouten his wityng, he forsook hire eke;
And thanne wolde he upon his Bible seke
That ilké proverbe of Ecclesiaste,
Where he comandeth, and forbedeth faste;
Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule aboute.
Thanne wolde he seye right thus, withouten doute:

_Whoso that buyldeth his hous al of salwes,
And priketh his blynde hors over the falwes,
And suffreth his wyf to go seken halwes,
Is worthy to been hanged on the salwes;
But al for noght; I setté noght an hawe
Of his proverbes, nof his oldé sawe;
Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be.
I hate hym that my vices telleth me,
And so doo mo, God woot, of us than I.
This made hym with me wood al outrely;
I noldé noght forbere hym in no cas._

642. _geestes_, the reference is not to the _Gesta Romanorum_, but to _Valerius Maximus_ (Bk. vi. ch. 3), whence these stories of _Sulpicius Gallus_ and _Sempronius Sophus_ are both taken.

645. _open-heveded_, bare-headed.

650. _salwes_, willows.

655. _falwes_, fallows.

657. _halwes_, shrines.
Now wol I seye yow sooth, by Seint Thomas!
Why that I rente out of this book a leef,
For which he smoot me so that I was deef.
He hadde a book that gladly nyght and day
For his desport he woldē rede alway.
He clepēd it "Valerie" and "Theofraste,"
At whichē book he lough alwey ful faste;
And eek ther was som tyme a clerk at Rome,
A cardinal, that highte Seint Jerome,
That made a book agayn Jovinian,
In whichē book eek ther was Tertulan,
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys,
That was abbessē nat fer fro Parys;
And eek the Parables of Salomon,
Ovidēs Art, and bookēs many on;
And allē thise were bounden in o volume;
And every nyght and day was his costume,
Whan he hadde leyser and vacacioun
From oother worldly occupacioun,
To reden on this book of wikked wyves.
He knew of hem mo legendēs and lyves
Than been of goodē wyvēs in the Bible;
For, trusteth wel, it is an impossible
That any clerk wol spekē good of wyves,—

668. *so that*, etc., *H that I was al deef.*
671. *Valerie*, i.e. Walter Map's *Epistola Valerii ad Ru-finum de non ducenda uxore.*
*Theofraste*, see note to l. 235.
676. *Tertulan*, perhaps Tertul-lian's treatise *De Exhor-tatione Castitatis.*
677. *Crisippus*, *Trotula*, not identified yet with any probability.
680. *bookes*, *H bourdes.*
But if it be of hooly Seintés lyves,—
Ne of noon oother womman never the mo.
Whó peynted the leoun? Tel me who.
By God! if wommen hadde writen stories,
As clerkés han withinne hire oratories,
They wolde han writen of men moore wikkednesse
Than all the mark of Adam may redresse.
The children of Mercúrie and Venus
Been in hir wirkyng ful contrarius;
Mercúrie loveth wysdam and science,
And Venus loveth ryt and dispence;
And for hire diverse disposicioun
Each falleth in otheres exaltacioun;
And thus, God woot, Mercurie is desolat
In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat;
And Venus falleth ther Mercurie is reysed;
Therefore no womman of no clerk is preysed.
The clerk whan he is oold, and may noght do
Of Venus werkés worth his oldé sho,
Thanne sit he doun and writ in his dotage
That wommen kan nat kepe hir mariage.

But now to purpos why I toldé thee
That I was beten for a book, pardee.
Upon a nyght Jankyn, that was oure sire,
Redde on his book, as he sat by the fire,
Of Eva first, that for hir wikkednesse
Was al mankyndé broght to wrecchednesse;

691. of, om. E.
708. worth, etc., H is not worth a scho.
709. sit . . . writ, sitteth, writeth.
GROUP D  WIFE OF BATH’S PROLOGUE

For which that Jesus Crist hymself was slayn,
That boghite us with his herté blood agayn.
Lo, heere expres of womman may ye fynde,
That womman was the los of al mankynde.  720

Tho redde he me how Sampson loste hise heres;
Slepynge, his lemmman kitte it with hir sheres;
Thurgh which tresoun loste he bothe hise eyen.

Tho redde he me, if that I shal nat lyen,
Of Hercules and of his Dianyre,  725
That causéd hym to sette hymself afyre.

No thyng forgat he the penaunce and wo
That Socrates hadde with his wyvés two;
How Xantippa caste pisse upon his heed.
This sely man sat stille as he were deed;  730
He wiped his heed, namoore dorste he seyn
But, “Er that thonder styné comth a reyn!”

Of Phasispha, that was the queene of Crete,
For shrewednesse hym thoughte the talé swete.
Fy! speke namoore; it is a grisly thyng,
Of hire horsfble lust and hir likyng!

Of Clitermystra, for hire lecherye
That falsly made hire housbonde for to dye;
He redde it with ful good devocioun.

He tolde me eek for what occasioun  740
Amphiorax at Thebés loste his lyf;
Myn housbonde hadde a legende of his wyf.

717-720. H and other MSS. omit.
717. *that* Jesus, om. E.  727. penaunce, from Pet. 3; E² sorwe, H² care.
733. Phasispha, Pasiphaë.
Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold
Hath privély unto the Grekês told
Wher that hir housbonde hidde hym in a place,
For which he hadde at Thebês sory grace.

Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucye;
They bothé made hir housbondes for to dye,—
That oon for love, that oother was for hate.
Lyma hir housbonde, upon an even late,
Empoysoned hath, for that she was his so;
Lucia likerous loved hire housbonde so,
That, for he sholde alwey upon hire thynke,
She gaf hym swich a manere lovê drynke
That he was deed, er it were by the morwe;
And thus algatés housbondés han sorwe.

Thanne tolde he me how oon Latumyus
Compleyned, unto his felawe Arrius,
That in his gardyn growéd swich a tree,
On which he seyde how that hise wyvês thre
Hangéd hemself for herté despitus.

"O leevê brother," quod this Arrius,
"Gif me a plante of thilkê blisseth tree,
And in my gardyn planted it shal be!"

Of latter date of wyvês hath he red,
That somme han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed,
And lete hir lecchour dighte hire al the nyght,

743. *Eriphilem*, who betrayed Amphiaraus to gain the necklace of Harmonia.

747. *Lyma*, an error for 'Livia,'

who poisoned Drusus; this instance and the next are taken from Map.

Whan that the corps lay in the floor upright;
And somme han dryven naylés in hir brayn
Whil that they sляpte, and thus they han hem slayn.

Somme han hem geven poysoun in hire drynke;
He spak moore harm than hertė may bithynke;
And therwthal he knew of mo proverbes,
Than in this world ther growen gras or herbes.
“Bet is,” quod he, “thyn habitacioun
Be with a leoun or a foul dragoun,
Than with a womman usynge for to chyde.”
“Bet is,” quod he, “hye in the roof abyde,
Than with an angry wyf doun in the hous.”
They been so wikked and contrarious,
They haten that hir housbondes loven ay.
He seyde a womman cast hir shame away
Whan she cast of hir smok; and forther mo,
A fair womman, but she be chaast also,
Is lyk a gold ryng in a sowės nose.
Who woldė wenė, or who wolde suppose,
The wo that in myn hertė was, and pyne?

And whan I saugh he woldė nevere fyne
To reden on this cursėd book al nyght,
Al sodeynly thre levės have I plyght
Out of his book, right as he radde, and eke
I with my fest so took hym on the cheke,
That in oure fyr he fil bakward adoun;

769. dryven, E² dryve.
771. geven, E² geve.
786. wene, E leewe.
788. fyne, cease.
790. plyght, plucked.
And he up stirte as dooth a wood leoun,
And with his fest he smoot me on the heed,
That in the floor I lay as I were deed;
And whan he saugh how stillè that I lay,
He was agast and wolde han fled his way,
Til atté laste out of my swogh I bryde.
"O hastow slayn me, falsè theef?" I seyde;
"And for my land thus hastow mordred me?
Er I be deed, yet wol I kissè thee."

And neer he cam, and knelèd faire adoun,
And seyde, "Deerè suster Alisoun!
As help me God, I shal thee nevere smyte.
That I have doon it is thyself to wyte;
Forgeve it me, and that I thee biseke;"
And yet, est-soones, I hitte hym on the cheke,
And seyde, "Theef! thus muchel am I wreke.
Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke."
But atté laste, with muchel care and wo,
We fille acorded by us selven two.
He gaf me al the bridel in myn hond,
To han the governance of hous and lond,
And of his tonge, and of his hond also,
And made hym brenne his book anon right tho;
And whan that I hadde geten unto me
By maistrie al the sovèrayneée,—
And that he seyde, "Myn owene trewè wyf,
Do as thee lust to terme of al thy lyf;
Keepe thyn honour, and keepe eek myn estaat,"—

breyde, woke. 815. *of (a)*, om. E².
After that day we hadden never debaat.
God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde
As any wyf from Denmark unto Ynde,
And also trewe, and so was he to me.
I prey to God, that sit in mageste,
So blesse his soule for his mercy deere.
Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol heere.

Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour and
the Frere

The Frere lough whan he hadde herd al this;
"Now, dame," quod he, "so have I joye or blis,
This is a long preamble of a tale."
And whan the Somonour herde the Frere gale,
"Lo," quod the Somonour, "Goddës armës two!
A frere wol entremette him evere-mo.
Lo, goodë men, a flye, and eek a frere,
Wol falle in every dysshë and mateere.
What spekestow of 'preambulacioun'?
What? amble, or trotte, or pees, or go sit doun!
Thou lettest oure disport in this manere."
"Ye, woltow so, sire Somonour?" quod the Frere;
"Now, by my feith! I shal, er that I go,

832. *gale*, cry out.
834. *entremette*, interpose.
836. *and*, Corp. and *eek*, a clumsy device to help out the line.
Telle of a somonour swich a tale or two
That alle the folk shal laughen in this place."

"Now ellës, Frerë, I bishrewë thy face!"
Quod this Somonour, "and I bishrewë me
But if I tellë talës, two or thre,
Of frerës, er I come to Sidyngborne,
That I shal make thyn hertë for to morne,
For wel I woot thy pacëene is gon."

Oure Hoostë cridë, "Pees! and that anon;"
And seydë, "Lat the womman telle hire tale;
Ye fare as folk that drunken ben of ale.
Do, dame, telle forth youre tale, and that is best."

"Al redy, sire," quod she, "right as yow lest;
If I have licence of this worthy Frere."

"Yis, dame," quod he, "tel forth, and I wol
heere."

WIFE OF BATH'S TALE

In tholdë dayës of the Kyng Arthur,
Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
All was this land fulfild of faïrye.
The elf queene with hir joly compaignye

847. Sidyngborne, Sitting-
bourne.
850. Hooste, E Hoost.
852. ben, E² were.
Wife of Bath's Tale. No original
857. the, om. E².
Dauncéd ful ofte in many a grene mede.
This was the olde opinion as I rede,—
I speke of manye hundred yeres ago,—
But now kan no man se none elvës mo,
For now the gretë charitee and prayeres
Of lymytours, and other hooly freres,
That serchen every lond and every streem,
As thikke as motës in the sonné beem,—
Blëssynge hallës, chambres, kichenes, boures,
Cîtes, burghes, castels, hyë toures,
Thröpës, bernës, shipnes, daïeryes,—
This maketh that thër been no fairyes ;
For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the lymytour hymself,
In undermelës and in morwenynges,
And seyth his matyns and his hooly thynges
As he gooth in his lymytacioun.
Wómmen may go saufly up and doun ;
In every bussë or under every tree,
Ther is noon oother incubus but he,
And he ne wol doon hem non dishonour.

And so bifele it that this kynge, Arthour,
Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler
That on a day cam ridynge fro ryver,

866. lymytours, friars begging in a fixed district.
867. serchen, H sechen.
871. Thropes, etc., villages, barns, stables, dairies.
875. undermeles, morning-meal time.
878. go, Corp. go now.
881. non, the reading of Camb. MS. only; EH but, which is pointless.
882. it, om. E².
884. fro ryver (cp. B. 1927) from hawking for river-fowl.
And happéd that allone as she was born,
He saugh a maydè walkynge hym biforn,
Of whiché mayde, anon, maugree hir heat,
By verray force birafté hire maydenhed;
For which oppressioun was swich clamour,
And swich pursuite unto the kyng Arthour,
That damnéd was this knyght for to be deed
By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his heed,—
Paráventure swich was the statut tho,—
But that the queene and other ladyes mo,
So longé preyéden the kyng of grace,
Til he his lyf hym graunted in the place,
And gaf hym to the queene al at hir wille
To chesé wheither she wolde hym save or spille.
   The queene thanketh the kyng with al hir myght,
And after this thus spak she to the knyght,
Whan that she saugh hir tyme upon a day:
   "Thou standest yet," quod she, "in swich array,
That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.
I grante thee lyf, if thou kanst tellen me
What thyng is it that wommen moost desiren,—
Be war, and keepe thy nekké-boon from iren,—
And if thou kanst nat tellen it anon,
Yet shal I geve thee levé for to gon
A twelf-month and a day, to seche and leere
An answere suffisant in this mateere;
And suretee wol I han er that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place."

Wo was this knyght, and sorwefull he siketh;
But what? he may nat do al as hym liketh,
And at the laste he chees hym for to wende,

And come agayn right at the yerés ende,
With swich answere as God wolde hym purveye,
And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth his weye.

He seketh every hous and every place
Where as he hopeth for to fyndé grace
To lerné what thyng wommen loven moost;
But he ne koude arryven in no coost
Wher as he myghté fynde in this mateere
Two créäturés áccordyng in feere.

Somme seydé wommen loven best richesse,
Somme seyde honóur, somme seydé jolynesse,
Somme riche array, somme seyden lust abedde,
And ofté tymé to be wydwe and wédde.
Somme seydé that ouré hertés been moost esed
Whan that we been y-flatered and y-pleased.

He gooth ful ny the sothe, I wol nat lye,—
A man shall wynne us best with flaterye;
And with attendance and with bisynesse,
Been we y-lymed, bothé moore and lesse.

And sommé seyen that we loven best
For to be free, and do right as us lest,
And that no man repreve us of oure vice,
But seye that we be wise and no thyng nyce;
For trewély ther is noon of us alle,

935. seyen, E ñ seyn, seyn how; H sayen.
If any wight wol clawe us on the galle, 940
That we nyl kiké, for he seith us sooth.
Assay, and he shal fynde it, that so dooth,
For, be we never so vicious with-inne,
We wol been holden wise and clene of synne.

And sommé seyn that greet delit han we 945
For to been holden stable and eke secreed,
And in o purpos stedefastly to dwelle,
And nat biwreyé thyng that men us telle;
But that tale is nat worth a raké-stele.

Pardee, we wommen konné no thyng hele;
Witnesse on Myda,—wol ye heere the tale?

Ovyde, amongés othere thyngés smale,
Seyde Myda hadde under his longé heres,
Growynge upon his heed, two asses eres,
The whiche vice he hydde as he best myghte, 955
Ful subtilly, from every mannés sighte,
That save his wyf ther wiste of it namo.
He loved hire moost, and tristé hire also;
He preyde hire that to no créature
She sholdé tellel of his disfigure.

She swoor him nay, for al this world to wynne,
She noldé do that vileynye or synne,
To make hir housbonde han so foul a name.
She nolde nat telle it for hir owene shame;
But nathéelles hir thoughté that she dyde, 965
That she so longé sholde a conseil hyde;

941. nyl, E nel.
   kike, H² like, Corp.³ loke.
949. rake-stele, rake-handle.
940. hele, hide.
950. Myda, Midas.
951. amonges, H among his.
HIR thoughte it swal so soore aboute hir herte,
That nedely som word hire moste asterte;
And sith she dorstè telle it to no man,
Doun to a maresys fastè by she ran.
Til she came there her hertè was a-fyre,
And as a bitore bombleth in the myre
She leyde hir mouth unto the water doun:
"Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy sou"n,"
Quod she, "to theè I telle it and namo,—
Myn housbonde hath longe asses erys two.
Now is myn herte all hool, now is it oute,
I myghte no lenger kepe it, out of doute."
Heere may ye se, thogh we a tyme abyde,
Yet, out it moot, we kan no conseil hyde.
The remenant of the tale if ye wol heere,
Redeth Ovyde, and ther ye may it leere.

This knyght, of which my tale is specially,
Whan that he saugh he myghte nat come therby,
That is to seye, what wommen lovè moost,
Withinne his brest ful sorweful was the goost.
But hoom he gooth, he myghtè nat sojorne,
The day was come that homward moste he tourne,
And in his wey it happèd hym to ryde
In al this care, under a forest syde,
Wher as he saugh upon a dauncè go
Of ladyes foure and twenty, and yet mo;
Toward the whichè daunce he drow ful yerne,
In hopé that som wysdom sholde he lerne;
But certeinly, er he came fully there,
Vanysshéd was this daunce, he nystè where.
No créaturé saugh he that bar lyf,
Save on the grene he saugh sittynge a wyf;
A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.
Agayn the knyght this oldé wyf gan ryse,
And seyde, “Sire knyght, heer forth ne lith no wey;
Tel me what that ye seken, by youre fey!
Paráventure it may the bettre be;
Thise oldé folk kan muchel thyng,” quod she.
“My leevé mooder,” quod this knyght, “certeyn
I nam but deed but if that I kan seyn
What thyng it is that wommen moost desire:
Koude ye me wisse I wolde wel quite youre hire.”
“Plight me thy trouthe heere in myn hand,”
quod she,
“The nexté thyng that I requeré thee
Thou shalt it do, if it lye in thy myght,
And I wol telle it yow, er it be nyght.”
“Have heer my trouthé,” quod the knyght, “I graunte!”
Thanné quod she, “I dar me wel avaunte
Thy lyf is sauf, for I wol stonde therby;
Upon my lyf, the queene wol seye as I.
Lat se, which is the proudeste of hem alle
That wereth on a coverchief or a calle,
That dar seye ‘nay’ of that I shal thee teche.
Lat us go forth withouten lenger speche.”
Tho rownèd she a pistol in his ere,
And bad hym to be glad and have no fere.

Whan they be comen to the court, this knyght
Seyde he had holde his day as he hadde hight,
And redy was his answere, as he sayde. 1025
Ful many a noble wyf, and many a mayde,
And many a wydwè, for that they been wise,
The queene hirself sittynge as a justise,
Assembled been, his answere for to heere;
And afterward this knyght was bode appeere. 1030

To every wight comanded was silence,
And that the knyght sholde telle in audience
What thyng that worldly wommen loven best.
This knyght ne stood nat stille as doth a best,
But to his questioun anon answerd,
With manly voys, that al the court it herde.

"My ligè lady, generally," quod he,
"Wommen desiren have sovereignty,
As wel over hir housbond, as hir love,
And for to been in maiestrie hym above. 1040
This is youre mooste desir, thogh ye me kille.
Dooth as yow list, I am heer at youre wille."

In al the court ne was ther wyf, ne mayde,
Ne wydwè, that contraried that he sayde,
But seyden he was worthy han his lyf;
And with that word up stirte the oldè wyf,
Which that the knyght saugh sittynge on the grene;

1021. rowned, whispered. 1042. heer, om. E; Camb. al.
pistel, epistle, story. 1028. a, om. E4. 1047. on, E in.
"Mercy!" quod she, "my sovereign lady queene!
Er that youre court deporte, do me right;
I taughte this answere unto the knyght,
For which he plighte me his trouthe there,
The firste thyng I woldè hym requere,
He wolde it do, if it lay in his myght.
Before the court thanne, preye I thee, sir knyght,"
Quod she, "that thou me take unto thy wyf,
For wel thou wost that I have kept thy lyf.
If I sey fals, sey 'nay,' upon thy fey!"

This knyght answerde, "Allas, and weylaweys!
I woot right wel that swich was my bihest.
For Goddes love, as chee a newe requeste!
Taak al my good, and lat my body go."

"Nay, thanne," quod she, "I shrew we us bothé
two!
For thogh that I be foul, and oold, and poore,
I nolde, for al the metal, ne for oore
That under erthe is grave, or lith above,
But if thy wyf I were, and eek thy love!"
"My 'love'!" quod he, "nay, my dampnacioun!
Allas! that any of my nacioun
Sholde evere so foulé disparaged be!"
But al for noght, the ende is this, that he
Constreynèd was, he nedès moste hire wedde,
And taketh his oldé wyf, and gooth to bedde.

Now wolden som men seye, paráventure,
That for my negligence I do no cure
To telle n yow the joye and al tharray,
That at the feesté was that ilké day;
To which thyng shortly answeren I shal;
I seye, ther nas no joye ne feeste at al.
Ther nas but hevynesse, and muché sorwe,
For privèly he wedded hire on a morwe,
And al day after hidde hym as an owle,
So wo was hym, his wyf lookèd so foule.

Greet was the wo the knyght hadde in his thoght,
Whan he was with his wyf abedde y-broght.
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro;
His oldé wyf lay Smylynge everemo,
And seyde, "O deeré housbonde, benedicite!
Fareth every knyght thus with his wyf, as ye?
Is this the lawe of kyng Arthúrés hous?
Is every knyght of his so dangerous?
I am youre owene love, and youré wyf;
I am she which that saved hath youre lyf,
And certes, ne dide I yow nevere unright,
Why fare ye thus with me, this firsté nyght?
Ye faren lyk a man had lost his wit;
What is my gilt? For Goddés love tel it,
And it shal been amended, if I may."

"Amended!" quod this knyght, "allas! nay, nay!
It wol nat been amended nevere mo,
Thou art so loothly, and so oold also,
And ther-to comen of so lough a kynnde,
That litel wonder is thogh I walwe and wynde.
So, woldé God! myn herté woldé breste!
"Is this," quod she, "the cause of youre unreste?"
"Ye, certeinly," quod he, "no wonder is." 1105
"Now, sire," quod she, "I koude amende al this,
If that me liste, er it were dayés thre;
So wel ye myghté bere yow unto me.
"But for ye spokens of swich gentillesse
As is descended out of old richesse,
That therfore sholden ye be gentil men,
Swich arrogance is nat worth an hen.
Looke, who that is moost vertuous alway,
Pryvee and apert, and moost entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedés that he kan,
Taak hym for the grettest gentil man.
Crist wole we clayme of hym oure gentillesse,
Nat of oure eldërês for hire old richesse;
For, thogh they geve us al hir heritage,—
For which we clayme to been of heigh parage,—
Yet may they nat biquethé for no thyng,
To noon of us, hir vertuous lyvynge,
That made hem gentil men y-called be,
And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.
"Wel kan the wisé poete of Florence,
That highte Dant, spoken in this sentence,—
Lo, in swich maner rym is Dantes tale,—
‘Ful selde up riseth by his branches smale
Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse
Wole that of hym we clayme ouse gentillesse; 1130
For of oure eldrés may we no thynge clayme,
But temporel thynge that man may hurte and
mayme.’

“Eek every wight woot this as wel as I,
If gentillesse were planted natureelly,
Unto a certeyn lynage doun the lyne,
Pryve nor apert, thanne wolde they nevere fyne
To doon of gentillesse the faire office;
They myghte do no vileyny or vice.

“Taak fyr and ber it in the derkeste hous,
Bitwix this and the mount of Kaukasous,
And lat men shette the dorés and go thenne,
Yet wole the fyr as fairé lye and brenne
As twenty thousand men myghte it biholde;
His office natureel aye wol it holde,
Up peril of my lyf, til that it dye.

“Heere may ye se wel how that genterye
Is nat annexéd to possessioun,
Sith folk ne doon hir operacioun
Alwey, as dooth the fyr, lo, in his kynde;
For, God it woot, men may wel often fynde
A lordés sone do shame and vileyny;

1126. Dant, Purgatorio, vii. 1131. eldres may we, Ha un-
121-3: “Rade volte risurge
cestres we.
per li rami L’ umana pro-
bitate,” etc. 1136. fyne, cease.
1150. wel, Ha ful.
And he that wole han pris of his gentye,  
For he was boren of a gentil hous,  
And hadde hise eldres noble and vertuous,  
And nyl hymselfen do no gentil dedis,  
Ne folwen his gentil auncestre that deed is,  
He nys nat gentil, be he duc or erl;  
For vileyns synful dedes make a cherl;  
For gentillessë nys but renomee  
Of thyne auncestres, for hire heigh bountee,  
Which is a strang thynge to thy persone.  
Thy gentillessë cometh fro God allone;  
Thanne comth our e verray gentillesse of grace,  
It was no thynge biquethe us with our place.

"Thenketh hou noble, as seith Valerius,  
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,  
That out of poverté roos to heigh noblesse.  
Redeth Senek, and redeth eek Boece,  
Ther shul ye seen expressé, that no drede is,  
That he is gentil that dooth gentil dedis;  
And therfore, leeve housbonde, I thus conclude;  
Al were it that myne auncestres weren rude,  
Yet may the hyë God, and so hope I,  
Granté me grace to lyven vertuously;  
Thanne am I gentil, whan that I bigynne  
To lyven vertuously and weyvé synne.

"And ther as ye of poverté me repreeve,

\[1155. nyl, E nel.\]
\[1156. folwen, H^5 folw, folwe, etc.\]
\[1159. renomee, renown; cp. Boethius, Bk. iii. Prose 6.\]
\[1165. Valerius, see Valerius Maximus, Bk. iii. ch. 4.\]
\[1168. Redeth (1), E Reed.\]
\[1169. expresse, E^4 expres.\]
\[1176. weyve, forgo.\]
The hye God, on whom that we bileeve,
In wilful poverté chées to lyve his lyf,
And certés, every man, mayden, or wyf,
May understonde that Jhesus, hevene kyng,
Ne wolde nat chesen vicious lyvynge.
Glad poverté is an honeste thyng, certeyn;
This wole Senec and othere clerkés seyn;
Whoso that halt hym payd of his poverté,
I holde hym riche, al hadde he nat a sherte;
He that coveiteth is a povere wight,
For he wolde han that is nat in his myght;
But he that noght hath, ne coveiteth have,
Is riche, although ye holde hym but a knave.

"Verray poverté, it syngeth proprely;
Juvenal seith of poverté, myrily,
'The pouré man, whan he goth by the weye,
Bisore the thevés he may synge and pleye.'
Poverté is hateful good, and as I gesse
A ful greet bryngere-out of bisynesse,
A greet amendere eek of sapience,
To hym that taketh it in pacience.
Poverté is this, although it seme alenge
Possessioun that no wight wol chalenge,
Poverté ful ofté, whan a man is lowe,
Maketh his God, and eek hymself, to knowe.  
Poverture a spectacle is, as thynketh me,  
Thurgh which he may hise verray freendês see;  
And therfore, sire, syn that I nought yow greve,  
Of my poverté namoore ye me repreve.  

"Now, sire, of eldê ye reprevê me;  
And certês, sire, thogh noon auctoritee  
Were in no book, ye gentils of honôur  
Seyn that men sholde an oold wight doon favôur,  
And clepe hym fader, for youre gentillesse,  
And auctoursshal I fynden, as I gesse.  

"Now, ther ye seye that I am foul and old,  
Than drede you noght to been a cokéwold;  
For filthe and eeldê, al so moot I thee!  
Been gretê wardeyns upon chastitee:  
But nathêlees, syn I knowe youre delit,  
I shal fulfille youre worldly appellit.  

"Chese now," quod she, "oon of thise thyngês tweye:  
To han me foul and old til that I deye,  
And be to yow a trewê, humble wyf,  
And nevere yow displesè in al my lyf;  
Or ellês ye wol han me yong and fair,  
And take youre âventure of the repair  
That shal be to youre hous by cause of me,  
Or in som oother place may wel be;  
Now chese yourselfvên, wheither that yow liketh."

This knyght avyseth hym and sorê siketh;  
But attê laste he seyde in this manere:

1202. Maketh, H Makith him.  1215. thee, thrive.
"My lady and my love, and wyf so deere, 1230
I put me in youre wisé governance;
Cheseth youre self which may be moost plesance,
And moost honóur to yow and me also;
I do no fors the wheither of the two,
For as yow liketh it suffiseth me."

"Thanne have I gete of yow maistrie," quod she,
"Syn I may chese, and governe as me lest?"
"Ye, certés, wyf," quod he, "I holde it best."
"Kys me," quod she, "we be no lenger wrothe,
For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow bothe,— 1240
This is to seyn, ye, bothé fair and good.
I prey to God that I moote sterven wood,
But I to yow be al so good and trewe,
As evere was wyf syn that the world was newe;
And but I be to-morn as fair to seene 1245
As any lady, emperice, or queene,
That is bitwixe the est and eek the west;
Dooth with my lyf and deth right as yow lest.
Cast up the curtyn,—looke, how that it is."

And whan the knyght saugh verraily al this,
That she so fair was, and so yong ther-to, 1251
For joye he hente hire in hire armés two,
His herté bathéd in a bath of blisse;
A thousand tyme arewe he gan hire kisse,
And she obeyéd hym in every thyng 1255
That myghté doon hym plesance or likyng.
And thus they lyve unto hir lyvés ende

1234. I do no fors, I care not. 1242. sterven wood, die mad.
1254. arewe, in a row.
In parfit joye; and Jhesu Crist us sende
Housbondés meeké, yongé, fressh a-bedde,
And gracé tovèrbyde hem that we wedde,
And eek, I praye Jhesu to shorte hir lyves
That nat wol be governed by hir wyves;
And olde and angry nygardes of dispence,
God sende hem sooné verray pestilence!

The prologue of the Freres Tale

This worthy Lymytour, this noble Frere,
He made alway a maner louryng chiere
Upon the Somonour, but for honestee
No vileyns word as yet to hym spak he;
But atté laste he seyde unto the Wyf,
“Damè,” quod he, “God geve yow right good lyf!
Ye han heer touchéd, al so moot I thee!
In scolé materé greet difficultee.
Ye han seyd muché thyng right wel, I seye;
But, dame, heere as we rydé by the weye
Us nedeth nat to speken but of game,
And lete auctoritees, on Goddés name,
To prechyng, and to scolé of clergye,
And if it lykè to this compaignye
I wol yow of a somonour telle a game.
Pardee, ye may wel knowé by the name

1260. loverbyde, to outlive.
1261. to, om. E3.
1270. right, om. H.
1276. auctoritees, cp. l. 1212.
1277. scolé, H scoles, Corp.4 scolé eke.
That of a somonour may no good be sayd.
I praye that noon of you be yvelle apayd,—
A somonour is a renner up and doun
With mandementz for fornicacioun,
And is y-bet at every townës ende.”

Oure Hoost tho spak, “A, sire, ye sholde be hende
And curteys, as a man of youre estaat,
In compaignye; we wol have no debaat!
Telleth youre tale, and lat the Somonour be.”

“Nay,” quod the Somonour, “lat hym seye to me
What so hym list,—whan it comth to my lot,
By God! I shal hym quiten every grot!
I shal hym tellen which a greet honoun
It is to be a flaterynge lymytour;
And his office I shal hym telle y-wis.”

Oure Hoost answerdè, “Peez! namoore of this!”

And after this he sayde unto the Frere,
“Tel forth youre tale, my leevé maister deere.”

1285. *y-bet*, beaten.
1286. *hende*, polite.
1292. *quiten every grot*, repay every groat.
1294, 1295. Between these lines E⁶ wrongly insert 1307, 1308.
FRIAR'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Freres Tale

Whilom ther was dwellynge in my contree
An ercheđekene, a man of heigh degree,
That boldély dide execuciuon
In punysshynge of fornicacioun,
Of wicchécraft, and eek of bawderye,
Of diffamacjoun and avowtrye,
Of chirché-revés, and of testamentz,
Of contractes, and of lakke of sacramentz,
And eek of many another manere cryme,
Which nedeth nat rehercen for this tyme,
Of usure, and of symonye also,
But certés, lecchorus dide he grettest wo;
They sholdé syngen if that they were hent;
And smalé tytheres weren foule y-shent;
If any persone wolde upon hem pleyne
Ther myghte asterte hym no pecunyal peyne.
For smalé tithés, and smal offrynge,
He made the peple pitously to synge,

The Freres Tale: Two Latin stories, one of a wicked seneschal, the other of a lawyer, making the same points as this, were printed by Thomas Wright, and have been reprinted in Part I. of the Chaucer Society's Originals and Analogues. We may be sure that the setting of this story is entirely Chaucer's own.

1304. avowtrye, adultery.
1307. eek, om. E3.
1314. asterte, escape.
For er the bishope caughte hem with his hook,
They weren in the erchedeknes book;
And thanne hadde he, thurgh his jurisdictioun,
Power to doon on hem correccioun.
He hadde a somonour redy to his hond;
A slyer boye was noon in Engelond;
For subtilly he hadde his espialle
That taughte hym wher hym myghte availle.
He koude spare of lecchours oon or two,
To techen hym to foure and twenty mo;
For thogh this somonour wood was as an hare,
To telle his harlotrye I wol nat spare,
For we been out of his correccioun,
They han of us no jurisdictioun,
Ne nevere shullen, terme of alle hir lyves.

"Peter! so been the wommen of the styves,"
Quod the Somonour, "y-put out of my cure!"
"Pees! with myschance and with mysadventure!"
Thus seyde our Hoost, "and lat hym telle his tale.
Now telleth forth, thogh that the Somonour galè;
Ne spareth nat, myn owene maister deere."
This falsè theef, this somonour, quod the Frere,
Hadde alwey bawdës redy to his hond,
As any hauk to lure in Engelond,

1318. weren, E² were.
1319. H. omits thanne and he;
Camb.³ have the spelling
jurisdiction. ? om. and.
1323. subtilly, H privelly.
1331. shullen, H shul, to; E²
om. alle.
1332. the wommen, E² om. the.
styves, stews.
1336. gale, cry out.
That tolde hym al the secre that they knewe,
For hire acqueyntance was nat come of newe;
They weren hire approwours prively.
He took hymself a greet profit therby;
His maister knew nat alwey what he wan.
Withouten mandément, a lewéd man
He koude somne, on payne of Cristès curs,
And they were glade to fillé wel his purs,
And make hym greté feestés atté nale;
And right as Judas haddé purses smale,
And was a theef, right swich a theef was he.
His maister hadde but half his dûete.
He was, if I shal geven hym his laude,
A theef, and eek a somnour, and a baude.
He hadde eek wenches at his retenué
That wheither that sir Robert, or sir Huwe,
Or Jakke, or Rauf, or whoso that it were
That lay by hem, they tolde it in his ere.
Thus was the wenche and he of oon assent,
And he wolde fecche a feynéd mandément,
And somne hem to the chapitre bothé two,
And pile the man, and lete the wenché go.
Thanne wolde he seye, "Freend, I shal for thy sake
Do striken thee out of oure lettres blake,

1343. approwours, approvers, informers.
1348. to fille wel, E² for to file.
1349. atté nale, at the ale-house.
1352. sir Robert, a priest, not a knight.
1362. pile, fleece.
1364. thee, E² hire.
Thee ðhar namoore as in this cas travaille, 1365
I am thy freend, ther I thee may availle."

Certeyn he knew of briberýes mo
Than possible is to telle in yerés two;
For in this world nys doggé for the bowe
That kan an hurt deer from an hool y-knowe 1370
Bet than this somnour knew a sly lecchour,
Or an avowntier, or a paramour;
And, for that was the fruyt of al his rente,
Therfore on it he sette al his entente.

And so bifel that onés on a day 1375
This somnour,—evere waityng on his pray,
Rod forth to somne an old wydwe, a ribibe,
Feynynge a causé, for he woldë brybe,—
And happed that he saugh before hym ryde
A gay yeman under a forest syde. 1380
A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and kene;
He hadde upon a courtépy of grene,
An hat upon his heed with frenges blake.

"Sire," quod this somnour, "hayl! and wel
atake!"

"Welcome!" quod he, "and every good felawe.
Wher rydestow, under this grene-wode shawe," 1386
Seydë this yeman; "wiltow fer to day?"

This somnour hym answerde and seydë, "Nay,
Heere fastë by," quod he, "is myn entente
To ryden, for to reysen up a rente
That longeth to my lordés duéeet."  
"Artow thanne a bailly?" "Ye," quod he,—
He dorsté nat, for verray filthe and shame,
Seye that he was a somonour, for the name.
"Dépardieux!" quod this yeman, "deeré bro-ther!
Thou art a bailly, and I am another.
I am unknown as in this contree;
Of thyn acqueyntance I wolde prayé thée,
And eek of bretherhede, if that yow leste;
I have gold and silver in my cheste;
If that thee happe to komen in oure shire
Al shal be thyn, right as thou wolt desire."
"Grantmercy!" quod this somonour, "by my feith!"
Everych in ootheres hand his trouhté leith,
For to be sworné bretheren til they deye;
In daliance they ryden forth hir weye.
This somonour that was as ful of jangles
As ful of venym been thise waryangles,
And evere enqueryng upon every thynge;
"Brother," quod he, "where is now youre dwell-ynge,
Another day if that I sholde yow seche?"
This yeman hym answerde, in softé speche:
"Brother," quod he, "fer in the north contree,
Where as I hope som tymé I shal thee see.

1395. deere, H² lieve.  
1406. hir weye, H³ and pleye(n).
1408. waryangles, butcher birds.
Er we departe I shal thee so wel wisse
That of myn hous ne shaltow nevere mysse."
    "Now, brother," quod this somonour, "I yow preye,
Teche me, whil that we ryden by the weye,—
Syn that ye been a baillif as am I,—
Som subtiltee, and tel me feithfully
In myn office how I may moosté wynne,
And spareth nat for conscience ne syrone,
But as my brother tel me how do ye."
    "Now, by my trouthé, brother deere," seyde he,
    "As I shal tellen thee a feithful tale,
My wages been ful streité and ful smale;
My lord is hard to me and daungerous,
And myn office is ful laborous;
And therfore by extorsions I lyve;
For, sothe, I take all that men wol me geve,
Algate by sleyghté, or by violence.
Fro yeer to yeer I wynne al my dispence;
I kan no bettré tellé, feithfully."
    "Now certés," quod this somonour, "so fare I;
I sparé nat to taken, God it woot,
But if it be to hevy or to hoot,
What I may gete in conseil privély;
No maner conscience of that have I;
Nere myn extorcioun I myghte nat lyven,
Nor of swiche japés wol I nat be shryven.
Stomak, ne conscience, ne knowe I noon
I shrewye thise shrifté-fadres everychoon!

1415. wisse, guide.  1426. and, H and eek.
Wel be we met, by God and by Seint Jame!
But, leevè brother; tel me thanne thy name,"
Quod this somonour; "in this meenè while." 1445
This yeman gan a litel for to smyle.
"Brother," quod he, "wiltow that I thee telle?
I am a feend; my dwellyng is in helle,
And heere I ryde aboute my purchasyng,
To wite wher men wol geve me anythyng.
My purchas is theffect of al my rente.
Looke how thou rydest for the same entente.
To wynne good, thou rekkest nevere how;
Right so fare I, for ryde I wolde right now
Unto the worldès endè for a preyë."
"A!" quod this somonour, "benedicite! what
sey ye?
I wende ye were a yeman trewely.
Ye han a mannès shape as wel as I,
Han ye a figure thanne determinat
In hellè, ther ye been in youre estat?" 1460
"Nay, certeinyly," quod he, "ther have we noon,
But whan us liketh we kan take us oon,
Or ellès make yow semë we been shape
Somtymë lyk a man, or lyk an ape;
Or lyk an angel kan I ryde or go.
It is no wonder thyng thogh it be so;
A lowsy jogelour kan deceyvë thee,
And pardee! yet kan I moore craft than he."

1450. wol geve me, E wolde me
given.
1451. i.e. what I win thus is
the sum of my income.
1456. sey'ye, H6 ye seye (ye say,
seye).
1459. a, om. E.
“Why,” quod the somonour, “ryde ye thanne or goon
In sondry shape, and nat alwey in oon?” 1470
“For we,” quod he, “wol us swiche formés make
As moost able is oure preyés for to take.”
“What maketh yow to han al this labour?”
“Ful many a cause, leevé sire somonour,”
Seydè this feend; “but allé thyng hath tyme; 1475
The day is short, and it is passéd pryme,
And yet ne wan I nothyng in this day;
I wol entende to wynnyng if I may,
And nat entende our wittés to declare;
For, brother myn, thy wit is al to bare
To understande, althogh I tolde hem thee.
But for thou axest why labouren we,—
For somtyme we been Goddés instrumentz,
And meenés to doon hise comandémentz,
Whan that hym list, upon his créatures,
In divers art and in diverse figures.
Withouten hym we have no myght, certayn,
If that hym list to stonden ther agayn.
And somtyme, at oure prayere, han we leve
Oonly the body and nat the soulé greve;
Witnessse on Job, whom that we diden wo;
And somtyme han we myght of bothé two,
This is to seyn, of soule and body eke;
And somtyme be we suffred for to seke

1478. wynnyng, E wynnen. 1479. wittes, H thinges.
1479. our, E hir. 1486. art, H4 act, actes.
Upon a man and doon his soule unreste,
And nat his body, and al is for the beste.
Whan he withstandeth oure temptacioun
It is a cause of his savacioun,—
Al be it that it was nat oure entente
He sholde be sauf, but that we wolde hym hente,—
And somtyme be we servant unto man,
As to the erchébisshope, Seint Dunstan;
And to the Apostles servant eek was I.”

“Yet tel me,” quod the somonour, “faithfully,
Make ye yow newé bodies thus alway
Of elementz?” The feend answerde, “Nay,
Somtyme we fayne, and somtyme we arysye
With dedé bodyes, in ful sondry wyse,
And speke as renably and faire and wel,
As to the Phitonissa dide Samuel;
And yet wol som men seye it was nat he.
I do no fors of youre dyvynytee,
But o thyng warne I thee, I wol nat jape,
Thou wolt algatês wite how we been shape,
Thou shalt herafterwardes, my brother deere,
Come there thee nedeth nat of me to leere,
For thou shalt by thyw owene experience
Konne in a chayer rede of this sentence
Bet than Virgilé while he was on lyve,
Or Dant also; now lat us rydé blyve,

1496. body, E soule.
1498. a, E om.; H² the.
1502. erchébisshope, E bisshope.
1509. renably, reasonably, elo-
quently.
1510. Phitonissa, Pythoness,
i.e. the Witch of Endor.
1518. i.e. be able to lecture on
this theme.
For I wolde compaignye with thee
Til it be so that thou forsakè me."
"Nay," quod this somonour, "that shal nat
bityde!
I am a yeman knowen is ful wyde;
My trouthé wol I holde as in this cas;
For though thou were the devel, Sathanas,
My trouthé wol I holde to my brother,
As I am sworn, and ech of us til oother,
For to be trewé bróther in this cas;
And bothe we goon abouten oure purchas.
Taak thou thy part, what that men wol thee geve,
And I shal myn,—thus may we bothè lyve,—
And if that any of us have moore than oother,
Lat hym be trewe and parte it with his brother."
"I graunte," quod the devel, "by my fey!"
And with that word they ryden forth hir wey,
And right at the entryng of the townès ende
To which this somonour shoope hym for to wende,
They saugh a cart that charged was with hey,
Which that a cartere droof forth in his wey.
Deepe was the wey, for which the carté stood:
The cartere smoot and cryde as he were wood,
"Hayt, Brok! hayt, Scot! what spare ye for the
stones!
The feend," quod he, "yow fecché, body and bones,
As ferforthly as evere were ye foled!
So muché wo as I have with yow tholed!
The devel have al, bothe hors and cart and hey!"

1527. to, H to thee.  1546. tholed, suffered.
This somonour seyde, "Heere shal we have a pley;"
And neer the feend he drough, as noght ne were,
Ful prively, and rowned in his ere,
"Herkne, my brother! herkne, by thy feith!
Herestow nat how that the cartere seith?
Hent it anon, for he hath geve it thee,
Bothe hey and cart and eek hise caples thre."
"Nay," quod the devel, "God woot, never a deel.
It is nat his entente, trust thou me weel;
Axe hym thyself, if thou nat trowest me,
Or ellës stynt a whyle, and thou shalt see."

This cartere thakketh his hors upon the croupe,
And they bigonné drawen and to stoupe.
"Heyt! now," quod he, "ther Jhesu Crist yow blesse!
And al his handwerk bothë moore and lesse,
That was wel twight, myn owene lyard boy!
I pray God save thee! and Seïnt Loy!
Now is my cart out of the slow, pardee!"
"Lo, brother," quod the feend, "what tolde I thee?
Heere may ye se, myn owene deere brother,
The carl spak oon thing, but he thoghte another.

1550. rowned, whispered.
1554. caples, nags.
1559. thakketh, smacks; E² taketh.
hors, plural.
1563. twight, twitched:
lyard, grey.
1564. pray, E pray to.
thee, H² thy (the) body.
Seïnt Loy, St. Eligius.
1568. thing, om. E.
Lat us go forth abouten ounge viage;
Heere wynne I nothyng upon cariage.”

Whan that they coomen somwhat out of towne
This somonour to his brother gan to rowne:
“Brother,” quod he, “heere woneth an old rebekke
That hadde almoost as lief to lese hire nekke,
As for to geve a peny of hir good.
I wole han twelf pence though that she be wood,
Or I wol sompne hire unto oure office,
And yet, God woot, of hire knowe I no vice;
But, for thou kanst nat, as in this contree,
Wynnè thy cost, taak heer ensample of me.”

This somonour clappeth at the wydwès gate:
“Com out,” quod he, “thou oldè vyrstrate!
I trowe thou hast som frere or preeest with thee.”

“Who clappeth?” seyde this wyf, “benedicitee!
God save you, sire! what is youre sweetè wille?”

“I have,” quod he, “of somonaunce a bille;
Up peyne of cursyng lookè that thou be
To-morn before the erchêdekenes knee,
Tanswere to the court of certeyn thynges.”

So wisly helpê me, as I ne may!
I have been syk, and that ful many a day;
I may nat go so fer,” quod she, “ne ryde,

1573. rebekke, abusive term for an old woman; so vyrstrate, in 1582.
1586. somonaunce, E somonce.
1587. Up, E Upon.
But I be deed, so priketh it in my syde.
May I nat axe a libel, sire somonour,
And answere there by my procúratour
To swich thyng as men wole opposen me?"

"Yis," quod this somonour, "pay anon—lat se—
Twelf pens to me and I wole thee acquite.
I shal no profit han therby but lite,
My maister hath the profit, and nat I.
Com of, and lat me ryden hastily;
Gif me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarye!"

"Twelf pens!" quod she, "now lady, Seinté
Marie!
So wisly help me out of care and synne,
This wydè world thogh that I sholdé wynne,
Ne have I nat twelf pens withinne myn hoold;
Ye knowen wel that I am poure and oold.
Kithé youre amesse on me, pouré wrecche."

"Nay, thanne," quod he, "the foulè feend me
ficche,
If I theexcusè though thou shul be spilt!"

"Allas!" quod she, "God woot I have no gilt."
"Pay me!" quod he, "or by the sweete Seinte
Anne,
As I wol bere awaye thy newe panne
For dette which that thou owest me of old,—
Whan that thou madest thyn housbonde cokèwold
I payde at hoom for thy correccioun."

1595. libel, copy of the complaint.
1596. procurator, E² procurateur, procutours.
1605. help me, E² help me God.
1609. Kithe, show.
1611. spilt, killed.
"Thou lixt!" quod she, "by my savacioun
Ne was I nevere er now, wydwe ne wyf,
Somoned unto youre court in al my lyf! 1620
Ne nevere I nas but of my body trewe.
Uhto the devel, blak and rough of hewe,
Geve I thy body and my panne also!"

And whan the devel herde hire cursen so
Upon hir knees, he seyde in this manere: 1625
"Now, Mabely, myn owene moder deere,
Is this youre wyl in ernest that ye seye?"
"The devel," quod she, "so fecche hym er he
deye,—
And panne and al, but he wol hym repente!"
"Nay, oldé stot! that is nat myn entente," 1630
Quod this somonour, "for to repenté me
For anythyng that I have had of thee;
I wolde I hadde thy smok and every clooth."
"Now, brother," quod the devil, "be nat
wrooth:
Thy body and this panne been myne by right; 1635
Thou shalt with me to hellé yet to-nyght,
Where thou shalt knowen of oure privete
Moore than a maister of dyvynyte."
And with that word this foulé seend hym hente.
Body and soule he with the devel wente 1640
Where as that somonours han hir heritage;
And God, that madé after his ymage
Mankynde, save and gyde us alle and some,
And leve thise somonours goodé men bcome!

1644. leue, H² leene.
Lordynges, I koude han toold yow, quod this Frere, 1645
Hadde I had leyser for this Somnour heere,
After the text of Cristè, Poul, and John,
And of oure othere doctours many oon,
Swiche peynés that youre herté myghte agryse;
Al be it so no tongé may devyse—
Thogh that I myghte a thousand wynter telle—
The peynes of thilké curséd hous of helle;
But for to kepe us fro that curséd place
Waketh and preyeth Jhesu for his grace,
So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.
Herketh this word, beth war, as in this cas:
"The leoun sit in his awayt alway
To sle the innocent, if that he may."
Disposeth ayoure hertés to withstande
The feend, that yow wolde makè thral and bonde;
He may nat temptè yow over youre myght,
For Crist wol be youre champion and knyght;
And prayeth that thise somonours hem repente
Of hir mysdedes, er that the feend hem hente!

The prologue of the Somonours Tale

This Somonour in his styropes hyé stood. 1665
Upon this Frere his herté was so wood,
That lyk an aspen leef he quook for ire.

1649. agryse, horrify.
1650. may, E² may it.
1654. Waketh, watch.
1663. H⁸ make the hit more 1665. hye, H up he.
“Lordynges,” quod he, “but o thyng I desire,—
I yow biseke that of youre curteisye,
Syn ye han herd this falsé Frere lye,
As suffereth me I may my talé telle.

“This Frére bosteth that he knoweth helle,
And God it woot, that it is litel wonder;
Frerés and seendés been but lyte asonder;
For, pardee! ye han ofté tyme herd telle
How that a frére ravysshed was to helle
In spirit oné by a visiouin;
And as an angel ladde hym up and doun,
To shewen hym the peynés that ther were,
In al the placé saugh he nat a frere.
Of oother folk he saugh ynowe in wo.
Unto this angel spak the frére tho:

‘‘Now, sire,’ quod he, ‘han frerés swich a grace
That noon of hem shal comé to this place?’

‘‘Yis,’ quod this angel, ‘many a millioun;’
And unto Sathanas he ladde hym doun,
And now hath Sathanas, seith he, a tayl,
Broder than of a carryk is the sayl.
‘Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas,’ quod he,
‘Shewe forth thyn ers, and lat the frére se
Where is the nest of frerés in this place;’
And er that half a furlong wey of space,
Right so as bees out swarmen from an hyve
Out of the develes ers ther gonné dryve

1676. ravysshed, E vanysshed.  1688. carryk, a ship of burden.
1692. that, H3 than.
Twenty thousand freres in a route,
And thurgh-out hellè swarmedéden aboute,
And comen agayn as faste as they may gon,
And in his ers they crepten everychon;
He clapte his tayl agayn and lay ful stille.
This frere, whan he hadde lookèd al his fille
Upon the tormentz of this sory place,
His spirit God restorèd of his grace
Unto his body agayn, and he awook;
But nathèles, for ferè yet he quook,
So was the develes ers ay in his mynde;
That is his heritage of verray kynde.
God save yow allè, save this cursed Frere!
My prologue wol I ende in this manere.”

SUMMONER’S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Somonour his Tale

Lordynges, ther is in Yorkshire, as I gesse,
A mersshè contree callèd Holdernesse,
In which ther wente a lymytour aboute
To preche, and eek to begge, it is no doute.
And so bifel that on a day this frere

1696. swarmeden, H swarmed
       (swarme) al.
1700. looked, E looke.

* Summoner’s Tale, the central incident of this was, no doubt, common property. But the setting of the tale must be Chaucer’s.

1709. Yorkshire, as, H England.

1711. lymytour, begging friar.
Hadde prechéd at a chirche in his manere,
And specially, aboven every thyng,
Excité he the peple in his prechyng
To trentals, and to geve for Goddës sake,
Wherwith men myghté hooly houses make,
Ther as divínë servyce is honőured,
Nat ther as it is wasted and devoured,
Ne ther it nedeth nat for to be geve,
As to possessioners that mowen lyve,
Thankéd be God ! in wele and habundaunce.
“Trentals,” sayde he, “deliveren fro penaunce
Hir freendës souléz, as wel olde as yonge ;
Ye, whan that they been hastily y-songe,
Nat for to holde a preest joly and gay,
He syngeth nat but o masse in a day.
Delivereth out,” quod he, “anon, the soules !
Ful hard it is, with flesshhook or with oules
To been y-clawéd, or to brenne, or bake ;
Now spedé yow hastily for Cristës sake.”
And whan this frere had seyd al his entente
With qui cum patre, forth his wey he wente.
Whan folk in chirche had geve him what hem
lest,
He went his wey, no lenger wolde he reste.
With scrippé and tippéd staf, y-tukkéd hye,
In every hous he gan to poure and prye,
And beggeth mele, and chese, or ellés corn.
His felawe hadde a stafe tippéd with horn,
A peyré of tables al of yvoyr,
And a poyntel polyshed fetisly,
And wroote the namés alwey as he stood
Of allé folk that gaf hym any good,
Ascaunces thát he woldé for hem prey.

“Gif us a busshel wheté, malt or reye,
A Goddés kechyll, or a trype of chese,
Or ellés what yow lyst, we may nat cheese;
A Goddés halfpeny, or a masse peny,
Or gif us of youre brawn, if ye have eny;
A dagon of youre blanket, leevé dame,
Oure suster deere,—lo heere I write youre name,—
Bacoun, or beef, or swich thyng as ye fynde.”

(A sturdy harlot wente ay hem biynede,
That was hir hostés-man, and bar a sak,
And what men gaf hem leyde it on his bak.
And whan that he was out at dore anon,
He planed awey the namés everichon
That he biforn had writen in his tables.
He served hem with nyffles and with fables.

“Nay! ther thou lixt, thou Somonour!” quod the Frere.

“Pees!” quod oure Hoost, “for Cristés mooher deere;
Tel forth thy tale and spare it nat at al.”
“So thryve I,” quod this Somonour, “so I shal!”
So longe he wenté, hous by hous, til he Cam til an hous ther he was wont to be
Refresshéd moore than in an hundred placis;
Syk lay the goodé man whos that the place is;
Bedredé upon a couché lowe he lay.

“Deus hic!” quod he, “O Thomas, freend, good day!”
Seydé this freré, curteisly and softe.

“Thomas,” quod he, “God yeldé yow! ful ofte Have I upon this bench faren ful weel;
Heere have I eten many a myrie meel;” And fro the bench he droof awey the cat, And leyde adoun his potente and his hat, And eek his scrippe, and sette hym softe adoun. His felawe was go walkéd into toun, Forth with his knave into that hostelrye Where as he shooke hym thilké nyght to lye.

“O deeré maister,” quod this siké man, “How han ye faré sith that March bigan? I saugh yow noght this fourtényght or moore.”

“God woot,” quod he, “laboured I have ful soore,
And specially for thy salvacioun Have I seyd many a precious orisoun;
And for oure othere freendés, God hem blesse.
I have to day been at youre chirche at messe,

1768. goode, H husband, Corp.² 1778. into, H⁴ in the.
bonde. 1783. fourtenyght, E² fourt-
that, om. E⁵
1776. potente, tipped staff. 1785. salvacioun, E² savacioun.
And seyd a sermoun after my symple wit,
Nat al after the text of hooly writ;
For it is hard to yow, as I suppose,
And therfore wol I teche yow al the glose.

Glosyne is a glorious thyng certeyn,
For lettre sleeth, so as we clerkés seyn.
There have I taught hem to be charitable,
And spende hir good ther it is resonable;
And there I saugh oure dame,—a, where is she?"

"Yond, in the yerd, I trowé that she be,"
Seydé this man, "and she wol come anon."

"Ey, maister, welcom be ye, by Seint John!"
Seydé this wyf; "how fare ye, hertély?"

The frere ariseth up ful curteisly
And hire embraceth in his armes narwe,
And kiste hire sweete, and chirkeð as a sparwe
With his lyppes: "Dame," quod he, "right weel,
As he that is youre servant every deel."

Thankèd be God, that yow gaf soule and lyf,
Yet saugh I nat this day so fair a wyf
In al the chirchë, God so savé me!"

"Ye, God amende defautès, sire," quod she, "Algatès welcome be ye, by my fey!"

"Graunt mercy, dame, this have I founde alwey,
But of youre gretè goodnesse, by youre leve,
I woldè prey yow that ye nat yow greve,
I wole with Thomas speke a litel throwe;"
Thise curatz been ful necligent and slowe
To grope tendrey a conscience.
In shrift, in prechyng is my diligence,
And studie in Petres wordes and in Poules.
I walke, and fisshé cristien mennés soules,
To yelden Jhesu Crist his proper rente.
To sprede his word is set al myn entente."

"Now, by youre leve, O deeré sire," quod she,
"Chideth him weel, for, seint Trinitee!
He is as angry as a pissemerye,
Though that he have al that he kan desire,
Though I him wrye a-nyght and make hym warm,
And on hym leye my leg, outhyr myn arm,
He groneth lyk oure boor, lith in oure sty.
Oother desport ryght noon of hym have I,
I may nat plese hym in no maner cas."

"O Thomas, je vous dy, Thomas! Thomas!
This maketh the feend, this mosité ben amended;
Ire is a thynge that hyté God defended,
And therof wol I speke a word or two."

"Now, maister," quod the wyf, "er that I go,
What, wol ye dyne? I wol go ther-aboute."

"Now, damé," quod he, "je vous dy sans
doute,
Have I nat of a capoun but the lyver,
And of youre softe breed nat but a shyver, And after that a rosted piggès heed,—
But that I nolde no beest for me were deed,—
Thanne hadde I with yow hoomly suffisaunce,
I am a man of litel sustenaunce.
My spirit hath his fostryng in the Bible,
The body is ay so redy and penyble
To waké, that my stomak is destroyed;
I prey yow, damé, ye be nat anoyed,
Though I so freendly yow my conseil shewe.
By God, I wolde nat telle it but a fewe!"

"Now, sire," quod she, "but o word er I go:
My child is deed withinne thise wykés two,
Soone after that ye wente out of this toun."

"His deeth saugh I by revelacioun,"
Seith this frere, "at hoom in oure dortour.
I dar wel seyn that er that half an hour
After his deeth, I saugh hym born to blisse
In my avisioun, so God me wisse!
So dide our sexteyn and oure fermerer,
That han been trewe fréres fifty yeer,—
They may now, God be thanked of his loone!
Maken hir jubilee, and walke allone.
And up I roos, and al oure covent eke,
With many a tearé triklyng on my cheke,
Withouten noyse, or claterynge of belles,
Te deum was oure song and no thyng elles;
Save that to Crist I sayde anorisoun,
Thankynge hym of his revelacioun;

1855. dortour, dormitory.
1859. fermerer, keeper of the infirmary.
1861. loone, loan.
For, sire and damé, trusteth me right weel,
Oure orisons been moore effectueel,
And moore we seen of Cristès secre thynges,
Than burel folk, al though they weren kynges.
We lyve in povertie and in abstinence,
And burell folk in richesse and despence
Of mete and drynke, and in hir foul delit.
We han this worldés lust al in despit.
Lazar and Dives lyveden diversly
And diverse gerdoun hadden they ther-by.
Who so wol preye he moot faste and be clene,
And fatte his soule and make his body lene.
We fare as seith thapostle; clooth and foode
Suffisen us, though they be nat ful goode;
The clennesse and the fastynge of us freres
Maketh that Crist accepteth oure preyers.

"Lo, Moyses fourty dayes and fourty nyght
Fasted, er that the heighé God of myght
Spak with hym in the mount of Synay.
With empty wombe, fastynge many a day,
Receyved he the lawé that was writen
With Goddés fynger; and Elye, wel ye witen,
In mount Oreb, er he hadde any speche
With hyé God, that isoure lyvês leche,
He fasted longe, and was in contemplaunce.

"Aaron, that hadde the temple in governaunce,
And eek the othere preestês everichon,
Into the temple whan they sholdé gon

1870. moore, E3 wel moore. 1872. burel, lay.
1895. the, E4 that.
To preyé for the peple, and do servyse,
They nolden drynken in no maner wyse
No drynké which that myghte hem dronké make;
But there, in abstinence préye and wake, 1900
Lest that they deyden:—taak heede what I seye,—
But they be sobre that for the peple préye,
War that!—I seye namoore,—for it suffiseth.
Oure Lord Jhesu, as hooly writ devyseth,
Gaf us ensample of fastynge and preyerés;
Therfore we mendynantz, we sely freres,
Been wedded to poverte and continence,
To charite, humblesse, and abstinance,
To persecucyoun for rightwisnesse,
To wepynge, misericordé and clennesse; 1910
And therfore may ye se that oure preyerés,—
I speke of us, we mendynantz, we freres,—
Been to the hyé God moore acceptable
Than yourés with youre feestés at the table.
Fro Paradys first, if I shal nat lye,
Was man out chacéd for his glotonye,
And chaast was man in Paradys certeyn.

"But herkné, Thomas, what I shal the seyn,
I ne have no text of it, as I suppose,
But I shal fynde it in a maner close, 1920
That speciallyoure sweeté Lord Jhesus
Spak this by frerés whan he seydé thus:

"‘Blessed be they that povere in spirit been,'—
And so forth al the gospel may ye seen

1924. *al*, *H* in.
Wher it be likker oure professioun,
Or hirs that swymmen in possessioun,—
Fy on hire pompe and on hire glotonye!
And for hir lewèdnesse, I hem diffye!

"Me thynketh they been lyk Jovinian,
Fat as a whale, and walkynge as a swan,
Al violente as botel in the spence.
Hir preyere is of ful greet reverence
When they for soulés seye the Psalm of Davit,—
Lo, 'buf' they seye, cor meum eructavit,—
Who folweth Cristes gospel, and his foore,
But we that humble been and chaast and poore,
Werkeris of Goddès word, not auditours?
Therfore, right as an hauk up at a sourēs
Up springeth into their, right so prayeres
Of charitable and chasté, bisy freres
Maken hir sourēs to Goddès erēs two.
Thomas, Thomas, so moote I ryde or go,—
And by that lord that clepid is Seint Yve!
Nere thou oure brother sholdestou nat thrive!
In our chapître praye we day and nyght
To Crist that he theee sendē heele and myght
Thy body for to weelden, hastily."

"God woote," quod he, "no thyng therof feele I!
As help me Crist, as I, in fewē yerēs,

1927. on (a), om. E².
1929. Jovinian, probably the mythical emperor of the Gesta Romanorum.
1931. spence, buttery.
1933. buf (E but), an imitation of the sound.
1935. foore, course.
1938. sourēs, rising.
1939. their, the air.
1944. oure brother, i.e. a lay associate; cf. infra ll. 2126-28.
1949. I in, E¹ in a (in).
Han spent upon diversé manere freres
Ful many a pound, yet fare I never the bet.
Certeyn my good I have almoost biset,
Farwel my gold, for it is al ago!"
The frere answere, "O Thomas, dostow so?
What nedeth yow diversé frerés seche?
What nedeth hym that hath a parfit leche
To sechen othere lechés in the toun?
Youre inconstance is youre confusioun.
Holde ye thanne me, or ellés oure covent,
To praye for yow been insufficient?
Thomas, that japé nys nat worth a myte;
Youre maladye is for we han to lyte.
A! gif that covent half a quarter otes!
A! gif that covent foure and twenty grotes!
A! gif that frere a peny, and lat hym go!
Nay, nay, Thomas, it may no thyng be so!
What is a serthyng worth parted in twelve?
Lo ech thyng that is oned in it selve
Is mooré strong than whan it is to-scatered.
Thomas, of me thou shalt nat been y-flatered;
Thou woldest han oure labour al for noght;
The hyé God, that al this world hath wroght,
Seith that the werkman worthy is his hyre.
Thomas, noght of youre tresor I desire,
As for my self, but that al oure covent
To preye for yow is ay so diligent,
And for to buylden Cristès owene chirche.
Thomas, if ye wol lernen for to wirche
Of buyldynge up of chirches, may ye synde
If it be good in Thomas lyf of Inde.
Ye lye heere ful of anger and of ire,
With which the devel set youre herte afyre,
And chiden heere the sely innocent,
Youre wyf, that is so meke and pacient;
And therfore, Thomas, trowe me if thee lest,
Ne stryve nat with thy wyf, as for thy beste;
And ber this word awey now, by thy feith,
Touchynge this thyng, lo what the wisé seith,
‘Withinne thy nown hous ne be thou no leoun;
To thy subgitz do noon oppressioun,
Ne maké thyne acqueyntis fro the flee.’
And, Thomas, yet eft-soones I chargé thee,
Be war of yre that in thy bosom slepeth,
War fro the serpent that so slily crepeth
Under the gras and styngeth subtilly;
Be war, my soone, and herkne paciently,
That twenty thousand men han lost hir lyves
For stryvyng with hir lemmans and hir wyves.
Now sith ye han so hooly, meke a wyf,
What nedeth yow, Thomas, to maken stryf?
Ther nys, y-wys, no serpent so cruél
Whan man tret on his tayl, ne half so fel

1980. *Thomas*, St. Thomas pro-

fessed to be an architect,

but the palace he built

for the Indian king was

in heaven.

1982. *and*, om. E.


1990. *acquuntis fro the, E* acqueyntance(s) nat for to.

1993. *of yre*, so Petworth; rest

from or for hir (hire).


As womman is, whan she hath caught an ire;
Vengeance is thanne al that they desire.
Ire is a synne, oon of the gret of sevne,
Abhomynable unto the God of hevene,
And to hymself it is destruccioun.
This every lewéd viker, or persoun,
Kan seye, how ire engendreth homycide.
Ire is in sooth executour of pryde.
I koude of ire seye so muché sorwe
My talé sholdé lasté til tomorwe;
And therfore preye I God, bothe day and nyght,
An ırous man God sende hym litel myght.
It is greet harme and certés greet pitee
To sette an ırous man in heigh degree.
"Whilom ther was an ırous potestat,
As seith Senek, that durynge his estaat
Upon a day out ryden knyghtés two;
And as Fortúné wolde that it were so
That oon of hem cam hoom, that oother noght.
Anon the knyght biforne the juge is broght,
That seydé thus: 'Thou hast thy felawe slayn,
For which I deme thee to the deeth certayn,'
And to another knyght comanded he,
'Go lede hym to the deeth, I charge thee!'
And happed as they wente by the weye,
Toward the placé ther he sholdé deye,
The knyght cam which men wenden had be deed.

2015. certes, E3 eek, H also. Seneca, De Ira, i. 16, of
2018. Senek, this story is told by Cn. Piso (T.)
2024. the, om. H4.
Thanne thoughté they it was the besté reed,
To lede hem bothé to the juge agayn.
They seiden, 'Lord, the knyght ne hath nat slayn
His felawe; heere he standeth hool alyve.'
'Ye shul be deed,' quod he, 'so moot I thrythe!
That is to seyn, bothe oon, and two, and thre.'
And to the firsté knyght right thus spak he:
'I dampnéd thee, thou most algate be deed;
And thou, also, most nedés lese thyn heed,
For thou art cause why thy felawe deyth;'
And to the thriddé knyght right thus he seith:
'Thou hast nat doon that I comanded thee;'
And thus he dide doon sleen hem allé thre.'

"Irous Cambises was eek dronkelewe
And ay delited hym to been a shrewé;
And so bifel a lord of his meynee,
That lovéd vertuous moralitee,
Seyde on a day bitwene hem two right thus:
"'A lord is lost if he be vicius,
And drokenesesse is eek a foul record
Of any man, and namely in a lord.
Ther is ful many an eye, and many an ere,
Awaityng on a lord, and he noot where.
For Goddés love drynk moore attemprely!
Wyn maketh man to lesen wrecchedly
His mynde and eek hise lymés everichon.'

"'The revers shaltou se,' quod he anon,
'And preeve it by thyne owene experience,

2043. Cambises, this story is one in Herodotus, Bk.
also in Seneca, iii. 14; iii. (T.)
it differs a little from 2055. eek, om. E³.

VOL. II
That wyn ne dooth to folk no swich offence.
Ther is no wyn bireveth me my myght
Of hand, ne foot, ne of myne eyen sight;
And for despit he drank ful muchel moore,
An hondred part, than he hadde doon bifoore;
And right anon, this irous, curséd wrecche
Léet this knyghtés sone bifoire hym fecche,
Comandyenge hym he sholde bifoire hym stonde;
And sodeynly he took his bowe in honde,
And up the streng he pullèd to his ere,
And with an arwe he slow the child right there.
‘Now, wheither have I a siker hand or noon?’
Quod he; ‘is al my myght and mynde agon?’
Hath wyn byrevéd me myne eyen sight?
What sholde I tellé thanswere of the knyght?
His sone was slayn, ther is namoore to seye.
Beth war, thersore, with lordés how ye pleye.
Syngeth Placebo,—and I shal if I kan,
But if it be unto a pouré man.
To a poure man men sholde hise vices telle,
But nat to a lord, thogh he sholde go to helle.

“Lo, irous Cirus, thilké Percien,
How he destroyed the ryver of Gysen;
For that an hors of his was dreynt ther-inne,
Whan that he wenté Babylonie to wynne.
He madé that the ryver was so smal
That wommen myghté wade it over al.

2062. doon, om. E.
2071. byrevéd, E bireft.
2079. Cirus, see Herodotus, Bk. 2081. dreynt, drowned.
"Lo, what seyde he that so wel techè kan: 2085
'Ne be no felawe to an rious man,
Ne with no wood man walkè by the weye,
Lest thee repente,'—ther is nameore to seye."

"Now, Thomas, leevé brother, lef thyn ire,
Thou shalt me fynde as just as is a squyre;
Hoold nat the develes knyf ay at thyn herte,—
Thyn angre dooth thee al to sooré smerte,—
But shewe to me al thy confessioun."

"Nay," quod the siké man, "by Seint Symoun!
I have be shryven this day at my curat;
I have hym toold hoolly al myn estat.
Nedeth nameore to speken of it, seith he,
But if me list, of myn humylitee."

"Gif me thanne of thy gold, to make oure cloystre,"
Quod he, "for many a muscle and many an oystre,
Whan othere men han ben ful wel at eyse,
Hath beenoure foode, our cloystre for to reyse;
And yet, God woot, unnethe the fundément
Parfournéd is, ne of our pavémént
Nys nat a tyl yet withinne oure wones,—
By God, we Owen fourty pound for stones!  
 "Now help, Thomas! for hym that harwed helle,
For ellës mosté weoure bookës selle;
And if ye lakke oure predicacioun

2091-92. H reverses these lines.
2095. at, H of.
2099. gold, H good.

2102. for to reyse, H to arreyse.
2105. wones, dwelling.
2107. harwed, harrowed, devastated.
Thanne goth the world al to destruccion.
For whoso wolde us fro this world bireve,
So God me savé, Thomas, by youre leve,
He wolde bireve out of this world the sonne;
For who kan teche, and werchen, as we konne?
And that is nat of litel tyme,” quod he,
“But syn that Elie was, or Elise,
Han frérés been,—that fynde I of record:
In charitee y-thanked be oure Lord!
Now, Thomas, helpe for seinte charitee!”
And doun ane he sette hym on his knee.

This siké man wax wel ny wood for ire;
He woldé that the frere had been on fire
With his false dissymulacioun.

“Swich thyng as is in my possessioun,”
Quod he, “that may I geven, and noon oother.”
Ye sey me thus, ‘that I am youré brother’?”
“Ye, certés,” quod the frere, “trusteth weel,
I took oure dame oure lettre and oure seel.”

“Now wel,” quod he, “and somwhat shal I geve
Unto youre hooely covert whil I lyve,
And in thyn hand thou shalt it have anon,
On this condicioun, and oother noon;
That thou departe it so, my leevé brother,
That every frere have also muche as oother;
This shaltou swere on thy professioun,
Withouten fraud or cavallioun.”

“I swere it,” quod this fréré, “by my feith!”

2116. Elie, E Ennok.
2120. And doun, H8 Adoun.
2130. leeve, H8 deere.
2133. by, H8 upon.
And therwithal his hand in his he leith,—
“Lo heer my feith, in me shal be no lak.”
“That thanne put in thyn hand doun by my bak,”
Seydë this man, “and gropë wel bihynde;
Bynethë my buttok ther shaltow fynde
A thynq that I have hyd in pryvetee.”
“A!” thoghte this frere, “this shal go with me!”
And doun his hand he launcheth to the clifte,
In hopë for to fyndë there a gifte;
And whan this sikë man feltë this frere
Aboute his tuwel gropë there and heere,
Amydde his hand he leet the frere a fart;
Ther nys no capul drawynge in a cart
That myghte have lete a fart of swich a soun.

The frere up stirte, as dooth a wood leoun,—
“A! falsë cherl,” quod he, “for Goddes bones!
This hastow for despit doon for the nones;
Thou shalt abyde this fart, if that I may!”

His meyne, whiche that herden this affray,
Cam lepynge in, and chacéd out the frere;
And forth he gooth with a ful angry cheere,
And fette his felawe, ther as lay his stoor.
He lookèd as it were a wildë boor,—
He gryntë with his teeth, so was he wrooth;
A sturdy paas doun to the court he gooth,
Wher as ther woned a man of greet honour,
To whom that he was alwey confessour;
This worthy man was lord of that village.
This freré cam as he were in a rage,
Where as this lord sat etyng at his bord;
Unnethés myghte the freré speke a word,
Til atté laste he seydé, “God yow see!”

This lord gan looke and seidé, “Benedicitee!
What, freré John, what maner world is this?
I se wel that som thyng ther is amys;
Ye looken as the wode were ful of thevys;
Sit doun anon, and tel me what youre grief is,
And it shal been amended if I may.”

“I have,” quod he, “had a despit this day,
God yeldé yow! adoun in youre village,
That in this world is noon so poure a page,
That he nolde have abhominacioun
Of that I have receyvéd in youre toun;
And yet ne greveth me no thyng so soore,
As that this oldé cherl, with lokuês hoore,
Blaspheméd hathoure hooly convent eke.”

“Now, maister,” quod this lord, “I yow bi-
seke”—

“No ‘maister,’ sire,” quod he, “but servitour,
Thogh I have had in scolé swich honour;
God liketh nat that ‘Raby’ men us calle,
Neither in market ne in youre largé halle.”

“No fors,” quod he, “but tel me al youre grief.”
"Sire," quod this frere, "an odious meschief
This day bityd is to myn ordre and me;
And so par consequens in ech degree
Of hooly chirché; God amende it soone!"
"Sire," quod the lord, "ye woot what is to
doone;
Distempre yow noght, ye be my confessour;
Ye been the salt of the erthe and the savour;
For Goddés love youre pacience ye holde;
Tel me youre grief;" and he anon hym tolde,
As ye han herd biforn, ye woot wel what.

The lady of the hous al stillé sat
Til she had herdé what the fréré sayde;
"Ey! Goddés mooder," quod she,—"blisful
mayde!
Is ther oght ellés? Telle me feithfully."
"Madame," quod he, "how thynké ye here-
by?"
"How that me thynketh?" quod she; "so
God me speede!
I seye, a cherle hath doon a cherlé s dede.
What sholde I seye? God lat hym nevere thee,
His siké heed is ful of vanytee;
I holde hym in a manere frenésye."
"Madame," quod he, "by God I shal nat lye,
But I on oother wise may be awreke,
I shal disclaundre hym, over al ther I speke,—
This falsé blasphemour that chargéd me
To parté that wol nat departed be,—
To every man yliché, with meschaunce!"

The lord sat stille, as he were in a traunce,
And in his herte he rollèd up and doun
“How hadde the cherl ymaginacioun,
To shewé swich a probleme to the frere?
Nevere erst er now herd I of swich mateere;
I trowe, the devel putte it in his mynde.
In ars-metrike shal ther no man fynde,
Biforn this day of swich a questioun.
Certês, it was a shrewed conclusioun,
That every man sholde have yliche his part,
As of the soun or savour of a fart.
O vilé proudé cherl! I shreve his face!
Lo, sirés,” quod the lord, with hardé grace,
“Who herd evere of swich a thyng er now?
‘To every man yliké,’—tel me how?
It is an impossible, it may nat be.
Ey, nyce cherl? God lethe thee nevere thee!
The rumblyngye of a fart, and every soun,
Nis but of eir reverberacioun,
And evère it wasteth, litel and litel awey.
Ther is no man kan demen, by my fey!
If that it were departed equally.
What, lo, my cherl, lo, yet how shrewédly,
Unto my confessour to day he spak;

2218. *ymaginacioun*., E² *this ymaginacioun.*
2222. *ars-metrike*, arithmetic.
2224. H⁶ *read who schulde make a demonstracioun.*
2227. *vile*, H⁶ *nyce.*
I holde hym, certeyn, a demonyak.
Now ete youre mete, and lat the cherl go pleye.
Lat hym go honge hymself a devel weye!"

The wordes of the lordes Squier and his kervere for
departyng of the fart on twelve

Now stood the lordes Squier at the bord,
That karf his mete, and herde word by word
Of allé thyngés whiche that I have sayd;
"My lord," quod he, "be ye nat yvele apayd,
I koudé tellé for a gówné-clooth
To yow, sire fréré, so ye be nat wrooth,
How that this fart sholde evéne y-deléd be
Among youre convent, if it lykéd me."
"Tel," quod the lord, "and thou shalt have
anon
A gówné-clooth, by God, and by Seint John!"
"My lord," quod he, "whan that the weder is
fair,
Withouten wynd, or perturbyng of air,
Lat bryng a cartéwheel into this halle,—
But lookè that it have his spokés alle,—
Twelve spokés hath a cartwheel comunly;
And bryng me thanne twelf frérès,—woot ye why?
For thritten is a convent, as I gesse;
The cónfessor heere, for his worthynesse,
Shal parfourse up the nombre of his covent.
Thanne shal they knelé doun, by oon assent,
And to every spokés ende, in this manere,
Ful sadly leye his nosé shal a frere.
Youre noble cónfessor there, God hym save!
Shal holde his nose upright under the nave.
Thanne shal this cherl, with belly stif, and toght
As any tabour, hyder been y-broght,
And sette hym on the wheel right of this cart,
Upon the nave, and make hym lete a fart,
And ye shul seen, up peril of my lyf,
By preeve which that is demonstratif,
That equally the soun of it wol wende,
And eke the stynk, unto the spokés ende,—
Save that this worthy man, youre confessour,
By cause he is a man of greet honour,
Shal have the firste fruyt, as resoun is.
The noble usage of freres yet is this,
The worthy men of hem shal first be served,—
And certeinly, he hath it weel disserved,
He hath to day taught us so muchel good
With prechynge in the pulpit ther he stood,
That I may vouchésauf, I sey for me,
He hadde the firste smel of fartes three,
And so wolde al the covent hardly,
He bereth hym so faire and hoolily.”

2268. hyder been, E* been hyder.
2272. preeve which, H verray proof.
2278. The noble ... yet is
2280. The noble ... yet is
The lord, the lady, and alle men save the frere, 
Seyden that Jankyn spak in this mater 
As wel as Euclide, or Protholomee: 
Touchynge this cherl they seyden subtiltee 
And heigh wit made hym speken as he spak;  
He nys no fool, ne no demonyak;  
And Jankyn hath y-wonne a newe gowne.  
My tale is doon,—we been almoost at towne.

2289. Protholomee, Ptolemy.  
2294. at towne, Sittingbourne.
GROUP E

**Heere folweth The Prologe of the Clerkes Tale of Oxenford**

"SIRE Clerk of Oxenford," oure Hosté sayde,
"Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a mayde,
Were newé spouséd, sittynge at the bord;
This day ne herd I of youre tonge a word.
I trowe ye studie abouté som sophyme;
But Salomon seith 'every thyng hath tyme.'
For Goddés sake! as beth of bettre cheere!
It is no tymé for to studien heere;
Telle us som myrie talé, by youre fey!
For what man that is entred in a pley,
He nedés moot unto the pley assente;
But precheth nat, as frerés doon in lente,
To make us for oure oldé synnés wepe,
Ne that thy talé make us nat to slepe.
Telle us som murie thyng of áventúres,—
Youre termés, youre colóurs, and youre figúres
Keepe hem in stoor til so be ye endite
Heigh style, as whan that men to kyngés write;

17. *so be, EH so be that.*
Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, we yow preye,
That we may understondé what ye seye."

This worthy clerk benignély answérde,
"Hosté," quod he, "I am under youre yerde,
Ye han of us, as now, the governance,
And therefor wol I do yow obeisance
As fer as resoun axeth hardly.
I wol yow telle a talé which that I
Lernéd at Padwé of a worthy clerk,
As prevéd by his wordés and his werk;
He is now deed and nayléd in his cheste,
I prey to God so geve his soulé reste!

"Fraunceys Petrak, the lauriat poete,
Highté this clerk whos rethoriké sweete
Enlumyned al Ytaillé of poetrie,—
As Lynyan dide of philosophie,
Or lawe, or oother art particularer,—
But deeth, that wol nat suffre us dwellen heer,
But as it were a twynklyng of an eye,
Hem bothe hath slayn, and allé shul we dye.
But forth to tellen of this worthy man
That taughté me this tale, as I bigan,
I seye that first with heigh stile he enditeth,
Er he the body of his talé writeth,
A prohemye, in the which discryveth he

22. Hosté, H Sir host.
27. Lerned at Padwe, Petrarch
    was at Arqua, near
    Padua, from Jan. to
    Sept. 1373, and Chaucer
    may easily have visited
    him on his Genoese
    mission of that year.
29. deed, Petrarch died in 1374.
34. Lynyan, an Italian jurist,
    who died in 1383.
36. suffre us, om. E.
Pemond, and of Salucês the contree;
And speketh of Apennyn, the hillês hye
That been the boundês of West Lumbardy,
And of Mount Vesulus in special,
Where as the Poo out of a wellé smal
Taketh his firsté spryngyng and his sours,
That estward ay encresseth in his cours
To Emeleward, to Ferrare and Venyse,—
The which a longe thyng weré to devyse,
And trewely, as to my juggément,
Me thynketh it a thyng impertinent,
Save that he wolé convoyen his mateere;
But this is his talé which that ye may heere.”

CLERK OF OXFORD’S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Tale of the Clerk of Oxenford

PART I

Ther is, at the West sydè of Ytaille,
Doun at the roote of Vesulus the colde,
A lusty playne, habundant of vitaille,

44. Pemond, Piedmont.
Saluces, Saluzzo.

47. Mount Vesulus, monte Viso.

51. To Emeleward, i.e. towards the district traversed by the old Via Aemiliana.

55. convoyen his mateere, convey his information.

56. this is, E² this.
Where many a tour and toun thou mayst biholde
That founded were in tyme of fadrès olde,
And many another delitâble sighte,
And Salucês this noble contree highte.

A markys whilom lord was of that lond,
As were hise worthy eldrès hym biforme,
And obeisant and redy to his hond
Were alle hise ligès, bothè lasse and moore.
Thus in delit he lyveth, and hath doon yoore,
Biloved and drad, thurgh favoure of Fortune,
Bothe of hise lordês and of his commune.

Therwith he was, to speake as of lynage,
The gentilleste y-born of Lumbardye ;
A faire persone, and strong, and yong of age,
And ful of honour and of curteisye ;
Discreet ynogh his contree for to gye,—
Save in somme thyngês that he was to blame,—
And Walter was this yongê lordês name.

I blame him thus, that he considered noght
In tymé comynge what hym myghte bityde ;

70. commune, commons.
75. [g]ye, guide.
76. Save, E Save that.
78. considered, E8 considereth.
We may quote the original of this stanza to show how close Chaucer keeps to his text: "vir insignis nisi quod, præsenti sua sorte contentus, incuriosissimus futurorum erat. Itaque venatui auctioque deditus sic illis incubuerat ut alia pene cuncta negliget ; quodque in primis ægre populi ferebant ab ipsis quoque conjugii consiliis abhorreret."
But in his lust present was al his thoghth, 80
As for to hauke and hunte on every syde,
Wel ny alle othere curès leet he slyde;
And eek he nolde, and that was worst of alle,
Weddë no wyf, for noght that may bifalle.

Oonly that point his peplé bar so soore 85
That flökmeele on a day they to hym wente,
And oon of hem that wisest was of loore,—
Or ellës that the lord best wolde assente
That he sholde telle hym what his peplë mente,
Or ellës koude he showe wel swich mateere,— 90
He to the markys seyde as ye shul heere:

"O noble markys, youre humanitee
Asseureth us and geveth us hardinesse
As ofte as tyme is of necessitee
That we to yow mowe telle oure hevynesse.
Accepteth, lord, now for youre gentillesse,
That we with pitous herte unto yow pleyne,
And lat youre erës nat my voys desdeyne.

Al have I noght to doone in this mateere
Moore than another man hath in this place, 100
Yet for as muche as ye, my lord so deere,
Han alwey shewèd me favour and grace,
I dar the bettrë aske of yow a space

86. flökmeele, 'catervatim,' in a crowd.
93. and geveth, E to geve.
Of audience, to shewen ounge requeste,
And ye, my lord, to doon right as yow reste; 105

For certés, lord, so wel us liketh yow
And al youre werk, and evere han doon, that we
Ne koudé nat us-self devysen how
We myghté lyven in moore felicitee,
Save o thyng, lord, if it youre willé be,
That for to been a wedded man yow reste;
Thanne were youre peple in sovereyn hertés reste.

Boweth youre nekke under that blisful yok
Of soveraynetyee, noght of servyse,
Which that men clepeth spousaille or wedlok, 115
And thenketh, lord, among youre thoghtés wyse,
How that oure dayés passe in sondry wyse,
For thogh we slepe, or wake, or rome, or ryde
Ay fleeth the tyme, it nyl no man abyde;

And thogh youre grene youthé floure as yit, 120
In crepeth age alwey, as stille as soon,
And Deeth manaceth every age and smyt
In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon;
And al so certein as we knowe echoon
That we shul deye, as uncertyyn we alle 125
Been of that day whan deeth shal on us falle.

105. to doon right as yow reste, not in the Latin.
113. Chaucer here transfers Petrarck's epithets: "col-
122. smyt, smiteth.
"Accepteth thane of us the trewe entente
That never yet refuséden thyn heeste,
And we wol, lord, if that ye wole assente,
Chese yow a wyf in short tyme atté leeste,
Born of the gentilleste and of the méeste
Of al this land, so that it oghté seme
Honour to God and yow, as we kan deeme.

Delivere us out of al this bisy drede,
And taak a wyf, for hyé Goddés sake ;
For if it so bifelle, as God forbede !
That thurgh youre deeth youre lyné sholdé slake,
And that a straunge súccessour sholde take
Youre heritage, O, wo were us alyve !
Wherfore we pray you hastily to wyve."

Hir meeké preyere, and hir pitous cheere,
Madé the markys herté han pitee.
"Ye wol," quod he, "myn owéne peplé deere,
To that I nevere erst thoughté streyné me.
I me rejoyséd of my libertee,
That seeldé tyme is founde in mariage ;
Ther I was free, I moot been in servage ;

But nathélees, I se youre trewe entente,
And trust upon youre wit, and have doon ay ;
Wherfore, of my free wyl, I wole assente
To weddé me as soone as evere I may.

131. meeste, most (important).
137. lyne, H' lynage.
144. streyne, H constreigne.
But ther as ye han profrèd me this day
To chesé me a wyf, I yow relese
That choys, and prey yow of that profrè cesse,

For, God it woot, that children oftè been
Unlyk hir worthy eldrès hem bifoire;
Bountee comth al of God, nat of the streen
Of which they been engendred and y-bore.
I truste in Goddes bontee, and thersfore
My mariaje, and myn estaat and reste,
I hym bitake,—he may doon as hym leste.

Lat me allone in chesynge of my wyf—
That charge upon my bak I wole endure;
But I yow preye, and charge upon youre lyf,
That what wyf that I take, ye me assure
To worshippe hire, whil that hir lyf may dure,
In word and werk, bothe heere and everywheere,
As she an emperourés doghter weere;

And forthermoore, this shal ye swere, that ye
Agayn my choys shul neither grucche ne stryve;
For sith I shal forgoon my libertee
At youre requeste, as evere moot I thrythe!
Ther as myn herte is set, ther wol I wyve;
And, but ye wole assente in this manere,
I prey yow speketh namoore of this matere.”
With hertely wyl they sworen and assenten;
To al this thyng, ther seydë no wight nay;
Bisekyng the hym of grace, er that they wenten,
That he wolde graunt hem a certein day
Of his spousaille, as soone as evere he may;
For yet alwey the peple somwhat dreedde
Lest that this markys no wyf woldë wedde.

He graunte hem a day, swich as hym leste,
On which he wolde be wedded sikerly,
And seyde he dide al this at hir requeste;
And they, with humble entente, buxomly,
Knelynge upon hir knees ful reverently,
Hym thonken alle; and thus they han an ende
Of hire entente, and hoom agayn they wende.

And here-upon he to his officerës
Comaundeth for the festë to purveye;
And to his privee knyghtës and squierës
Swich charge gaf as hym liste on hem leye;
And they to his comandëment obeye,
And ech of hem dooth al his diligence
To doon unto the feestë reverence.

**PART II**

Noght fer fro thilkë paleys honorable
Ther as this markys shoope his mariaghe,
There stood a throop, of sitë delitable,
In which that pourë folk of that village
Hadden hir beestës and hir herbergage,
And of hire labour tooke hir sustenance,
After the erthë gaf hem habundance.

Among thise pourë folk ther dwelte a man
Which that was holden pourest of hem alle,—
But hyë God som tymë senden kan
His grace into a litel oxës stalle;
Janicula, men of that throope hym calle;
A doghter hadde he fair ynoth to sighte,
And Grisildis this yongë mayden highte.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee
Thanne was she oon the faireste under sonne,
For pourëliche y-fostred up was she;
No likerous lust was thurgh hire herte y-ronne,
Wel ofter of the welle than of the tonne
She drank, and for she woldë vertu plese
She knew wel labour, but noon ydel ese.

But thogh this maydë tendre were of age,
Yet in the brest of hire virginitée
Ther was enclosëd rype and sad corage,
And in greet reverence and charitee
Hir oldë, pourë fader fostred shee;
A fewë sheepe, spynnyenge, on feeld she kepte,
She woldë noght been ydel til she slepte.

201. herbergage, lodging. 215-220. Chaucer’s addition.
203. After, E³ After that.
204. Among, E³ Amonges. 215. tonne, tun, cask.
And whan she homward cam she woldé brynge  
Wortés, or othere herbés, tymés ofte,  
The whiche she shredde and seeth for hir lyvynge,  
And made hir bed ful harde and no thyng softe;  
And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on-lofte,  
With everich obeisaunce and diligence  
That child may doon to fadres reverence.

Upon Grisilde, this pouré créature,  
Ful ofté sithe this markys caste his eye  
As he on huntyng rood paráventure;  
And, whan it fil that he myghte hire espye,  
He noght with wantowne lookyng of folye  
Hise eyén caste on hire, but in sad wyse  
Upon hir chiere he gan hym ofte avyse,

Commendynge in his herte hir wommanhede,  
And eek hir virtu, passynge any wight  
Of so yong age, as wel in chiere as dede;  
For thogh the peplé have no greet insight  
In vertu, he consideréd ful right  
Hir bountee, and disposed that he wolde  
Wedde hire oonly, if evere he weddé sholde.

The day of weddyng cam, but no wight kan  
Tellé what womman that it sholdé be;  
For which merveillé wondred many a man,  
And seyden, whan they were in priveteé,

235. whan, E whan that.  
242. have, E hadde.  
249-252. Chaucer’s addition.  
249. whan, E whan that.
"Wol nat oure lord yet leve his vanytee? Wol he nat wedde? allas! allas! the while! Why wole he thus hymself and us bigile?"

But nathëlees this markys hath doon make, Of gemmës set in gold and in asure, Broochës and ryngës, for Grisildis sake; And of hir clothynge took he the mesure By a mayde lyke to hire of stature, And eek of othere aornementës alle That unto swich a weddyng sholdë falle.

The time of undren of the same day Approcheth, that this weddyng sholdë be, And al the paleys put was in array, Bothe halle and chambrës, ech in his degree; Houses of office stuffëd with plentee, Ther maystow seen of deynteuous vitaille That may be founde as fer as last Ytaille.

This roial markys richëly arrayed, Lordës and lades in his compaignye, The whiche that to the feestë weren y-prayed, And of his retenue the bachelrye, With many a soun of sondry melodye, Unto the village of the which I tolde, In this array the rightë wey han holde.

257. of, om. E9. 266. last, lasteth, reaches.
260. undren, between 9 and 12 A.M. 267. richely, H2 really
263-266. Chaucer’s addition. (royally).
Grisilde of this, God woot, ful innocent
That for hire shapen was al this array,
To fecchen water at a welle is went,
And cometh hoom as soone as ever she may;
For wel she hadde herd seyd that thilke day
The markys sholdè wedde, and if she myghte
She woldè fayn han seyn som of that sighte.

She thoghte, "I wole with othere maydens stonde,
That been my felawes, in oure dore and se
The markysesse, and therfore wol I fonde
To doon at hoom as soone as it may be
The labour which that longeth unto me;
And thanne I may at leyser hire biholde
If she this wey unto the castel holde."

And as she wolde over hir thresshold gon
The markys cam, and gan hire for to calle;
And she set doun hir water pot anon
Biside the thresshold in an oxès stalle,
And doun upon hir knes she gan to falle,
And with sad contentence kneleth stille
Til she had herd what was the lordès will.

This thoghtful markys spak unto this mayde
Ful sobrely, and seyde in this manere:
"Where is youre fader, Grisildis?" he sayde;

281 sqq. The form of the soliloquy is Chaucer's.
290-294. Chaucer's addition.
And she with reverence, in humble cheere,
Answerdè, "Lord, he is al redy heere;"
And in she gooth withouten lenger lette,
And to the markys she hir fader fette.

He by the hand thanne took this oldè man,
And seydè thus, whan he hym hadde asyde,
"Janicula, I neither may ne kan
Lenger the plesance of myn herté hyde.
If that thou vouchésauf, what-so bityde,
Thy doghter wol I take, er that I wende,
As for my wyf unto hir lyvés ende.

Thou lovest me, I woot it wel certeyn,
And art my feithful ligë man y-bore,
And all that liketh me, I dar wel seyn.
It liketh thee, and specially therfore,
Tel me that poynt that I have seyd bifoire,
If that thou wolt unto that purpos drawe;
To takè me as for thy sone-in-lawe."

This sodeyn cas this man astonyed so
That reed he wax, abayst, and al quakyng
He stood; unnethès seydè he wordès mo,
But oonly thus: "Lord," quod he, "my willynge
Is as ye wole, ne ageyns youre likynge
I wol no thyng, ye be my lord so deere;
Right as yow lust governeth this mateere."

313. that I have seyd, H as ye have herd.
317. abayst, abashed.
"Yet wol I," quod this markys softe, 
"That in thy chambre, I, and thou, and she,
Have a collacioun, and wostow why?
For I wol axe if it hire willé be
To be my wyf, and reule hire after me;
And al this shal be doon in thy presence,
I wol noght speke out of thyn audience."

And in the chambre whil they were aboute
Hir tretys, which as ye shal after heere,
The peple cam unto the hous with-oute,
And wondred hem in how honeste manere,
And tentifly, she kepte hir fader deere;
But outrély Grisildis wondré myghte,
For nevere erst ne saugh she swich a sighte.

No wonder is thogh that she were astonéd
To seen so greet a gest come in that place;
She nevere was to swiché gestés woned,
For which she lookoutéd with ful palé face.
But, shortly forth this talé for to chace,
Thise arn the wordés that the markys sayde
To this benigné, verray, feithful mayde:

"Grisilde," he seye, "ye shal wel understande
It liketh to youre fader and to me
That I yow wedde; and eek it may so stonde,

325. _collacioun_, a conference. 334. _tentifly_, H _tendurly_.
341. _tale_, H _é matiere._
GROUP E

CLERK'S TALE

As I suppose ye wol that it so be;
But thise demandés axe I first," quod he,
"That sith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,
Wol ye assente or ellès yow avyse?"

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte
To al my lust, and that I frely may
As me best thynketh do yow laughe or smerte,
And nevere ye to grucche it nyght ne day?
And eek whan I sey 'ye' ne sey nat 'nay,'
Neither by word, ne frowynge contenance?
Swere this, and heere I swere oure alliance."

"Wondrynge upon this word, quakynge for drede,
She seydé, "Lord, undigne and unworthy
Am I to thilke honóur that ye me beede;
But as ye wole youreself, right so wol I,
And heere I swere that nevere willyngly
In werk, ne thought, I nyl yow disobeye,
For to be deed, though me were looth to deye!"

"This is ynoghe, Grisildé myn," quod he,
And forth he gooth with a ful sobré cheere
Out at the dore, and after that cam she,
And to the peple he seyde in this manere:
"This is my wyf," quod he, "that standeth heere;
Honoureth hire, and loveth hire, I preye,
Whoso me loveth; ther is namoore to seye."

357.  oure, E yow.
And for that no thyng of hir oldé geere
She sholdé brynge into his hous, he bad
That wommen sholde dispoillen hire right theere;
Of which thise ladyes weré nat right glad
To handle hir clothès wher-inne she was clad;
But nathèlees this maydé, bright of hewe,
Fro foot to heed they clothéd han al newe.

Hir heris han they kembd, that lay untressed
Ful rudely, and with hir fyngres smale
A corone on hire heed they han y-dressed,
And sette hire ful of nowches grete and smale.
Of hire array what sholde I make a tale?
Unnethe the peple hire knew for hire fairnesse,
Whan she translated was in swich richesse.

This markys hath hire spouséd with a ryng,
Broght for the samé cause, and thanne hire sette
Upon an hors snow-whit and wel amblyng,
And to his paleys, er he lenger lette,
With joyful peple that hire ladde and mette,
Convoyéd hire, and thus the day they spende
In revel til the sonné gan descende;

And, shortly forth this talé for to chace,
I seye that to this newé markysesse
God hath swich favour sent hire of his grace,
That it ne seméd nat by liklynesse
That she was born and fed in rudēnesse,
As in a cote, or in an oxē stalle,
But norissed in an emperourēs halle.

To every wight she woxen is so deere
And worshipful, that folk ther she was bore,
And from hire birthē knewe hire yeer by yeere,
Unnethē trowēd they, but dorste han swore
That to Janicle of which I spak bifoře
She doghter nere, for as by conjecture,
Hem thoughte she was another créature ;

For though that evere vertuous was she,
She was ençressēd in swich excellence
Of thewēs goode, y-set in heigh bountee,
And so discreet and fair of eloquence,
So benigne, and so digne of reverence,
And koudē so the peplēs herte embrace,
That ech hire lovede that lookēd on hir face.

Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun
Publicēd was the bountee of hir name.
But eek biside in many a regioun,
If oon seide wel, another seyde the same.
So spradde of hire heighe bountee the fame
That men and wommen, as wel yonge as olde,
Goon to Saluce upon hire to bihold.

409. thewes, virtues. 418. fame, E name.
Thus Walter lowely—nay, but roially—
Wedded with fortunat honestétee,
In Goddes pees lyveth ful esily
At hoom, and outward grace ynogh had he;
And for he saugh that under lowe degree
Was ofte vertu hid, the peple hym heelde
A prudent man, and that is seyn ful seelde.

Nat oonly this Grisildis thurgh hir wit
Koude al the feet of wyfly homlynesse,
But eek, whan that the cas requiréd it,
The commune profit koudé she redresse;
Ther nas discord, rancour, ne hevynesse,
In al that land; that she ne koude apese,
And wisely brynge hem alle in reste and ese.

Though that hire housbonde absent were, anon,
If gentil men or othere of hire contree
Were wrothé, she wolde bryngen hem aton;
So wise and rypé wordés hadde she,
And juggémentez of so greet equitee,
That she from hevene sent was, as men wende,
Peplé to save and every wrong tamende.

Nat longé tyme after that this Grisild
Was wedded, she a doghter hath y-bore,
Al had hire levere have born a knavé child.

425. lowe, E heigh. 437. aton, together.
426. ofte, om. E. 439. cas, H tyme.
430. cas, H tyme. 444. born, H² had.
Glad was this markys and the folk therfore, 445
For though a mayd child coome al bifo, 450
She may unto a knave child atteyne,
By liklihede, syn she nys nat bareyne.

PART III

Ther fil, as it bifleth tymês mo,
Whant hat this child had souked but a throwe, 450
This markys in his herté longeth so
To tempte his wyf, hir sadnesse for to knowe,
That he ne myghte out of his herté throwe
This merveillous desir his wyf tassaye ; 454
Nedelees, God woot, he thoghte hire for taffraye.

He hadde assayéd hire ynogh bifo,
And foond hire evere goode,—what neded it
Hire for to tempte, and alwye moore and moore?
Though som men preise it for a subtil wit,
But as for me, I seye that yvele it sit 460
To assaye a wyf whan that it is no nede,
And putten hire in angwyssh and in drede.

For which this markys wroghte in this manere ;
He cam allone a nyght, ther as she lay,
With stierné face and with ful trouble cheere, 465
And seydé thus : "Grisilde," quod he, "that day

447. knave, E man.
450. a throwe, a while.
452. sadnesse, constancy.
460. Chaucer is here much more emphatic than Petrarch.
That I yow took out of youre povere array
Andputte yow in estaat of heigh noblesse,—
Ye have nat that forgotten, as I gesse?

I seye, Grisilde, this present dignitee
In which that I have put yow, as I trowe,
Maketh yow nat forgetful for to be
That I yow took in poure estaat ful lowe;
For any wele ye moot youreselven knowe;
Taak heede of every word that I yow seye,
Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tweye.

Ye woot youreself wel how that ye cam heere
Into this hous, it is nat longe ago,
And though to me that ye be lief and deere,
Unto my gentils ye be no thyng so;
They seyn to hem it is greet shame and wo
For to be subgetz, and been in servage,
To thee, that born art of a smal village;

And namely sith thy doghter was y-bore
Thise wordés han they spoken, dountelees;
But I desire, as I have doon bifore,
To lyve my lyf with hem in reste and pees;
I may nat in this caas be recchelees,
I moot doon with thy doghter for the beste,
Nat as I wolde, but as my peple lestte;

475. I, E.y. 482. been, E to been.
488. recchelees, careless.
And yet, God woot, this is ful looth to me;
But nathëlees withouté youre wityng
I wol nat doon, but this wol I,” quod he,
"That ye to me assente, as in this thyng,
Shewe now youre pacience in youre werkyng,
That ye me highte and swore in youre village,
That day that makéd wasoure mariage.”

Whan she had herd al this she noght ameved,
Neither in word, or chiere, or countenaunce,
For as it seméd she was nat agreveed.
She seydé, “Lord, al lyth in youre plesaunce ;
My child and I, with hertely obeisaunce,
Been yourés al, and ye mowe save or spille
Youre owene thyng ; werketh after youre wille.

Ther may no thyng, God so my soulé save !
Likén to yow that may displesé me ;
Ne I desiré no thyng for to have,
Ne dредé for to leese, save oonly yee ;
This wyl is in myn herte, and ay shal be.
No lengthe of tyme, or deeth, may this deface,
Ne chaunge my corage to another place.”

Glad was this markys of hire answeryng,
But yet he feynéd as he were nat so ;
Al drey was his cheere and his lookyng,
Whan that he sholde out of the chambré go.
Soone after this, a furlong wey or two,
He privēly hath toold al his entent
Unto a man, and to his wyf hym sente.

A maner sergeant was this privee man,
The which that feithful ofte he founden hadde
In thyngēs grete, and eek swich folk wel kan
Doon execucīoun in thyngēs badde;
The lord knew wel that he hym loved and dradde:
And whan this sergeant wiste his lordēs wille,
Into the chambre he stalkēd hym ful stille.

"Madame," he seyde, "ye moote forgeve it me,
Though I do thyng to which I am constreynēd;
Ye been so wys, that ful wel knowē ye
That lordēs heestēs mowe nat been y-feyned:
They mowe wel been biwaillēd and compleynēd,
But men moote nede unto hire lust obeye,
And so wol I; ther is namoore to seye.

This child I am comanded for to take,"—
And spak namoore but out the child he hente
Despitously, and gan a cheerē make
As though he wolde han slayn it er he wente.
Grisildis moot al suffren and consente;
And as a lamb she sitteth meke and stille,
And leet this cruēl sergeant doon his wille.

Suspecious was the diffame of this man,
Suspect his face, suspect his word also,
Suspect the tymé in which he this bigan;
Allas, hir doghter that she loved so,
She wende he wolde han slawen it right tho;
But nathélees she neither weepe ne syked,
Consentynge hire to that the markys lyked;

But atté laste to spoken she bigan,
And mekely she to the sergeant preyde,
So as he was a worthy gentil man,
That she moste kisse hire child er that it deyde.
And in hir barm this litel child she leyde
With ful sad face, and gan the child to blisse,
And lulléd it, and after gan it kisse;

And thus she seyde in hire benigné voys,
"Fareweel, my child, I shal thee nevere see!"
But sith I thee have markéd with the croys,
Of thilké Fader, blessed moote he be,
That for us deyde up on a croys of tree.
Thy soulé, litel child, I hym bitake,
For this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake."

I trowe that to a norice in this cas
It had been hard this reuthé for to se;
Wel myghte a mooer thanne han cryd, allas!

545. syked, sighed.
551. barm, bosom; H an hir arm.
552, 553. blisse . . kisse, E kisse . . blisse.
554-560. Chaucer's addition, though Petrarch mentions the signing with the cross.
But nathless, so sad stidefast was she,
That she enduréd al adversitee,
And to the sergeant mekely she sayde,
"Have heer agayn youre litel yongé mayde;
Gooth now," quod she, "and dooth my lordés heeste;
But o thyng wol I prey yow of youre grace,
That, but my lord forbad yow, atté leeste
Burieth this litel body in som place/
That beestés, ne no briddés, it to-race;"
But he no word wol to that purpos seye,
But took the child and wente upon his weye.

This sergeant cam unto his lord ageyn,
And of Grisildis wordés and hire cheere
He tolde hym point for point, in short and pleyn,
And hym presenteth with his doghter deere.
Somwhat this lord hath routhe in his manere,
But nathèles his purpos heeld he stille,
As lordés doon whan they wol han hir wille;

And bad his sergeant that he pryvély
Sholdé this child ful sof té wynde and wrappe
With allé circumstancés, tendrely,
And carie it in a cofre, or in a lappe;
But, upon payne his heed of for to swappe,
That no man sholdé knowe of his entente,
Ne whenne he cam, ne whider that he wente;

But at Boloigné to his suster deere,
That thilké tyme of Panik was countesse,
He sholde it take, and shewe hire this mateere,
Bisekynge hire to doon hire bisynesse
This child to fostre in allé gentillesse;
And whos child that it was he bad hir hyde
From every wight for oght that may bityde.

The sergeant gooth, and hath fulfild this thyng;
But to this markys now retourné we,
For now gooth he ful faste ymaginyng
If by his wyvés cheere he myghté se,
Or by hire word aperceyvè, that she
Were chaungéd; but he nevere hire koudé fynde
But evere in oon yliké sad and kynde,

As glad, as humble, as bisy in servyse,
And eek in love, as she was wont to be,
Was she to hym in every maner wyse;
Ne of hir doghter noght a word spak she.
Noon accident for noon adversitee
Was seyn in hire, ne nevere hir doghter name
Ne nemprédd she, in earnest nor in game.

589. Boloigne, Bologna.
590. Panik, E5 Pavyk, Pavie; "Comiti de Panico" in Petrarch.
594. kyr, E hym.
607-609. An unhappy trans- lation of Petrarch's "nunquam siue ex pro-
posito siue incidenter nomen eius ex ore ma-
tris auditum."
609. nemprédd, named.
PART IV

In this estaat ther passéd been foure yeer
Er she with childé was; but, as God wolde,
A knavé child she bar by this Walter,
Ful gracious and fair for to biholde;
And whan that folk it to his fader tolde,
Nat oonly he, but al his contree, merye
Was for this child, and God they thanke and herye.

Whan it was two yeer old, and fro the brest
Departed of his norice, on a day
This markys caughté yet another lest
To tempte his wyf yet ofter, if he may.
O, nedeles was she tempted in assay!
But wedded men ne knowé no mesure
Whan that they fynde a pacient creature!

"Wyf," quod this markys, "ye han herd er this
My peple sikly berth our e mariagé,
And namely sith my sone y-boren is,
Now is it worse than evere in al our e age.
The murmure sleeth myn herte and my corage;
For to myne erés comth the voys so smerte
That it wel ny destroyéd hath myn herte.
"Now sey they thus: 'Whan Walter is agon
Thanne shal the blood of Janicle succede,
And been oure lord, for oother have we noon;'
Swiche wordés seith my peple, out of drede,
Wel oughte I of swich murmur taken heede,
For certeiny I dredé swich sentence,
Though they nat pleyn speke in myn audience.

I woldé lyve in pees, if that I myghte,
Wherfore I am disposéd outrély,
As I his suster servédé by nyghte,
Right so thenke I to serve hym pryvély.
This warne I yow, that ye nat sodeynly
Out of youresel for no wo sholde outreye—
Beth pacïent, and ther-of I yow preye."

"I have," quod she, "seyd thus, and evere shal,
I wol no thyng, ne nyl no thyng certayn,
But as yow list; naught greveth me at al
Though that my daughter and my sone be slayn
At youre comandément; this is to sayn,
I have noght had no part of children tweyne,
But first siknesse and after wo and peyne.

Ye been oure lord, dooth with youre owene thyng
Right as yow list,—axeth no reed at me,
For as I lefte at hoom al my clothyng
Whan I first cam to yow, right so," quod she,

640. servede, E4 served.  643. outreye, pass beyond control.
“Lefte I my wyl, and al my libertee,
And took youre clothyng; wherfore I yow preye,
Dooth youre plesaunce, I wol youre lust obeye.

And certés, if I haddé prescience
Your e wyl to knowe er ye youre lust me tolde,
I wolde it doon withouten necligence;
But now I woot youre lust and what ye wolde,
Al youre plesancé ferme and stable I holde;
For wiste I that my deeth wolde do yow ese,
Right gladly wolde I dyen yow to plese;

Deth may noght makè no comparisoun
Unto youre love;” and whan this markys say
The constance of his wyf, he caste adoun
Hise eyén two, and wondreth that she may
In paciencié suffre al this array;
And forth he goth with drery contenance,
But to his herte it was ful greet plesance.

This ugly serjeant, in the samé wyse
That he hire doghter caughté, right so he,
Or worsé, if men worsé kan devyse,
Hath hent hire sone that ful was of beautee.
And evere in oon so pacient was she
That she no chieré maade of hevynesse,
But kiste hir sone, and after gan it blesse;

667. youre, Corp.9 our, supported by Petrarch’s
   “nec mors ipsa nostro fuerit par amori.”
667. say, saw.
674. caughte, H fette.
676. hent, seized.
679. it, H9 him.
Save this: she preydè hym, that, if he myghte,
Hir litel sone he wolde in erthè grave,
His tendrè lymès, delicaat to sighte,
Fro fowelès and fro beestès for to save;
But she noon answere of hym myghté have;
He wente his wey, as hym nothyng ne roghte,
But to Boloigne he tendrely it broghte.

This markys wondere more lenger the moore
Upon hir pacience, and if that he
Ne haddè soothly knowên ther-bifoore
That parfitly hir children lovéd she,
He wolde have wend that of som subtiltee,
And of malice, or for crueel corage,
That she hadde suffréd this with sad visage;

But wel he knew, that next hymself, certayn
She loved hir children best in every wyse.
But now of wommen wolde I axen fayn
If thise assayès myghté nat suffise?
What koude a sturdy housbonde moore devyse
To preeve hire wyfhod, or hir stedefastnesse,
And he continuynge evere in sturdinesse?

But ther been folk of swich condicioun
That whan they have a certein purpos take,
They kan nat stynte of hire entencioun,

680. that if, H4 if that.
683. for, H2 him, Heng. hem.
685. roghte, recked.
692. corage, heart.
696. It is Chaucer who ad-
dresses the query to
women.
699. or, H5 and.
But, right as they were bounden to that stake,
They wol nat of that firsté purpos slake.
Right so this markys fulliche hath purposed
To tempte his wyf as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance,
That she to hym was changéd of corage;
But nevere koude he fyndé variance;
She was ay oon in herte and in visage,
And ay the forther that she was in age
The mooré trewe, if that it were possible,
She was to hym in love, and moore penyble;

For which it seméd thus that of hem two
Ther nas but o wyl, for as Walter leste,
The samé lust was hire plesance also;
And, God be thankéd, al fil for the beste.
She shewéd wel, for no worldly unreste
A wyf, as of hirself, no thing ne sholde
Wille in effect, but as hir housbonde wolde.

The sclaundre of Walter ofte and wydë spradde,
That of a crueel herte he wikkedly,
For he a pouré womman wedded hadde,
Hath mordred bothe his children privély.
Swich murmure was among hem comunly.
No wonder is, for to the peplés ere
Ther cam no word but that they mordred were;

704. that, H a.
GROUP E  CLERK'S TALE

For which, where-as his peple ther-bifore
Hadde loved hym wel, the sclaundre of his diffame
Made hem that they hym hatede thersore.  731
To been a mordreere is an hateful name,
But nathellees, for ernest ne for game,
He of his crueel purpos noldे stente ;
To tempte his wyf was set al his entente.  735

Whan that his doghter twelf yeer was of age
He to the court of Rome, in subtil wyse
Enforméđ of his wyl, sente his message,
comaundynge hem swiche bullès to devyse
As to his crueel purpos may suffyse,
How that the pope, as for his peplès reste,
Bad hym to wedde another if hym lestе.

I seye, he bad they sholdé countrefete
The popês bullès, makynge mencioun
That he hath leve his firsté wyf to lete,
As by the popês dispensacioun,
To stynte rancour and dissencioun
Bitwixe his peple and hym ; thus seyde the bulle,
The which they han publicëd attë fulle.

The rudë peple, as it no wonder is,
Wenden ful wel that it hadde be right so ;
But whan thise tidynge cam to Grisildis
I deemë that hire hertë was ful wo ;

731. hatedë, E§ hated.
But she—yliké sad for everemo—
Disposéd was, this humble créature
The adversitee of Fortune al tendure,

Abidyng everé his lust and his plesance
To whom that she was geven herte and al,
As to hire verray worldly suffisance.

But, shortly if this storie I tellen shal,
This markys writen hath in special
A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,
And secreely he to Boloigne it sente.

To the erl of Panyk, which that haddé tho
Wedded his suster, preyde he specially
To bryngen hoom agayn hise children two
In honurable estaat al openly;
But o thyng he hym preyède outrely,
That he to no wight, though men wolde enquire,
Sholdé nat tellé·whos children they were

But seye, the mayden sholde y-wedded be
Unto the markys of Saluce anon.

And as this erl was preyèd, so dide he;
For at day set he on his wey is goon
Toward Saluce, and lordés many oon
In riche array, this mayden for to gyde,
Hir yongé brother ridynge hire bisyde.

754. sad, constant; Petrarch’s “inconcussa.”
756. tendure, to endure.
764. Panyk, E⁵ Pavyk, Pavie.
768. ouitrely, utterly.
770. they, E⁵ that they.
777. hire bisyde, H³ by hir syde.
Arrayèd was toward hir mariage
This fresshè maydè ful of gemmès cleere.
Hir brother, which that seven yeer was of age, 780
Arrayèd eek ful fressh in his manere;
And thus in greet noblesse and with glad cheere,
Toward Saluces shapynge hir journey,
Fro day to day they ryden in hir wey.

PART V

Among al this, after his wikke usage, 785
This markys, yet his wyf to temptè moore,
Tò the outtrestè preeve of hir corage,
Fully to han experience and loore
If that she were as stidfast as bifoore,
He on a day, in open audience,
Ful boistously hath seyd hire this sentence:

"Certès, Grisilde, I hadde ynogh plesance
Tò han yow to my wyf for youre goodnesse,
As for youre trouthe and for youre obeisance,
Noght for youre lynage, ne for youre richesse: 795
But now knowe I in verray soothfastnesse
That in greet lordshipe, if I wel avye,
Ther is greet servitute, in sondry wyse.

I may nat doon as every plowman may,—
My peplè me constreyneth for to take 800

794. As, H³ And.
Another wyf, and crien day by day,
And eek the popé, rancour for to slake,
Consenteth it, that dar I undertake;
And trewéliche thus muche I wol yow seye,
My newé wyf is comynge by the weye.

Be strong of herte, and voyde anon hir place,
And thilké dowere that ye broghten me;
Taak it agayn, I graunte it of my grace.
Retourneth to youre fadrés hous,” quod he,
“No man may alwey han prosperitee.
With evene herte I redé yow tendure
This strook of Fortune or of aventure.”

And she answerde agayn in pacience:
“My lord,” quod she, “I woot and wiste alway
How that bitwixen youre magnificence
And my poverté no wight kan ne may
Maken comparisoun, it is no nay;
I ne heeld me nevere digne in no manere
To be youre wyf, no, ne youre chamberere;

And in this hous ther ye me lady maade,
The heighé God take I for my witnesse,
And also wysly he my soulé glaade!
I nevere heeld me lady, ne maistresse,

808. _I graunte it of my grace_, Petrarch only has “dotem tuam referens.”
811, 812. Chaucer’s expansion of “æqua mente.”
813. _answerde agayn, H^6 agayn answerde._
818. _digne, worthy._
819. _chamberere, E^3 chambere._
But humble servant to youre worthynesse,  
And evere shal, whil that my lyf may dure,  
Aboven every worldly creature.

That ye so longe, of youre benigne,  
Han holden me in honour and nobleye,  
Where as I was noght worthy for to bee,  
That thonke I God, and yow, to whom I preye  
Foryelde it yow; ther is namoore to seye;  
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende  
And with hym dwelle unto my lyves ende.

Ther I was fostrèd of a child ful smal,  
Til I be deed my lyf ther wol I lede,  
A wydwé clene, in body, herte and al;  
For sith I gaf to yow my maydenhede,  
And am youre trewe wyf, it is no drede,  
God shildé swich a lordés wyf to take  
Another man to housbonde or to make;

And of youre newé wyf God of his grace  
So graunte yow wele and prosperitee;  
For I wol gladly yelden hire my place,  
In which that I was blisful wont to bee;  
For sith it liketh yow, my lord;” quod shee,  
“That whilom weren al myn hertés reste,  
That I shal goon, I wol goon whan yow leste.

829. for to, om. E.  
831. Foryelde, repay.  
836-840. Expanded from Pet-  
839. shilde, forbid.
But ther as ye me profré swich dowaire
As I first broghte, it is wel in my mynde
It were my wrecchéd clothés, no thyng faire,
The wiche to me were hard now for to fynde.
O goodé God, how gentil and how kynde
Ye seméd by youre speche and youre visage
The day that makéd wasoure mariage!

But sooth is seyd, algate I fynde it trewe,
For in effect it preevéd is on me,
Love is noght oold as whan that it is newe!
But certés, lord, for noon adverseite,
To dyén in the cas, it shal nat bee
That evere in word or werk I shal repente
That I yow gaf myn herte in hool entente.

My lord, ye woot that in my fadrés place
Ye dide me streepe out of my pouré weede,
And richély me cladden of youre grace.
To yow broghte I noght ellés, out of drede,
But feith and nakednesse and maydenehed;
And heere agayn my clothynge I restoore,
And eek my weddyng ryng, for everemore.

The remenant of youre jueles redy be
In-with youre chambré, dar I saufly sayn.
Naked out of my fadrés hous," quod she,
"I cam and naked moot I turne agayn;

853-860. Chaucer's addition. 854. The day, H That day.
866. nakednesse, H² mekenes.
Al youre plesancé wol I folwen fayn;
But yet I hope it be nat youre entente
That I smokleès out of youre paleys wente. 875

Ye koude nat doon so dishoneste a thyng,
That thilké wombe in which youre children leye
Sholde biforn the peple, in my walkyng,
Be seyn al baré, wherfore I yow preye,
Lat me nat lyk a worm go by the weye.
Remembre yow, myn owene lord, so deere,
I was youre wyf, though I unworthy weere;
Wherfore in gerdoun of my maydenhede
Which that I broghte, and noght agayn I bere,
As vouchethsauft to geve me to my meede 885
But swich a smok as I was wont to were,
That I ther-with may wrye the wombe of here
That was youre wyf; and heer take I my leeve
Of yow, myn owene lord, lest I yow greve."

"The smok," quod he, "that thou hast on thy bak,
Lat it be stille, and bere it forth with thee."
But wel unnethés thilké word he spak,
But wente his wey, for routhe and for pitee.
Biforn the folk hirselven strepeth she,
And in her smok, with heed and foot al bare, 895
Toward hir fader hous forth is she fare.

887. wrye, cover. 888. and heer, etc., Chaucer's addition.
The folk hire folwé wepynge in hir weye,
And Fortune ay they cursen as they goon;
But she fro wepyng kepte hire eyén dreye,
Ne in this tymé word ne spak she noon.

Hir fader, that this tidynge herde anoon,
Curseth the day and tymé that nature
Shoopé hym to been a lyvés creature;

For out of doute this oldé pouré man
Was evere in suspect of hir mariagé;
For evere he deméd, sith that it bigan,
That whan the lord fullfild hadde his corage,
Hym woldé thynke it were a disparage
To his estaat, so lowé for talighte,
And voyden hire as soone as ever he myghte.

Agayns his doghter hastiliche goth he,
For he by noyse of folk knew hire comynge,
And with hire oldé coote, as it myghte be,
He covered hire ful sorwefully wepynge;
But on hire body myghte he it nat brynge,
For rudé was the clooth and moore of age
By deyés fele than at hire mariagé.

Thus with hire fader, for a certeyn space,
Dwelleth this flour of wyfly pacience,
That neither by hire wordés ne hire face,

903. *Shoope*, shaped. expansion of "attritam senio."
Biforn the folk, ne eek in hire absence,
Ne shewèd she that hire was doon offence;
Ne of hire heighe estaat no remembrance
Ne haddé she, as by hire contenaunce.

No wonder is, for in hire grete estaat,
Hire goost was evere in pleyn humyletee;
No tendré mouth, noon herté delicaat,
No pompé, no semblant of roialtee;
But ful of pacient benyngnytee,
Discreet and pridéees, ay honorable,
And to hire housbonde evere meke and stable.

Men speke of Job, and moost for his humblesse,
As clerkés, whan hem list, konne wel endite,
Namely of men, but as in soothfastnesse,
Though clerkés preisé wommen but a lite,
Ther kan no man in humblesse hym acquite
As wommen kan, ne kan been half so trewe
As wommen been, but it be falle of newe.

PART VI

Fro Boloigne is this erl of Panyk come,
Of which the fame up sprang to moore and lesse,
And to the peplés erés, alle and some,
Was kouth eek that a newé markysesse

932-938. Chaucer’s addition, in apparent forgetfulness that it is a Clerk who is speaking.
941. to, E in.
He with hym broghte, in swich pompe and richesse,
That nevere was ther seyn with mannës eye
So noble array in al West Lumbardye.

The markys, which that shoope and knew al
this,
Er that this erl was come, sente his message
For thilke sely, pourë Grisildis;
And she with humblë herte and glad visage,
Nat with no swollen thoght in hire corage,
Cam at his heste, and on hire knees hire sette,
And reverently and wisely she hym grette.

"Grisilde," quod he, "my wyl is, outrely,
This mayden, that shal wedded been to me,
Receivëd be to-morwe as roially
As it possible is in myn hous to be,
And eek that every wight in his degree
Have his estaat in sittyng and servyse
And heigh plesaunce as I kan best devyse.

I have no wommen suffisaunt, certayn,
The chambrës for tarraye in ordinaunce
After my lust, and therfore wolde I fayn
That thyn were al swich manere governaunce;
Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce;
Thogh thyn array be badde and yvel biseye,
Do thou thy devoir at the leestë weye."

948. sely, innocent. 961. tarraye, to array.
950. thoght, H* hert. 965. biseye, beseen.
"Nat oonly, lord, that I am glad," quod she,
"To doon youre lust, but I desire also
Yow for to serve and plesse in my degree
Withouten fayntynge, and shal everemo;
Ne nevere for no welé, ne no wo,
Ne shal the goost withinne myn herté stente
To love yow best, with al my trewe entente."

And with that word she gan the hous to dighete,
And tables for to sette and beddes make,
And peyned hire to doon al that she myghte,
Preyynge the chambreres for Goddes sake
To hasten hem, and fasté swepe and shake;
And she the moosté servysable of alle
Hath every chambre arrayéd and his halle.

Abouten undren gan this erl alighte
That with him broghte thise noble children
tweye,
For which the peple ran to seen the sighte
Of hire array so richely biseye;
And thanne at erst amongës hem they seye,
That Walter was no fool, thogh that hym leste
To chaunge his wyf, for it was for the beste;

For she is fairer, as they deemen alle,
Than is Grisilde, and moore tendre of age,
And fairer fruyt bitwene hem sholdé falle,

971. ne no, H² ne for no.
981. Abouten undren, a little before noon.
And moorë plesant, for hire heigh lynage;
Hir brother eek so faire was of visage
That hem to seen the peple hath caught plesaunce,
Commendynge now the markys governaunce.—

"O stormy peple! unsad, and evere untrewe!
Ay undiscreet, and chaungynge as a vane,
Delitynge evere in rumbul that is newe;
For lyk the moone, ay waxë ye and wane!
Ay ful of clappyng, deere ynogh a jane!
Youre doom is fals, youre constance yvele preeveth,
A ful greet fool is he that on yow leeveth."

Thus seyden saddé folk in that citee
Whan that the peple gazèd up and doun,—
For they were glad, right for the noveltee,
To han a newé lady of hir toun.
Namaore of this make I now mencioun,
But to Grisilde agayn wol I me dresse,
And telle hir constance and hir bisynesse.—

Ful bisy was Grisilde in every thyng
That to the feesté was apertinent;
Right noght was she abayst of hire clothyng,
Thogh it were rude and somdeel eek to-rent,
But with glad cheerë to the gate is went

993. *the peple*, Petrarch merely
    says "erantque qui di-
    cernent." The next two
    stanzas are Chaucer's
    addition (marked *Auctor*
    in E²), inserted in revising the tale.
999. *jane*, a small eoin of
    Genoa.
1013. *is, E² is she.*
With oother folk to greete the markysesse,
And after that dooth forth hire bisynesse.  

With so glad chiere hise gestës she receyveth,
And konnyngly, everich in his degree,
That no defautë no man apercyeveth,
But ay they wondren what she myghtë bee
That in so pore array was for to see,
And koudë swich honour and reverence,
And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In al this meenë-while she ne stente
This mayde, and eek hir brother, to commende
With al hir herte, in ful benyngne entente,
So wel that no man koude hir pris amende;
But attë laste whan that thise lordës wende
To sitten doun to mete, he gan to caile
Grisilde, as she was bisy in his halle.

"Grisilde," quod he, as it were in his pley,
"How liketh thee my wyf, and hire beautee?"
"Right wel," quod she, "my lord, for in good fey
A fairer saugh I nevere noon than she;
I prey to God geve hire prosperitee;
And so hope I that he wol to yow sende
Plesance ynogh unto youre lyves ende.
O thyng biseke I yow, and warne also,
That ye ne prikkè with no tormentynge
This tendré mayden, as ye han doon mo;
For she is fostrèd in hire norissynge
Moore tendrely, and, to my supposynge,
She koudè nat adversitee endure
As koude a pourè fostrèd creature.”

And whan this Walter saugh hire pacïence,
Hir gladè chiere, and no malice at al,
And he so ofte had doon to hire offence
And she ay sad and constant as a wal,
Continuynge evere hire innocence overal,
This sturdy markys gan his hertè dresse
To rewen upon hire wyfly stedfastnesse.

“This is ynoghe, Grisildè myn,” quod he,
“ær han a namoore agast, ne yvele apayed;
I have thy feith and thy benyngnytee,
As wel as evere womman was, assayed,
In greet estaat and pourèliche arrayed.
Now knowe I, gode wyf, thy stedfastnesse;”
And hire in armés took, and gan hire kesse.

And she for wonder took of it no keepe,
She herdè nat what thyng he to hire seyde,
She ferde, as she had stert out of a sleepe,

1039. mo, more, others; cp. Petrarch “ne hanc illis aculeis agites, quibus alteram agitasti.” Even now she will not say ‘me.’
1045. glade, E® glad.
1055. pourèliche, H proprelche/
1056. gode, H® dere.
Til she out of hire mazèdnesse abreyde.
"Grisilde," quod he, "by God that for us deyde,
Thou art my wyf, ne noon oother I have,
Ne nevere hadde, as God my soulé save!

This is thy doghter, which thou hast supposed
To be my wyf,—that oother faithfully
Shal be myn heir, as I have ay purposèd;
Thou bare hym in thy body trewely;
At Boloigne have I kept hem privély.
Taak hem agayn, for now maystow nat seye
That thou hast lorn noon of thy children tweye;

And folk that ootherweys han seyd of me,
I warne hem wel that I have doon this deede
For no malice, ne for no crueltee,
But for tassaye in thee thy wommanheede,
And nat to sleen my children, God forbeede!
But for to kepe hem pryvély and stille
Til I thy purpos knewe and al thy wille."

Whan she this herde, aswowné doun she falleth
For pitous joye, and after hire swownynge
She bothe hire yongé children to hire calleth,
And in hire armés, pitously wepynge,
Embraceth hem, and tendrély kissynge,
Ful lyk a mooder, with hire salté teeres
She bathéd bothe hire visage and hire heeres.
O which a pitous thyng it was to se
Hir swownyng, and hire humblé voys to heere!
"Graunt mercy, lord! that thanke I yow," quod she,
"That ye han savéd me my children deere.
Now rekke I nevere to been deed right heere, 1090
Sith I stonde in youre love and in youre grace.
No fors of deeth, ne whan my spirit pace!

O tendre, O deere, O yongé children myne!
Youre woful moorer wendé stedfastly
That crueel houndés, or som foul vermyne, 1095
Hadde eten yow; but God, of his mercy,
And youre benyngné fader, tendrélý
Hath doon yow kep’t—and in that samé stounde
Al sodeynly she swapte adoun to grounde;

And in hire swough so sadly holdeth she 1100
Hire children two, whan she gan hem tembrace,
That with greet sleighte, and greet difficultee
The children from hire arm they goone arace.
  O many a teere on many a pitous face
Doun ran, of hem that stooden hire bisyde; 1105
Unnethe abouten hire myghte they abyde!

Walter hire gladeth, and hire sarwé slaketh;
She riseth up abayséd from hire traunce,
And every wight hire joye and feesté maketh,  
Til she hath caught agayn hire contenaunce.  
Walter hire dooth so faithfully plesaunce  
That it was deyntee for to seen the cheere  
Bitwixe hem two, now they been met yfeere.

Thise ladyes, whan that they hir tymé saye,  
Han taken hire and into chambré gon,  
And strepen hire out of hire rude array,  
And in a clooth of gold that brighté shoon,  
With a coroune of many a riché stoon  
Upon hire heed, they into halle hire broghte,  
And ther she was honúréd as hire oghte.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende,  
For every man and womman dooth his myght  
This day in murthe and revel to dispende,  
Til on the welkné shoon the sterrés lyght ;  
For more solempne in every mannés syght  
This festé was, and gretter of costage,  
Than was the revel of hire mariagé.

Ful many a yeer in heigh prosperitee  
Lyven thise two in concord and in reste,  
And richély his doghter maryed he  
Unto a lord, oon of the worthieste  
Of al Ytaille ; and thanne in pees and reste  
His wyvés fader in his court he kepeth,  
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

1113. yfeere, in company.  
1124. lyght, H₄ bright.
His sone succeedeth in his heritage
In reste and pees after his fader day,
And fortunat was eek in mariage;
Al putte he nat his wyf in greet assay.
This world is nat so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath been of oldé tymés yoore;
And herkneth what this auctour seith therfoore.

This storie is seyd, nat for that wyvés sholde
Folwen Grisildë as in humylitee,
For it were inportáble, though they wolde,—
But for that every wight in his degree
Sholdé be constant in adwersitee
As was Grisildë, therfore Petrak writeth
This storie, which with heigh stile he enditeth;

For sith a womman was so pacient
Unto a mortal man, wel moore us oghte
Receyven al in gree that God us sent,
For greet skile is he preevé that he wroghte.
But he ne tempteth no man that he boghte,
As seith Seint Jame, if ye his pistel rede.
He preeveth folk al day, it is no drede,

And suffreth us, as for oure exercise,
With sharpe scourges of adwersitee
Ful ofté to be bete in sondry wise,
LENVOY DE CHAUCER

Nat for to know oure wyl, for certès he,
Er we were born, knew al oure frelétee;
And for oure beste is al his governaunce;
Lat us thanne lyve in vertuous suffraunce.

But o word, lordynges, herkneth, er I go:
It were ful hard to fyndé now-a-dayes
In al a toun Grisildis thre or two,
For if that they were put to swiche assayes,
The gold of hem hath now so badde alayes
With bras, that thogh the coyne be fair at eye
It woldé rather breste atwo than plye;

For which heere, for the Wyvès love of Bathe,—
Whos lyf and al hire secté God mayntene
In heigh maistrie, and ellès were it scathe,—
I wol with lusty herté, fressh and grene,
Seyn yow a song, to gladé yow, I wene;
And lat us stynte of earnestful matere:
Herkneth my song that seith in this manere.

Lenvoy de Chaucer

Grisilde is deed, and eek hire pacience,
And bothe atonès buryed in Ytaille;
For which I crie in open audience,

1163. But o word. What follows is all Chaucer's.
1175. The unsuitableness of all this to the Clerk has often been noticed.
1169. plye, bend.
No wedded man so hardy be tassaille
His wyvês pacience in hope to fynde
Grisildis, for in certein he shal faille!

O noble wyvês, ful of heigh prudence,
Lat noon humylitee youre tongé naill,
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence
To write of yow a storie of swich mervaille
As of Grisildis pacient and kynde,
Lest Chichivache yow swelwe in hire entraille!

Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence,
But evere anwereth at the countretaille.
Beth nat bidasséd for youre innocence,
But sharply taak on yow the governaille.
Emprenteth wel this lessoun in youre mynde
For commune profit sith it may availle.

Ye archiwyvês stondeth at defense,
Syn ye be strong as is a greet camaille,
Ne suffreth nat that men yow doon offense;
And sklerdre wyvês, fieble, as in bataille,
Beth egre as is a tygré yond in Ynde;
Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow consaille;

1180. *tassaille*, H to assayle.
1184. *tonge*, H tongues.
1188. *Chichivache*, the lean cow who fed on patient wives while her mate Bycorne grew fat on humble husbands. A corruption of *chichefache*, lean-faced.
1188. *swelwe*, swallow.
1190. *counter-taille*, at the counter-tally, as one tally answers another.
1196. *camaille*, camell.
1198. *wyvês, fieble*, H wydewes felle.
1200. *clappeth*, clatter.
Ne dreed hem nat, doth hem no reverence,
For though thyn housbonde armé be in maille,
The arwés of thy crabbéd eloquence
Shal perce his brest, and eek his aventaille.
In jalousie I rede eek thou hym bynde,
And thou shalt make hym couche as dooth a quaille.

If thou be fair, ther folk been in presence
Shewe thou thy visage and thyn apparaile;
If thou be foul, be fre of thy dispence,
To gete thee freendés, ay do thy travaille;
Be ay of chiere, as light as leef on lynde,
And lat hym care and wepe, and wryng and waille!

The Prologe of the Marchantes Tale

"Wepyng and waylyng, care and oother sorwe
I knowe ynoth, on even and a morwe,"
Quod the Marchant, "and so doon othere mo
That wedded been, I trowe that it be so;
For wel I woot it fareth so with me.
I have a wyf, the worsté that may be,
For thogh the feend to hire y-coupled were,
She wolde hym overmacche, I dar wel swere.
What sholde I yow reherce in especial
Hir hye malice? She is a shrewe at al.
Ther is a long and largé difference

1204. aventaille, front of a helmet.
1211. lynde, lime-tree.
1214. on, H both on, Heng. both.
1223. large, H6 a large.
Bitwix Grisildis gretè pacience,
And of my wyf the passyng crueltee.
Were I unbounden, al so moot I thee!
I woldè nevere eft comen in the snare.
We wedded men lyve in sorwe and care.
Assayè who so wole and he shal fynde
I seyè sooth, by Seint Thomas of Ynde!
As for the moore part, I sey nat alle;
God shildè that it sholdè so bifalle!

"A! good sire Hoost! I have y-wedded bee
Thise monthèstwo, and moore nat, pardee!
And yet, I trowè, he' that al his lyve
Wyfles hath been, though that men wolde him ryve
Unto the herte, ne koude in no manere
Tellen so muchel sorwe as I now heere
Koude tellen of my wyvès cursednesse!"

"Now," quod our Hoost, "Marchant, so God yow blesse!
Syn ye so muchel knowen of that art,
Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part."

"Gladly," quod he, "but of myn owenè soore,
For soory herte, I tellè may namoore."

1226. thee, thrive. 1230. l, H° That l.
1228. sorwe, Heng.³ sorow. 1232. shilde, forbid.
MERCHAND'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Marchantes Tale

Whilom ther was dwellynge in Lumbardye
A worthy knyght that born was of Pavye,
In which he lyved in greet prosperitee;
And sixty yeer a wylees man was hee,
And folwed ay his bodily deyly
On wommen ther as was his appetyt,
As doon thise foolës that been seculeer;
And whan that he was passed sixty yere,
Were it for hoolynesse or for dotage
I kan nat seye, but swich a greet corage
Haddë this knyght to been a wedded man
That day and nyght he dooth al that he kan
Tespien where he myghtë wedded be;
Preyingeoure Lord to granten him that he
Mighte onës knowe of thilkë blisful lyf
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf,
And for to lyve under that hooly boond

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The Marchantes Tale: the Pear-tree incident in this story is the subject of the ninth novel of the seventh day in Boccaccio's Decamerone, and is found also in a collection of Latin fables by one Adolphus, written in 1315, and elsewhere. It has probably an Eastern origin. We cannot tell where Chaucer found it, but his setting of it was doubtless mainly his own.

1248. sixty, H² fourty; so H in 1252.

1259. of thiike, H² of that, Camb.³ that.
With which that first God man and womman bond.
"Noon oother lyf," seyde he, "is worth a bene,
For wedlok is so esy, and so clene,
That in this world it is a paradys;"
Thus seyde this oldé knyght, that was so wys.

And certinly, as sooth as God is kyng,
To take a wyf it is a glorious thyng,
And namely whan a man is oold and hoor,—
Thanne is a wyf the fruyt of his tresor,—
Thanne sholde he take a yong wyf and a seir,
On which he myghte engendren hym an heir,
And lede his lyf in joye and in solas;
Where as thise bacheléris synge, "Alas!"
Whan that they fynden any adversitee
In love, which nys but childyssh vanytee;
And trewely it sit wel to be so
That bacheléris have often peyne and wo;
On brotel ground they buylde, and brotelnesse
They fyndé whan they wené sikernesse.

They lyve but as a bryd, or as a beest,
In libertee and under noon arreest;
Ther as a wedded man, in his estaat,
Lyveth a lyf blisful and ordinaat,
Under this yok of mariage y-boundé.

Wel may his herte in joye and blisse habounde,
For who kan be so buxom as a wyf?
Who is so trewe and eek so ententyf
To kepe hym, syk and hool, as is his make?
For wele or wo she wolde hym nat forsake;

1273. joye, H mirthe. 1277. sit, sitteth, fits.
She nys nat wery hym to love and serve,
Thogh that he lye bedredé til he sterve.
And yet somme clercês seyn it nys nat so,
Of whiche he, Theofraste, is oon of tho.
What force though Theofraste listé lye?
“Ne take no wyf,” quod he, “for houbondrye,
As for to spare in houshold thy dispence;
A trelwe servant dooth moore diligence
Thy good to kepé, than thy owené wyf,
For she wol claymé half part al hir lyf;
And if that thou be syk, so God me save!
Thy verray freendés, or a trelwe knave,
Wol kepe thee bet than she, that waiteth ay
After thy good, and hath doon many a day;
And if thou take a wyf unto thyn hoold,
Ful lightly maystow been a cokéwold.”
This sentence, and an hundred thyngés worse,
Writeth this man, ther God his bonés corse!
But take no kepe of al swich vanytee;
Defieth Theofraste and herkè me.

A wyf is Goddés gifté verrailly;
Alle othere manere giftés hardily,
As londés, rentés, pasture, or commune,
Or moeblés, alle been giftés of Fortune,
That passen as a shadwe upon a wal;

1292. bedrede, etc., bedridden
till he die.
1294. Theofraste, see Wife of
° Bath’s Tale, il. 235, 671.
1301. that, om. E.
1305, 1306. Apparently this
couplet shocked the
 copyists, for in H, etc.,
there are three bad sub-
stitutes for it. 
1314. moeblés, moveables,
chattels.
But dredèlees, if pleynly speke I shal,
A wyf wol laste and in thyn hous endure,
Wel lenger than thee list, paráventure.

Mariage is a ful greet sacrement;
He which that hath no wyf I holde hym shent;
He lyveth helplees and al desolat,—
I speke of folk in seculer estaat;
And herké why, I sey nat this for noght,
That womman is for mannés helpe y-wroght.
The hyé God whan he hadde Adam maked,
And saugh him al alloné, bely naked,
God of his greté goodnesse seydé than,
"Lat us now make an helpe unto this man,
Lyk to hymself;" and thanne he made him Eve.
Heere may ye se, and heerby may ye preve,
That wyf is mannés helpe and his confort,
His Paradys terrestre, and his disport;
So buxom and so vertuous is she,
They mosté nedés lyve in unitee.
O flessh they been, and o flessh, as I gesse,
Hath but oon herte in wele and in distresse.

A wyf! a! Seinté Marie, benedicite,
How myghte a man han any adversitee
That hath a wyf? Certés, I kan nat seye.
The blissé which that is bitwixe hem tweye
Ther may no tongé telle or herté thynke.
If he be poure she helpheth hym to swynke,
She kepeth his good and wasteth never a deel;
Al that hire housbonde lust hire liketh weel;
She seith not onés, "nay," whan he seith, "ye."
"Do this," seith he; "Al redy, sire," seith she.
O blisful ordre of wedlok precious!
Thou art so murye, and eek so vertuous,
And so commended and apprevéd eek,
That every man that halt hym worth a leek,
Upon his bare knees, oughte, al his lyf,
Thanken his God that hym hath sent a wyf;
Or ellés preye to God hym for to sende
A wyf, to laste unto his lyvés ende;
For thanne his lyf is set in sikernesse;
He may nat be deceyvéd, as I gesse,
So that he werke after his wyvés reede.
Thanne may he boldely kepen up his heed,
They been so trewe, and therwithal so wyse;
For which, if thou wolt werken as the wyse,
Do alwey so as wommen wol thee reede.

Lo, how that Jacob, as thise clerkés rede,
By good conseil of his mooder Rebekke,
Boondé the kydés skyn aboute his nekke,
Thurgh which his fadrés benysoun he wan.

Lo Judith, as the storie tellé kan,
By wys conseil she Goddés peple kepte,
And slow hym Olofernus whil he slepte.

1344. *Al, H*³ And *al.*
1347. *Of, H*⁴ repeat *O.*
1350. *hale hym,* holds himself.
1353. *elles,* om. *H*⁴, *H insert-
ing *oon before *hym,* and
1356-1359. Om. *B,* text from *Heng.*
1360. *to be with hym for a wyle to laste.*
1365. *storie, E*⁴ *storie eek.*
Lo Abigayl, by good conseil how she
Savéd hir housbonde, Nabal, whan that he
Sholde han be slayn; and looke Ester also,
By good conseil delyvered out of wo
The peple of God, and made hym Mardochee
Of Assuere enhaunced for to be.

Ther nys no thyng in gree superlatyf,
As seith Senek, above an humble wyf.

Suffre thy wyvès tongue, as Catoun bit,
She skal commande, and thou shalt suffren it,
And yet she wolde obeye of curteisye;
A wyf is kepere of thyn housbondrye.
Wel may the siké man biwaille and wepe,
Ther as ther nys no wyf the hous to kepe.
I warné thee if wisely thou wolt wirche,
Love wel thy wyf, as Crist lovéd his chirche.
If thou lovest thyself thou lovest thy wyf.
No man hateth his flessh, but in his lyf
He fostreth it, and therfore bidde I thee
Cherisse thy wyf, or thou shalt nevere thee.
Housbonde and wyf, what so men jape or
pleye,

Of worldly folk holden the siker weye;
They been so knyt ther may noon harm bityde,
And namély upon the wyvès syde;

Glossed in E and Heng.:
"Seneca: Sicut nichil est superius (om. E) benigna
conjugae, ita nihil crudelius est infesta muliere."

Glossed, "Cato: Uxor is linguam, si frugi est,
ferre memento."
For which this Januarie, of whom I tolde,
Considered hath, inwith hise dayés olde,
The lusty lyf, the vertuous quyete,
That is in mariagé hony sweete;
And for hise freendés on a day he sente,
To tellen hem theeffect of his entente.

With facé sad his tale he hath hem toold.
He seydé, "Freendés, I am hoor and oold,
And almoost, God woot, on my pittés brynke;
Upon the soulé somewhat moste I thynke.
I have my body folily despended;
Blesséd be God! that it shal been amended,
For I wol be certeyn a wedded man,
And that anoon, in al the haste I kan.
Unto som maydé, fair and tendre of age,
I prey yow shapeth for my mariagé
Al sodeynly, for I wol nat abyde;
And I wol fonde tespien on my syde
To whom I may be wedded hastily;
But for as muche as ye been mo than I,
Ye shullen rather swich a thyng espyen
Than I, and where me best were to allyen.
But o thyng warne I yow, my freendés deere,
I wol noon oold wyf han in no manere.
She shal nat passé twenty yeer certayn,
Oold fissh and yongé flessh wolde I have fayn.

Bet is," quod he, "a pyk than a pykerel,"
And bet than olde boef is the tendré veel.  
I wol no womman thritty yeer of age,—
It is but benéstraw and greet forage;
And eek thise oldé wydwés, God it woot,
They konne so muchel craft on Wadés boot,
So muchel broken harm whan that hem leste,
That with hem sholde I nevere lyve in reste;
For sondry scolés maken sotile clerkis.
Womman of manye scolés half a clerk is;
But certeynly a yonge thyng may men gye,
Right as men may warm wex with handés plye.
Wherfore I sey yow pleynly in a clause,
I wol noon oold wyf han right for this cause;
For if so were that I hadde swich myschaunce
That I in hire ne koude han no plesaunce,
Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in awoutrye,
And go streight to the devel whan I dye;
Ne children sholde I none upon hire geten;
Yet were me levere houndés had me eten,
Than that myn heritáge sholde falle
In straunge hand, and this I telle yow alle.
I doté nat; I woot the causé why
Men sholde wedde, and forthermore woot I
Ther speketh many a man of mariagé,
That woot namoore of it than woot my page.
For whiché causés man sholde take a wyf:

1421. thrifty, H₃ twenty.
1424. on Wades boot, the
legend of Wade and his
adventures in his boat
Guingelot has perished.
1432. right, om. E⁴.
1435. awoutrye, adultery.
1436. go, om. E²; Corp.³ so.
1438. houndes, E² that houndes.
1440. this, H₃ thus.
Siththè he may nat lyven chaast his lyf,  
Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,  
By cause of leveful procreacioun  
Of children, to thonóur of God above,  
And nat oonly for paramour or love;  
And for they sholdé leccherye eschue,  
And yelde hir dettès whan that they ben due;  
Or for that ech of hem sholde helpen oother  
In meschief, as a suster shal the brother,  
And lyve in chastitee ful holily;  
But, sirès, by youre leve, that am nat I,  
For, God be thankèd, I dar make avaunt,  
I feele my lymès stark and suffisaunt  
To do al that a man bilongeth to;  
I woot my selven best what I may do.  
Though I be hoor I fare as dooth a tree  
That blosmeth, er that fruyt y-woxen bee;  
And blosmy tree nys neither drye ne deed.  
I feele me nowhere hoor but on myn heed;  
Myn herte and alle my lymès been as grene  
As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene;  
And syn that ye han herd al myn entente,  
I prey yow to my wyl ye wole assente."

Diversé men diversely hym tolde  
Of mariágé manye ensamples olde.  
Somme blaméd it, somme preysèd it certeyn,  
But atté lasté, shortly for to seyn,
As al day falleth altercacioun
Bitwixen freendès in disputisoun,
Ther fil a stryf bitwixe hise bretheren two,
Of whiche that oon was clepéd Placebo,
Justinus soothele callèd was that oother.
   Placebo seyde, "O Januarie brother,
Ful litel nede hadde ye, my lord so deere,
Conseil to axe of any that is heere,
But that ye been so ful of sapience
That yow ne liketh, for youre heighe prudence,
To weyven fro the word of Salomon.
This word seyde he unto us everychon,
   'Wirk allè thyng by conseil,' thus seyde he,
   'And thanné shaltow nat repenté thee;'
But though that Salomon spak swich a word,
Myn owené deeré brother, and my lord,
So wysly God my soulé brynge at reste,
I holde youre owene conseil is the beste;
For, brother myn, of me taak this motyf,
I have now been a court man al my lyf,
And, God it woot, though I unworthy be,
Í have stonden in ful greet degree
Abouten lordés of ful heigh estaat;
Yet hadde I nevere with noon of hem debaat;
I nevere hem contraried trewely.
I woot wel that my lord kan moore than I;
What that he seith I holde it ferme and stable;
I seye the same, or ellés thyng semblable.

1477. called, H5 cleped. 1483. weyven, depart from.
1495. heigh, H3 gret.
A ful greet fool is any conseilour,
That serveth any lord of heigh honour,
That dar presume, or ellës thenken it,
That his conseil sholde passe his lordës wit.
Nay, lordës been no foolës, by my fay!
Ye han youreselven shewëd heer to day
So heigh sentence, so holily and weel,
That I consente and conferme everydeel
Yourë wordes alle, and youre opinioun.
By God, ther nys no man in al this toun,
Ne in Ytaillé, koudë bet han sayd.
Crist halt hym of this conseil wel apayd;
And trewëly it is an heigh corage,
Of any man that stapen is in age,
To take a yong wyf; by my fader kyn,
Yourë hertë hangeth on a joly pyn!
Dooth now in this matiere right as yow lestë,
For, finally, I holde it for the beste.”

Justinus, that ay stillë sat and herde,
Right in this wise to Placebo answerde:

“Now, brother myn, be pacient I preye,
Syn ye han seyd, and herkneth what I seye.

“Senek among hisë othere wordës wyse
Seith that a man oghte hym right wel avyse
To whom he geveth his lond or his catel;
And syn I oghte avysë me right wel
To whom I geve my good awaye fro me,

1503. elles, H⁴ oones.
1506. shewëd, Heng.²; E seyd,
      H⁴ y-spoken, spoken.
1511. Ne in, E Nyn.
1511. koudë, E⁹ that koude.
1511. halë, holds; H⁴ holdith.
1514. stapen, advanced.
1520. to, EH⁵ he to.
Wel muchel moore I oghte avyséd be
To whom I geve my body for alwey.
I warne yow wel, it is no childés pley
To take a wyf withoute avysément.
Men moste enqueré, this is myn assent,
Wher she be wys, or sobre, or dronkélewé,
Or proud, or ellés ootherweys a shrewé,
A chidestere, or a wastour of thy good,
Or riche, or poore, or ellés mannyssh wood.
Al be it so that no man fynden shal
Noon in this world that trotteth hool in al,
Ne mán ne beest, which as men koude devyse,
But nathélees it oghte ynough suffise
With any wyf, if so were that she hadde
Mo goodé thewés than hire vices badde;
And al this axeth leyser for tenquere,—
For, God it woot, I have wept many a teere
Ful pryvély, syn I have had a wyf.
Preyse who so wole a wedded mannés lyf,
Certein I fynde in it but cost and care,
And observance of allé blisses bare;
And yet, God woot, my neighébores aboute,
And namély of wommen many a route,
Seyn that I have the moosté stedefast wyf,

1528. muckel, om. H, H inserting for to before be.
1535. A, om. E.
chidestere, scold.
mannyssh wood, mad like a virago.
which, H such.
koude, H can.
1542. thewes, virtues.
1543. for tenquere, H to enqueré.
1544. it, om. H, reading wepéd for wept.
1548. observance, E observances.
And eek the mekeste oon that bereth lyf;
But I woot best where wryngeth me my sho.
Ye mowe, for me, right as yow liketh do.
Ayyseth yow, ye been a man of age,
How that ye entren into mariage,
And namely with a yong wyf and a fair.
By hym that madé water, erthe; and air,
The yongeste man that is in al this route
Is bisy yenough to bryngen it aboute
To han his wyf alloné; trusteth me,
Ye shul nat plesen hire fully yerés thre,—
This is to seyn, to doon hire ful plesaunce.
A wyf axeth ful many an observaunce.
I prey yow that ye be nat yvele apayd.”

“Wel,” quod this Januarie, “and hastow sayd?
Straw for thy Senek, and for thy provérbes!
I counté nat a panyer ful of herbes
Of scole termés; wyser men than thow,
As thou hast herd, assenteden right now
To my purpos. Placebo, what sey ye?”

“I seye it is a cursed man,” quod he,
“That letteth matrimoigné sikerly!”
And with that word they rysen sodeynly,
And been assented fully that he sholde
Be wedded whanne hym list and where he wolde.

Heigh! fantasye and curious bisynesse
Fro day to day gan in the soule impresse
Of Januarie, aboute his mariáge.

1562. plesen, H3 plese. 1574. rysen, H rysen up.
Many fair shape and many a fair visage
Ther passeth thurgh his herté nyght by nyght,
As whoso tooke a mirour polisshed bryght
And sette it in a commune market-place,
Thanne sholde he se ful many a figure pace
By his mirour; and in the samé wyse
Gan Januarie inwith his thyght devyse
Of maydens whiche that dwellen hym bisyde.
He wisté nat wher that he myghte abyde,
For, if that oon have beaute in hir face,
Another stant so in the peples grace
For hire sadnesse and hire benyngnytee,
That of the peple grettest voys hath she;
And somme were riche, and hadden baddé name;
But nathéees, bitwixe ernest and game,
He atté laste apoynted hym on oon,
And leet alle othere from his herté goon,
And chees hire of his owene auctoritee;
For love is blynd al day, and may nat see.
And whan that he was in his bed y-broght
He purtreyed in his herte and in his thyght
Hir fresshé beautee, and hir agé tendre,
Hir myddel smal, hire armés longe and sklendre,
Hir wisé governaunce, hir gentillesse,
Hir womanly berynge, and hire sadnesse.
And whan that he on hire was condescended
Hym thoughte his choys myghté nat ben amended;

1580. Many (1), H Many a. 1587. dwellen, H4 dwellid, dwellen, etc.
1584. ful, om. H4. 1589. if, H4 though.
For whan that he hym self concluded hadde,
Hym thoughte ech oother mannés wit so badde
That inpossiblé it weré to repplye
Agayn his choys,—this was his fantasye.

Hise freendés sente he to, at his instaunce,
And preyéd hem to doon hym that plesaunce,
That hastily they wolden to hym come ;
He wolde abregge hir labour, alle and some ;
Nedeth namoore for hym to go ne ryde,
He was apoynted ther he wolde abyde.

Placebo cam, and eek hiso freendés soone,
And alderfirst he bad hem alle a Boone,
That noon of hem none argumentés make
Agayn the purpos which that he hath take,
Which purpos was plesant to God, seyde he,
And verray ground of his prosperitee.

He seyde ther was a mayden in the toun,
Which that of beautee haddé greet renoun,
Al were it so she were of smal degree,
Suffiseth hym hir yowthe, and hir beautee ;
Which mayde, he seyde, he wolde han to his wyf,
To lede in ese and hoolynesse his lyf ;
And thankéd God that he myghte han hire al,
Thát no wight his blissé parten shal ;

And preyédé hem to laboure in this nede
And shapen that he faillé nat to spedé ;
For thanne he seyde his spirit was at ese.
"Thanne is," quod he, "no thyng may me displesé,
Save o thyng priketh in my conscience,
The which I wol reherce in youre presence.
"I have," quod he, "herd seyd, ful yoore ago,
Ther may no man han parsite blisses two,—
This is to seye, in erthe and eek in hevene,—
For though he kepe hym fro the synnes sevne,
And eek from every branche of thilké tree,  
Yet is ther so parfit felicitee
And so greet ese and lust in mariége,
That evere I am agast now in myn age,
That I shal lede now so myrie a lyf,  
So delicat, withouten wo and stryf,
That I shal have myn hevene in erthé heere ;
For sith that verray hevene is boght so deere,
With tribulacioun and greet penaunce,
How sholde I thanne, that lyve in swich plesaunce
As allé wedded men doon with hire wyvys,  
Come to the blisse ther Crist eterne on lyve ys ?
This is my drede, and ye my bretheren tweye,
Assoilleth me this questioun, I preye."
Justinus, which that hated his folye,  
Answerde anon right in his japerye ;
And for he wolde his longé tale abregge,
He woldé noon auctoritee allegge,
But seydé, "Sire, so ther be noon obstácle
Oother than this, God of his hygh myrácle,  
And of his mercy, may so for yow wirche
That er ye have youre right of hooly chirche,
Ye may repente of wedded mannés lyf,
In which ye seyn ther is no wo ne stryf ;

1654. _preye, H^4 you preye._  
1660. _mercy, E hygh mercy._  
1661. _right, H rightes, Corp._

rietes.
GROUP E

And elles, God forbede, but he sente
A wedded man hym gracé to repente
Wel ofte rather than a sengle man;
And therfore, sire,—the besté reed I kan,—
Dispeire yow noght, but have in youre memorie,
Paraunter she may be youre purgatorie;
She may be Goddes meene, and Goddes whippe!
Thanne shal youre souelé up to hevene skippe
Swifter than dooth an arwe out of the bowe.
I hope to God herafter shul ye knowe
That ther nys no so greet felicitee
In mariage, ne nevere mo shal bee,
That yow shal lette of youre savacioun,
So that ye use, as skile is and resoun,
The lustés of youre wyf attemptrely,
And that ye plese hire nat to amorously,
And that ye kepe yow eek from oother synne.
My tale is doon, for my witte is thynne;
Beth nat agast her-of, my brother deere,
But lat us waden out of this mateere.
The Wyf of Bathe, if ye han understonde,
Of mariágé, which ye have on honde,
Declaratd hath ful wel in litel space.
Fareth now wel, God have yow in his grace.”

And with this word this Justyn and his brother
Han take hir leve, and ech of hem of oother;
For whan they saughe that it moste needis be,
They wroghten so, by sly and wys tretee,
That she, this mayden, which that Mayus highte,

1665. have, H han now. 1691. needis, om. E.
As hastily as evere that she myghte,
Shal wedded be unto this Januarie.
I trowe it were to longé you to tarie,
If I yow tolde of every scit and bond
By which that she was seffed in his lond,
Or for to herknen of hir riche array.
But finally y-emen is the day
That to the chirché bothé be they went,
For to receyve the hooly sacrement.
Forth comth the preest, with stole aboute his nekke,
And bad hire be lyk Sarra and Rebekke
In wysdom and in trouthe of mariáge,
And seyde his orisons as is uságe,
And croucheth hem and bad God sholde hem blesse,
And made al siker ynogh with hoolynesse.

Thus been they wedded with solempniteit,
And at the festé sitteth he and she,
With othere worthy folk, up on the deys.
Al ful of joye and blisse is the paleys,
And ful of instrumentz, and of vitaille
The moste deyntéous of all Ytaille.
Biforn hem stoode swich instrumentz of soun
That Orpheus, ne of Thebés Amphioun,
Ne maden nevere swich a melodye.
At every cours thanne cam loud mynstralcye
That nevere trompéd Joab for to heere,
GROUP E  MERCHANT'S TALE  163

Nor he Theodomas yet half so cleere 1720
At Thebês, whan the citee was in doute.
Bacus the wyn hem skynketh al aboute,
And Venus laugheth upon every wight,
For Janúarie was become hir knyght,
And woldè bothe assayen his coráge 1725
In libertee, and eek in mariáge;
And with hire fyrbrond in hire hand aboute
Daunceth biforn the bryde and al the route;
And certeinly I dar right wel seyn this
Yménéus, that god of weddyng is,
Saugh nevere his lyf so myrie a wedded man.
Hoold thou thy pees, thou poete Marcian,—
That writest us that ilké weddyng murie
Of hire Philologie and hym Mercurie,
And of the songés that the Muses songe,— 1735
To smal is bothe thy penne and eek thy tonge,
For to descryven of this mariáge,
Whan tendré youthe hath wedded stoupyng age;
Ther is swich myrthe that it may nat be writen.
Assayeth it youre self, thanne may ye witen 1740
If that I lye or noon in this matiere.

Mayus, that sit with so benyngne a chiere,
Hire to biholde it semed faireye.

Queene Ester looked nevere with swich an eye

1722. Cp. House of Fame, i. 1732. Marcian, Martianus
1245, where Professor Capella, a writer of the Skeat points out that 5th century, whose De
Chaucer takes his men- Nuptiis Philologiae et tion of Theodamas from Mercurii was a treatise Statius, Thebaid, viii. on the liberal arts in 343.
nine books.
On Assuer, so meke a look hath she.
I may yow nat devyse al hir beautee,
But thus muche of hire beautee telle I may,
That she was lyk the brighté morwe of May,
Fulfild of allé beautee and plesaunce.

This Januarie is ravysshed in a traunce
At every tyme he lookèd on hir face;
But in his herte he gan hire to manace,
That he that nyght in armès wolde hire streyne
Harder than evere Parys dide Eleyne;
But nathèles yet hadde he greet pitee
That thilké nyght offenden hire moste he;
And thoughte, "Alas! O tendré créature!
Now woldé God ye myghté wel endure
Al my corage, it is so sharpe and keene!
I am agast ye shul it nat susteene;
But God forbede that I dide al my myght,
Now woldé God that it were woken nyght,
And that the nyght wolde lasten everemo.
I wolde that al this peple were ago!"
And finally he dooth al his labour,
As he best myghté, savynge his honóur,
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wyse.

The tymé cam that resoun was to ryse,
And after that men daunce and dryken faste,
And spices al aboute the hous they caste,
And ful of joye and blisse is every man,—
All but a squyer highté Damyan,
Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a day.
He was so ravysshed on his lady May
That for the verry peyne he was ny wood.
Almoost he swelte and swowned ther he stood,
So soore hath Venus hurt hym with hire brond
As that she bar it daunsynge in hire hond;
And to his bed he wente hym hastily.
Namoore of hym as at this tyme speke I,
But there I let hym wepe ynogh and pleyne
Til freßhe May wol rewen on his peyne.
O perilous fyr that in the bedstraw bredeth!
O famulier foo, that his servyce bedeth!
O servant traytour, falsé, hoomly hewe,
Lyk to the naddre in bosom, sly, untrew, untrée,
God shilde us allé from youre áqueyntance!
O Januarie, dronken in plesance
In mariáge, se how thy Damyan,
Thyn owené squier and thy borné man,
Entendeth for to do thee vileynye!
God graunté thee thyn hoomly fo trespye,
For in this world nys worsé pestilence
Than hoomly foo al day in thy presence!

Parfourned hath the sonne his ark diurne,
No lenger may the body of hym sojurne

1773. carf, carved.
1776. swelle, fainted.
1780. as, om. E⁶.
    speke, H telle.
1781. wepe, etc., H now his wo compleyne.
1783. This paragraph is marked 'Auctor in EH⁸.
        1785. hoomly hewe, servant in the house.
1786. naddre, adder.
    sly, om. H; Corp.³ place it after naddre.
1790. borne, E⁴ born.
On thorisonte, as in that latitude.
Night with his mantel, that is derk and rude,
Gan oversprede the hemysperie aboute,
For which departed is this lusty route
Fro Januarie, with thank on every syde.
Hoom to hir houses lustily they ryde,
Where as they doon hir thyngës as hem leste,
And, whan they sye hir tymë, goon to reste.

Soone after that this hastif Januarie
Wolde go to bedde, he wolde no lenger tarye.
He drynketh ypocras, clarree and vernáge,
Of spices hoote, tencreessen his coráge;
And many a letuarie hath he ful fyn
Swiche as the curséd monk, Daun Constantyn,
Hath writen in his book, De Coitu;
To eten hem alle he nas no thyng eschu;
And to hise privee freendës thus seydë he:
"For Goddës love, as soone as it may be,
Lat voyden al this hous in curteys wyse;"
And they han doon right as he wol devyse.
Men drynkken and the travers drawe anon;
The bryde was broght a-bedde as stille as stoon,
And whan the bed was with the preest y-blessed,
Out of the chambre hath every wight hym dressed;
And Januarie hath faste in armës take
His fresshè May, his paradys, his make.
He lulleth hire, he kisseth hire ful ofte,
With thikkè brustles of his berd unsofte,
Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh, sharpe as brere; 1825
For he was shave al newe in his manere.
He rubbeth hire aboute hir tendre face
And seydé thus, “Alas! I moot trespaces
To yow, my spouse, and yow greetyly offende,
Er tymè come that I wil doun descende; 1830
But nathélees, considereth this,” quod he,
“Ther nys no werkman, what so evere he be,
That may bothe werké wel and hastily.
This wol be doon at leyser parfitly,
It is no fors how longé that we pleye; 1835
In trewe wedlok coupled be we tweye,
And blessed be the yok that we been inne!
For inoure actés we mowe do no synne.
A man may do no synnè with his wyf,
Ne hurte hymselfen with his owene knyf; 1840
For we han leve to pleye us, by the lawe.”
Thus laboureth he til that the day gan dawe,
And thanne he taketh a sope in fyne clarree,
And uprighth in his bed thanne sitteth he;
And after that he sang ful loude and cleere, 1845
And kiste his wyf, and madè wantowne cheere.
He was al coltissh, ful of ragerye,
And ful of jargon as a flekkèd pye.
The slakkè skyn aboute his nekkèd shaketh

1824. thikke, E³ tilke. 1836. coupled, E wedded.
1825. houndfyssh, shark. 1838. oure, om. EH¹.
Whil that he sang, so chaunteth he and craketh;
But God woot what that May thoughte in hire herte
Whan she hym saugh up-sittynge in his sherte,
In his nyght cappe, and with his nekké lene!
She preyseth nat his pleyyng worth a bene.

Thanne seide he thus, "My resté wol I take;
Now day is come, I may no lenger wake;"
And doun he leyde his heed and sleepe til pryme.
And afterward, whan that he saugh his tyme,
Up ryseth Januarie, but fresshé May
Heeld hiré chambre unto the fourthé day,
As usage is of wyvés, for the beste;
For every labour som tyme moot han reste,
Or ellès longé may he nat endure;
This is to seyn, no lyvés creature,
Be it of fyssh, or bryd, or beest, or man.

Now wol I speke of woful Damyan,
That langwissheth for love, as ye shul heere;
Therfore I speke to hym in this manere.

I seye, O sely Damyan, allas!
Andswere to my demaunde as in this cas.
How shaltow to thy lady, fresshé May,
Tellé thy wo? She wole alwey seye nay.
Eek if thou speke, she wol thy wo biwreye.
God be thyn helpe, I kan no bettré seye.

This siké Damyan in Venus fyr
So brenneth, that he dyeth for desyr;
For which he putte his lyf in aventure.
No lenger mygte he in this wise endure,
But prively a penner gan he borwe,
And in a lettre wroot he al his sorwe,—
In manere of a compleynte or a lay,—
Unto his faire, fresshé lady May;
And in a purs of sulk, heng on his sherte,
He hath it put and leyde it at his herte.

The mooné, that at noon was thilke day
That Januarie hath wedded fresshé May
In two of Tawr, was into Cancre glyden,
So longe hath Mayus in hir chambre byden,
As costume is unto thise nobles alle.

A brydë shal nat eten in the halle
Til dayës foure, or thre dayes atte leeste,
Y-passed been, thanne lat hire go to feeste.
The fourthë day compleet fro noon to noon,
Whan that the heighë massë was y-dooin,
In hallë sit this Januarie and May,
As fressh as is the brightë someres day;
And so bifel, how that this goodë man
Remembred hym upon this Damyan,
And seydë, "Seyntë Marie! how may this be

1878. wise, H wo.
1879. penner, pen-case.
1887. In two of Tawr, Tyr-
whitt proposed to read
ten, but Mr. Brae has
shown that the moon
could pass through Taurus
and Gemini into Cancer in
four days. He shows this
especially for June, but June
can hardly be the month. Cp.
ll. 2081, 2133, 2222.
That Damyan entenden nat to me?
Is he ay syk? or how may this bitydye?"
Hise squieres, whiche that stooden ther bisyde,
Excuséd hym by cause of his siknesse,
Which letted hym to doon his bisynesse,—
Noon oother causé myghté make hym tarye.

"That me forthynketh," quod this Januarie,
"He is a gentil squier, by my trouthe!
If that he deyde, it weré harm and routhe;
He is as wys, discreet, and eek secreë,
As any man I woot, of his degree;
And therto manly and eek servysable,
And for to been a thrifty man right able;
But after mete, as soone as evere I may,
I wol myselfe visite hym, and eek May,
To doon hym al the confort that I kan;"
And for that word hym blesséd every man,
That of his bountee and his gentillesse
He woldé so conforten in siknesse
His squier, for it was a gentil dede.

"Dame," quod this Januarie, "taak good hede
At after mete ye with youre wommen alle,
Whan ye han been in chambre out of this halle,
That allé ye go se this Damyan.
Doothe hym disport, he is a gentil man,
And telleth hym that I wol hym visite,
Have I no thyng but rested me a lite;
And spede yow fasté, for I wolde abyde

1909. eek, E² as, Corp.³ om.
1921. mete, E noon.
1923. se, H² to se, Heng. to.
Til that ye slepè fastè by my syde;”
And with that word he gan unto hym calle
A squier, that was marchal of his halle,
And tolde hym certeyn thyngès, what he wolde.
This fresshè May hath streight hir wey y-holde,
With alle hir wommen, unto Damyan.
Doun by his beddès sydè sit she than,
Confortyng heym as goodly as she may.
This Damyan, whan that his tyme he say,
In secree wise, his purs and eek his bille,
In which that he y-writen hadde his wille,
Hath put into hire hand, withouten moore,
Save that he siketh wonder depe and soore,
And softeley to hire right thus seyde he:
“Mercy! and that ye nat discovere me,
For I am deed, if that this thyng be kyd.”
This purs hath she inwith hir bosom hyd,
And wente hire wey—ye gete namoore of me;
But unto Januarie y-comen is she
That on his beddès sydè sit ful softe.
He taketh hire and kisseth hire ful ofte,
And leyde hym doun to slepe, and that anon.
She feynéd hire as that she mostè gon
Ther as ye woot that every wight moot neede;
And whan she of this bille hath taken heede,
She rente it al to cloutès attè laste,
And in the pryvee softeley it caste.
Who studieth now, but faire, fresshè May?

1929. unto hym, E3 to him to, Corp.3 to him. 1943. kyd, known.
1948. He, H3 And.
Adoun by oldé Januarie she lay,
That sleepe til that the coughe hath hym awaked.
Anon he preyde hire strepen hire al naked,
He wolde of hire, he seyde, han som plesaunce;
And seyde hir clothés dide hym encombraunce.
And she obeyeth, be hire lief or looth;
But, lest that precious folk be with me wrooth,
How that he wroghte I dar nat to yow telle,
Or wheither hire thoughte it paradys or helle;
But heere I lete hem werken in hir wyse,
Til evensong rong, and than they moste aryse.
Were it by destyne, or áventure,
Were it by influence or by nature,
Or constellacioun, that in swich estaat
The hevene stood, that tymé fortunaat
Was, for to putte a bille of Venus werkés
(For alle thyng hath tyme, as seyn thise clerkes)
To any womman for to get hire love,
I kan nat seye; but greté God above
That knoweth that noon act is causèlees,
He deme of al, for I wole holde my pees;
But sooth is this, how that this fresshé May
Hath take swich impressioun that day,
For pitee of this siké Damyan,
That from hire herté she ne dryvé kan
The remembrancé, for to doon hym ese.

1962. that, E² ye, the.
1964. Text from Camb.; E
1966. than, E⁵ that.
1970. wheither, H⁴ go wrong altogether.
1975. wheither that for
1979. For, H⁵ Of, Corp.³ On.
“Certeyn,” thoghte she, “whom that thi thyng displese
I rekké noght, for heere I hym assure
To love hym best of any creature,
Though he namooré hadđé than his sherte.”

Lo, pitee renneth soone in gentil herte!

Heere may ye se how excellent franchise
In wommen is whan they hem narwe avyse.
Som tyrant is, as ther be many oon,
That hath an herte as hard as any stoon,
Which wolde han lat hym storven in the place,
Wel rather than han graunted hym hire grace;
And hem rejoysen in hire crueel pryde,
And rekké nat to been an homycide.

This gentil May, fulfilléd of pitee,
Right of hire hand a lettré madé she,
In which she graunteth hym hire verray grace.
Ther lakketh noght, oonly but day and place
Wher that she myghte unto his lust suffise,
For it shall be right as he wole devyse;
And whan she saugh hir tyme, upon a day,
To visité this Damyan gooth May,
And sotilly this lettré doun she threste
Under his pilwe, rede it if hym leste!
She taketh hym by the hand and harde hym twiste,
So secrély that no wight of it wiste,
And bad hym been al hool; and forth she wente
To Januarie, whan that he for hire sente.
Up riseth Damyan the nexté morwe;
Al passéd was his siknesse and his sorwe.
He kembeth hym, he preyneth hym and pyketh,
He dooth al that his lady lust and lyketh;
And eek to Januarie he gooth as lowe
As evere dide a doggé for the bowe.
He is so plesant unto every man,—
For craft is al, whoso that do it kan,—
That every wight is fayn to speke hym good,
And fully in his lady grace he stood.
Thus lete I Damyan aboute his nede,
And in my talé forth I wol procede.

Somme clerkés holden that felicitee
Stant in delit, and therfore certeyn he,
This noble Januarie with al his myght,
In honeste wyse, as longeth to a knyght,
Shoope hym to lyvé ful deliciously.
His housynge, his array, as honestly
To his degree was maked as a kynges.
Amongés othere of hishe honeste thynges
He made a gardyn walléd al with stoon.
So fair a gardyn woot I nowher noon,
For out of doute, I verrailly suppose
That he that wrooth the Romance of the Rose
Ne koude of it the beautee wel devyse;
Ne Priapus ne myghté nat suffise,
Though he be god of gardyns, for to telle
The beautee of the gardyn, and the welle
That stood under a laurer, alwey grene.
Ful ofté tyme he Pluto, and his queene
Proserpina, and al hire faýrye,
Disporten hem and maken melodye
Aboute that welle, and dauncéd as men tolde.
This noble knyght, this Januarie the olde,
Swich deyntee hath in it to walke and pleye
That he wol no wight suffren bere the keye,
Save he hymself, for of the smale wykét
He baar alwey of silver a clykét,
With which, whan that hym leste, he it unshette;
And whan he woldé paye his wyf hir dette
In somer sesoun, thider wolde he go,
And May his wyf, and no wight but they two,
And thyngés whiche that were nat doon a bedde
He in the gardyn parfourned hem and spedde;
And in this wysé many a murye day
Lyvéd this Januarie and fresshè May;
But worldly joyé may nat alwey dure
To Januarie, ne to no créature.

O sodeyn hape! O thou Fortune instable!
Lyk to the scorpion so deceyvable
That flaterest with thyne heed whan thou wolt
stynge;
Thy tayl is deeth, thurgh thyne envenymynge! 2060
O brotil joye! O sweetè venym queynte!

2046. clyket, latch-key. 2057 sqq. Marked Auctor in E².
2055. dure, H⁴ endure. 2059. stynge, E synge!
O monstré, that so subtilly kanst peynte
Thy giftés, under hewe of stidefastnesse,
That thou deceyvest bothé moore and lesse,
Why hastow Januarie thus deceyved,
That haddest hym for thy ful freend receyved?
And now thou hast biraft hym bothe hise eyen,
For sorwe of which desireth he to dyen.

Alas! this noble Januarie free,
Amydde his lust and his prosperitee,
Is woxen blynd, and that al sodeynly!
He wepeth and he wayleth pitously,
And therwithal the fyr of jalousie—
Lest that his wyf sholde sille in som folye—
So brente his herté, that he woldé fayn
That som man bothé hym and hire had slayn;
For neither after his deeth nor in his lyf,
Ne wolde he that she weré love ne wyf,
But evere lyve as wydwe in clothés blake,
Soul as the turtle that lost hath hire make.

But atté laste, after a monthe otweye,
His sorwe gan aswagé, sooth to seye,
For whan he wiste it may noon oother be
He pacientely took his adversitee,
Save, out of douté, he may nat forgoon
That he nas jalous everemoore in oon.
Which jalousye it was so outrageuous,
That neither in hallé, nyn noon oother hous,

2074. som, E swich. 2080. lost hath, Camb. 4 hath lost.
2088. nyn, nor in.
Group E

Merchant's Tale

Ne in noon oother place neverthemo,
He noldé suffré hire to ryde or go,
But if that he had hond on hire alway;
For which ful ofté wepeth fresshé May,
That loveth Damyan so benyngnely
That she moot outhere dyen sodeynly,
Or ellés she moot han hym as hir leste;
She wayteth whan hir herté woldé breste.

Upon that oother sydé Damyan
Bicomenc is the sorwéfullesté man
That evere was, for neither nyght ne day
Ne myghte he speke a word to fresshé May,
As to his purpos, of no swich mateere,
But if that Januarie moste it heere,
That hadde an hand upon hire everemo;
But nathélees, by writyng to and fro,
And privee signées, wiste he what she mente,
And she knew eek the fyn of his entente.

O Januarie! what myghte it thee availle
Thogh thou myghtest se as fer as shippés saille?
For al-so good is blynde deceyvéd be
As to be deceyvéd whan a man may se.

Lo Argus, which that hadde an honred eyen,
For al that evere he koude poure or pryen,
Yet was he blent, and, God woot, so been mo,

2089. Ne in, E Nyn.
2090. to, E4 for to.
2100. to, H2 with.
2106. fyn, sum.
2107 sqg. Marked Aucto r in E.
2109. al-so, EH8 as.
2113. blent, blinded, deceived.
and, H3 as.
That wenen wisly that it be nat so;
"Passe-over is an ese,"—I sey namoore.

This freeshè May, that I spak of so yoore,
In warm wex hath emprented the clyket
That Januarie bar of the smale wyket,
By which into his gardyn ofte he wente;
And Damyan, that knew al hire entente,
The clyket counterfeted pryvely.
Ther nys namoore to seye; but hastily
Som wonder by this clyket shal bityde,
Which ye shul heeren, if ye wole abyde.

O noble Ovyde! ful sooth seystou, God woot,
What sleighte is it, thogh it be long and hoot,
That he nyl fynde it out in som manere.
By Piramus and Tesbee may men leere,
Thogh they were kept ful longe streite overal,
They been accorded, rownynge thurgh a wal,
Ther no wight koude han founde out swich a sleighte.

But now to purpos,—er that dayès eighte
Were passèd er the monthe of Juyn biffille,
That Januarie hath caught so greet a wille,
Thurgh eggyng of his wyf, hym for to pleye
In his gardyn, and no wight but they tweye,
That in a morwe unto this May seith he,

2125 sqq. Marked Auct or in E.

ful, H² vel, Corp.³ om.
2130. rownynge, whispering.

2133. Juyn, MSS. Juyl, but see
1. 2222; the mistake may
be Chaucer's.
"Rys up, my wyf, my love, my lady free!
The turtle voys is herd, my dowvé sweete,
The wynter is goon with his reynés weete;
Com forth now with thyne eyen columbyn!
How fairer been thy brestes than is wyn!
The gardyn is enclosed al aboute;
Com forth, my whité spouse! out of doute
Thou hast me wounded in myn herte, O wyf!
No spot of thee ne knew I al my lyf;
Come forth, and lat us taken som disport;
I chees thee for my wyf and my confort!"
Swiche oldé lewed wordés used he.

On Damyan a signé made she,
That he sholde go biform with his clikét.
This Damyan thanne hath opened the wykét,
And in he stirte, and that in swich manere
That no wight myght it se, neither y-heere;
And stille he sit under a bussch anon.

This Januarie, as blynd as is a stoon,
With Mayus in his hand and no wight mo,
Into his fresshé gardyn is ago,
And clapté to the wyket sodeynly.

"Now, wyf," quod he, "heere nys but thou
and I,
That art the créature that I best love;
For, by that Lord that sit in hevene above,
Levere ich hadde to dyen on a knyf,

2138. January had been reading the Song of Solomon.
2141. columbyn, dove-like.
2144. white, H swete.
2147. som, H³ oure.
Than thee offendé, trewé, deeré wyf.
For Goddes saké, thenk how I thee chees
Noght for no coveitised doutélees,
But oonly for the love I had to thee;
And though that I be oold and may nat see,
Beth to me trewe, and I shal telle yow why.
Thre thyngés, certés, shal ye wynne therby;
First, love of Crist, and to youre self honour,
And al myn heritagé, toun and tour;
I geve it yow; maketh chartres as yow leste.
This shal be doon tommorwe er sonné reste,
So wisly God my soulé brynge in blisse!
I prey yow first in covenat ye me kisse,
And though that I be jalous, wyte me noght.
Ye been so depe enprented in my thoght,
That whan that I considere youre beautee,
And therwithal the unlikel yele of me,
I may nat, certés, though I sholdé dye,
Forbere to been out of youre compaignye;
For verray love this is, withouten doute.
Now kys me, wyf, and lat us rome aboute.”

This fresshè May, whan she thise wordés herde,
Benyngnély to Januarie answerde;
But first and forward, she bigan to wepe;
“I have,” quod she, “a soulé for to kepe
As wel as ye, and also myn honòur;
And of my wyfhod thilké tendré flour
Which that I have assuréd in youre hond,

2176. covenat, H6 covenault. 2179. that (2), om. E.
2177. wyte, blame. 2185. thise, H his.
Whan that the preest to yow my body bond;
Wherfore I wole answere in this manere,
By the leve of yow, my lord so deere;
I prey to God that nevere dawe the day
That I ne sterve, as foule as womman may,
If evere I do unto my kyn that shame,
Or ellés I empeyrè so my name,
That I be fals; and if I do that lakke,
Do strepè me, and put me in a sakke,
And in the nexté ryver do me drenchen,—
I am a gentil womman and no wenche!
Why speke ye thus? But men been evere untrewe,
And wommen have repreve of yow ay newe.
Ye han noon oother contenance, I leeve,
But speke to us of untrust and repreeve.”
And with that word she saugh wher Damyan
Sat in the bussh, and coughen she bigan,
And with hir fynger signés madé she
That Damyan sholde clymbe upon a tree
That chargéd was with fruyt, and up he wente;
For verraily he knew al hire entente,
And every signé that she koudé make
Wel bet than Januarie, hir owené make;
For in a lettré she hadde toold hym al
Of this matéré, how he werchen shal;
And thus I lete hym sitte upon the pyrie,
And Januarie and May romyngé myrie.

Bright was the day, and blew the firmament;

Phebus of gold doun hath hise stremés sent
To gladen every flour with his warmnesse.
He was that tyme in Geminis, as I gesse,
But litel fro his declynacioun
Of Cancer, Jovis exaltacioun;
And so bifes, that brighté morwè tyde,
That in that gardyn, in the ferther syde,
Pluto, that is the kyng of faírye,
And many a lady in his compaignye,
Folwynge his wyf, the queené Proserpyne,
Ech after oother right as ony lyne,—
Whil that she gadered flourés in the mede,
In Claudyan ye may the stories rede,
How in hise grisely carté he hire fette.
This kyng of faírye thanne adoun hym sette
Upon a bench of turvés, fressh and grene,
And right anon thus seyde he to his queene:
"My wyf," quod he, "ther may no wight seye nay,
Thexperience so preveth every day
The tresons whiche that wommen doon to man.
Ten hundred thousand [tales] tellen I kan
Notable of youre untrouthe and brotilnesse.
O Salomon! wys, and richest of richesse,
Fulfil'd of sapience and of worldly glorie,
Ful worthy been thy wordés to memórie
To every wight that wit and reson kan!

Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man:
'Aamonges a thousand men yet foond I oon,
Bút of wommen allé foond I noon.'

"Thus seith the kyng that knoweth youré
wikkednesse,
And Jhesus filius Syrak, as I gesse,
Ne speketh of yow but seeldé reverence.
A wyldé fyr and corrupt pestilence,
So falle upon youré bodyes yet to nyght!
Ne se ye nat this honourable knyght?
By-cause, alas! that he is blynd and old
His owené man shal make hym cokéwold.
Lo, heere he sit, the lechour, in the tree!
Now wol I graunten of my magestee
Unto this oldé, blyndé, worthy knyght,
That he shal have ageyn his eyen syght,
Whan that his wyf wold doon hym vileynye.
Thanne shal he knowen al hire harlotrye
Bothe in repreve of hire and othere mo."

"Ye shal?" quod Proserpyne; "and wol ye so?
Now by my moodres sirés soule! I swere
That I shal geven hire suffisant answere,
And allé wommen after, for hir sake,
That though they be in any gilt y-take,
With face bold they shulle hemself excuse,
And bery hem doun that wolden hem accuse; 2270
For lacke of answeré noon of hem shal dyen.
Al hadde man seyn a thyng with bothe hise eyen,
Yit shul we wommen visage it hardily,
And wepe, and swere, and chide subtilly,
So that ye men shul been as lewed as gees. 2275
What rekketh me of youre auctoritees?

"I woot wel that this Jew, this Salomon,
Foond of us wommen foolés many oon,
But though that he ne foond no good womman,
Yet hath ther foundé many another man 2280
Wommen ful trewe, ful goode and vertuous;
Witnesse on hem that dwelle in Cristés hous;
With martirdom they prevéd hire constance.
The Romayn Geestés eek make remembrance
Of many a verry trewe wyf also; 2285
But, sire, ne be nat wrooth,—al be it so,
Though that he seyde he foond no good womman,
I prey yow take the sentence of the man,
He menté thus, that in sovereyn bontee
Nis noon but God that sit in Trinitee. 2290
Ey, for verry God, that nys but oon,
What maka ye so muche of Salomon?
What though he made a temple, Goddes hous?
What though he weré riche and glorious?
So made he eek a temple of false goddis. 2295

2272. eyen, H³ have the correct spelling for the rime, yen. 2274. chide, E repeats visage.
How myghte he do a thyng that moore forbode is?

Pardee! as faire as ye his name emplastre
He was a lecchour and an ydolastre,
And in his elde he verray God forsook;
And if that God ne hadde, as seith the book,
Y-sparéd for his fadres sake, he sholde
Have lost his regnè rather than he wolde.

I sette right noght, of al the vileynye
That ye of wommen write, a boterflye!
I am a womman, nedês moot I speke,
Or ellês swellé til myn herté breke;
For sitthen he seyde that we been jangleresses,
As evere hool I mooté brouke my tresses!
I shall nat sparé for no curteisye
To speke hym harm that wolde us vileynye!

"Dame," quod this Pluto, "be no lenger wrooth,
I geve it up! but sithe I swoor myn ooth
That I wolde graunten hym his sighte ageyn,
My word shal stonde, I warné yow certeyn.
I am a kyng, it sit me noght to lye!"

"And I," quod she, "a queene of faëry!
Hir answere shal she have, I undertake.
Lat us namooré wordés heer-of make,
For sothe I wol no lenger yow contrarie."

Now lat us turne agayn to Januarie,
That in the gardyn with his fairé May
Syngeth ful murier than the papéjay:

2300. if that, E² if.
2301. Y-spared, H⁸ I-spared
    him.
2302. rather, earlier.
2308. brouke, have the use of.
2315. sit, fits.
2322. papejay, parrot.
“Yow love I best, and shal, and oothér noon.”
So longe aboute the aleyes is he goon,
Til he was come agayns thilké pyrie
Where as this Damyan sitteth ful myrie,
Anheigh among the fresshé levés grene.

This fresshé May, that is so bright and sheene,
Gan for to syke and seyde, “Allas, my syde!
Now, sire,” quod she, “for aught that may bityde,
I moste han of the perés that I see,
Or I moot dye, so sooré longeth me
To eten of the smalé perés grene.
Help, for hir love that is of hevené queene!
I telle yow wel, a womman in my plit
May han to fruyt so greet an appetit
That she may dyen, but she of it have.”

“Allas!” quod he, “that I ne had heer a knave
That koudé clymbe! Allas, alas!” quod he,
“That I am blynd!” “Ye, sire, no fors,” quod she;
“But wolde ye vouche-sauf, for Goddes sake,”
The pyrie inwith youre armés for to take,—
For wel I woot that ye mystrusté me,—
Thanne sholde I clymbé wel ynogh,” quod she,
“So I my foot myghte sette upon youre bak.”

“Certés,” quod he, “theron shal be no lak,
Mighte I yow helpen with myn herté blood!”
He stoupeth doun, and on his bak she stood,
And caughte hire by a twiste, and up she gooth,—
Ladyes, I prey yow that ye be nat wrooth,
I kan nat close, I am a rudé man,—

2325. *pyrie*, pear-tree.  
2349. *twiste*, branch.
And sodeynly anon this Damyan
Gan pullen up the smok, and in he throng.
And whan that Pluto saugh this greté wrong,
To Januarie he gaf agayn his sighte,
And made hym se as wel as evere he myghte;
And whan that he hadde caught his sighte agayn,
Ne was ther nevere man of thyng so fayn;
But on his wyf his thoght was everemo.
Up to the tree he caste his eyn two,
And saugh that Damyan his wyf had dressed
In swich manere it may nat been expressed,
But if I woldé speke uncurteisly;
And up he gaf a roryng and a cry,
As dooth the mooder whan the child shal dye.
"Out! helpe! alas! harrow!" he gan to crye;
"O stronge lady, stooré, what dostow?"
And she anserdé, "Sire, what eyleth yow?
Have pacience and resoun in youre mynde.
I have yow holpe on bothe youre eyn blynde,—
Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lyen,—
As me was taught to heele with youre eyn,
Was no thyng bet to maké yow to see
Than strugle with a man upon a tree.
God woot, I dide it in ful good entente."
"Strugle," quod he, "ye, algate in it wente!
God geve yow bothe on shamés deth to dyen!
He swyvéd thee, I saugh it with myne eyn,
And ellés be I hanged by the hals!"

2355. agayn his sight, H8 his sight
agayn, omitting next couplet. 2364. dote
2355. stooré, stubborn. 2369. God woot, I dide it in ful good entente.
2379. hals, neck.
"Thanne is," quod she, "my medicyné fals,
For certeinly, if that ye myghte se,
Ye wolde nat seyn this wordés unto me;
Ye han som glymsyng, and no parfit sighte."

"I se," quod he, "as wel as evere I myghte,
Thonkéd be God I with bothe myne eyen two,
And, by my trouthe, me thoughte he dide thee so."

"Ye mazé, mazé, goodé sire," quod she;
"This thank have I for I have maad yow see.
Allas!" quod she, "that evere I was so kynde."

"Now, damé," quod he, "lat al passe out of
mynde.
Com doun, my lief, and if I have myssayd,
God helpe me so, as I am yvele apayd.
But, by my fader soule! I wende han seyn
How that this Damyan hadde by thee leyn,
And that thy smok hadde leyn upon his brest."

"Ye, sire," quod she, "ye may wene as yow lest,
But, sire, a man that waketh out of his sleepe,
He may nat sodeynly wel taken keepe
Upon a thyng, ne seen it parfitly,
Til that he be adawéd verraily.
Right so a man that longe hath blynd y-be;
Ne may nat sodeynly so wel y-se,
First whan his sighte is newé come ageyn,
As he that hath a day or two y-seyn.
Til that youre sighte y-satled be a while,
Ther may ful many a sighté yow bigile.
Beth war, I prey yow, for, by hevené kyng,
Ful many a man weneth to seen a thynge,
And it is al another than it semeth.
He that mysconceyveth, he mysdemeth,"—
And with that word she leepe doun fro the tree.

This Januarie, who is glad but he?
He kisseth hire and clippeth hire ful ofte,
And on hire wombe he stroketh hire ful softe;
And to his palays hoom he hath hire lad.

Now, goodé men, I pray yow to be glad.
Thus endeth heere my tale of Januarie.
God blesse us, and his mooiter Seinté Marie!

"Ey, Goddès mercy," sayde oure Hosté tho,
"Now swich a wyf, I pray God kepe me fro!"
Lo, whiche sleightés and subtilitees
In wommen been! for ay as bisy as bees
Been they, us sely men for to deceyve;
And from a sooth evere wol they weyve.
By this Marchauntés tale it preveth weel;
But doueteles, as trewe as any steel
I have a wyf, though that she pourë be;
But of hir tongue a labbyng shrewë is she;

2413. clippeth, hugs.
2416. to, om. E.
2419. E heads this The Prologue of the Squieres Tale, printing with it the first eight lines of Group
And yet she hath an heepe of vicés mo,
Therof no fors, lat alle swiche thyngès go;
But wyte ye what? In conseil be it seyd,
Me reweth soore I am unto hire teyd;
For, and I sholdé rekenen every vice
Which that she hath, y-wis I were to nyce;
And causë why, it sholde reported be,
And toold to hire of somme of this meyne,
Of whom it nedeth nat for to declare
(Syn wommen konnen outen swich chaffare),
And eek my wit suffiseth nat therto,
To tellen al, wherfore my tale is do.”

TALES OF THE FOURTH DAY

GROUP F

Words of the Host to the Squire

"Squier, come neer, if it youre willé be, And sey somewhat of love; for certés ye Konnen theron as muche as any man."

"Nay, sire," quod he, "but I wol seye as I kan With hertly wyl,—for I wol nat rebelle Agayn youre lust. A tâle wol I telle. Have me excuséd, if I speke amys, My wyl is good, and loo, my tale is this."

SQUIRE'S TALE

Here begynneth The Squieres Tale

At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye, Ther dwelte a kyng that werreyéd Russye,

2. sey somewhat of love, H say us a tale.

Squire's Tale: Keightley in his Tales and Popular Fictions (1834) suggested that the local colour of this Tale was derived from Marco Polo, and Col. Yule notes that Cambyuscan is only a corruption of Chinghiz (or "the great") Khan. Dr. Skeat has quoted passages from Marco Polo's
Thurgh which ther dydè many a doughty man.
This noble kynge was clepéd Cambyuskan,
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun
That ther was nowher in no regioun
So excellent a lord in allé thyng.
Hym lakkéd noght that longeth to a kynge;
As of the secte of which that he was born,
He kepe his lay, to which that he was sworn;
And therto he was hardy, wys, and riche,
Pitous and just, and evermore yliche;
Sooth of his word, benigne and honouroble,
of his coráge as any centre stable;
Yong, fresh, and strong, in armes desirous
As any bachelore of al his hous.
A fair persone he was, and fortunat,
And kepe alwey so wel roial estat
That ther was nowher swich another man.

This noble kynge, this Tartre Cambyuskan,
Haddé two sones on Elpheta his wyf,
Of whiché the eldeste highté Algarsyf;
That oother sone was clepéd Cambalo.
A doghter hadde this worthy kynge also

description of Kublai Khan
as the sources of some of
Chaucer’s lines, but the re-
semblances are not very
close. On magic horses,
rings and mirrors Mr. Clous-
ton has written a whole
book for the Chaucer
Society.
16. longeth, H³ longed.
17. As; E And.
18. lay, creed; H² lawe.

20. Text from Heng.; rest and
pitous and just alwey y-
liche.
23. and strong, E strong and.
31. sone, om. H⁴.
icleped, H² i-cleped.
Cambalo, Kightley sug-
gests that the name was
taken from Kublai
Khan’s capital, Camb-
baluc.
That yongest was, and highté Canacee,
But for to tellé yow al hir beautee
It lyth nat in my tonge nyn my konnyng,
I dar nat undertake so heigh a thyng;
Myn English eek is insufficient;
It mosté been a rethor excellent,
That koude hise colours longynge for that art,
If he sholde hire discryven every part;
I am noon swich, I moot speke as I kan.

And so bifel that whan this Cambyuskan
Hath twenty wynter born his diadem,
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,
He leet the feeste of his nativitye
Doon cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,
The last Idus of March after the yeer.

Phebus, the sonne, ful joly was and cleer,
For he was neigh his exaltacioun
In Martés face, and in his mansioun
In Aries, the colerik hooté signe.
Ful lusty was the weder and benigne,
For which the foweles agayn the sonné sheene,
What for the sesoun and the yongé grene,
Ful loudé songen hire affecciouns,
Hem semed han geten hem protecciouns
Agayn the swerd of wynter, keene and coold.
This Cambyuskan—of which I have yow toold—
In roial vestiment sit on his deys,
With diadem ful heighe in his paleys,
And halt his feeste so solempne and so ryche,
That in this world ne was ther noon it lyche;
Of which, if I shal tellen al tharray,
Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day;
And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse
At every cours the ordre of hire servyse.
I wol nat tellen of hir strangë sewes,
Ne of hir swannes, ne of hire heronsewes.
Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtës olde,
Ther is som mete that is ful deyntë holde
That in this lond men recche of it but smal;
Ther nys no man that may reporten al.
I wol nat taryen yow, for it is pryme,
And for it is no fruyt, but los of tyme;
Unto my purpos I wolde have my recours.
And so bifel that after the thridde cours,
Whil that this kyng sit thus in his nobleye,
Herknynge his mynstralës hir thyngës pleye
Biforn hym at the bord deliciously,
In at the hallë dore, al sodeynly,
Ther cam a knyght upon a steede of bras,
And in his hand a brood mirour of glas;
Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ring,
And by his syde a naked swerd hangyng;

61. hald, holdeth. 
67. sewes, dishes. 
68. heronsewes, young herons. 
75. purpos, Corp.² first purpos, E⁺ firste.
And up he rideth to the heighé bord.
In al the halle ne was ther spoken a word,
For merveille of this kynyght; hym to biholde
Ful bisily ther wayten yonge and olde.

This strangé knyght that cam thus sodeynly,
Al arméd, save his heed, ful richély,
Saleweth kynge and queene, and lordés alle,
By ordre, as they seten in the halle,
With so heigh reverence and obeisance,
As wel in speché as in contenaunce,
That Gawayn with his oldé curteisye,
Though he were comen ageyn out of fairye,
Ne koude hym nat amendé with a word;
And after this, biforn the heighé bord,
He with a manly voys seith his message
After the forme uséd in his langage,
Withouten vice of silable, or of lettre;
And for his talé sholdé seme the bettre,
Accordant to hise ordés was his cheere,
As techeth art of speche hem that it leere.
Al be it that I kan nat sowne his stile,
Ne kan nat clymben over so heigh a style,
Yet seye I this, as to commune entente,
Thus muche amounteth al that evere he mente,
If it so be that I have it in mynde.

He seyde, "The kynge of Arabe and of Inde,
My ligé lord, on this solemne day
Saleweth yow, as he best kan and may,
And sendeth yow, in honour of youre feeste,
By me that am al redy at youre heeste,
This steede of bras, that esily and weel
Kan in the space of o day natureel,—
This is to seyn, in four and twenty houres,—
Wher so yow lyst, in droghte or ellës shoures,
Beren youre body into every place
To which youre herté wilneth for to pace,
Withouten wem of yow, thurgh foul or fair ;
Or, if yow lyst to fleece as hye in the air
As dooth an egle whan hym list to soore,
This samë steede shal bere yow evere moore,
Withouten harm, til ye be ther yow lestë,
Though that ye slepen on his bak, or reste ;
And turne ageyn with wrthyng of a pyn.
He that it wroghtë koude ful many a gyn.
He wayted many a constellacioun
Er he had doon this operacioun,
And knew ful many a seel, and many a bond.

"This mirroure eek, that I have in myn hond,
Hath swich a myght that men may in it see
Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee
Unto youre regne, or to youre self also,
And openly who is youre freend or foo;
And over al this, if any lady bright
Hath set hire herte on any maner wight,

114. al redy at youre, H redy at al his.
115. whan, E whan that.
118. elles, H² in.
121. wem, spot, harm.
122. gym, contrivance.
123. wayted, watched.
125. on, E² in.
If he be fals she shal his tresoun see,
His newé love, and al his subtiltee,
So openly that ther shal no thyng hyde.
Werfore, ageyn this lusty someres tyde,
This mirour and this ryng that ye may see
He hath sent to my lady Canacee,
Youre excellenté doghter that is heere.

"The vertu of the ryng, if ye wol heere,
Is this, that if hire lust it for to were
Upon hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,
Ther is no fowel that fleeth under the hevene
That she ne shal wel understonde his stevene,
And knowe his menyng openly and pleyn,
And answere hym in his langage ageyn;
And every gras that groweth upon roote
She shal eek knowe and whom it wol do boote,
Al be hise woundeds never so depe and wyde.

"This naked sword that hangeth by my syde
Swich vertu hath that what man so ye smyte,
Thurgh out his armure it wole kerve and byte,
Were it as thikke as is a branchéd ook;
And what man that is wounded with the strook
Shal never be hool, til that yow list of grace
To stroke hym with the plat in thilké place
Ther he is hurt; this is as muche to seyn,
Ye mooté with the platté sword ageyn

144. to, E² unto.
146. the (a), H⁴ this.
150. stevene, speech.
154. do boote, help.
158. kerve, E hym kerve.
160. that is wounded, H is i- wounded.
       the, E a.
162. plat, flat.
       thilke, E² that.
Strike hym in the wounde and it wol close. 165
This is a verray sooth withouten glose,
Itfailleth nat whils it is in youre hooled.”
And whan this knyght hath thus his talé toold,
He rideth out of halle, and doun he lighte.
His steedé, which that shoon as sonné brighte, 170
Stant in the court as stille as any stoon.
This knyght is to his chambré lad anoon
And is unarmed and unto mete y-set.
The presentes been ful roially y-fet,—
This is to seyn, the swerd and the mirour,— 175
And born anon into the heighé tour,
With certeine officers ordeyned therfore;
And unto Canacee this ryng was bore
Solemnély, ther she sit at the table;
But sikerly, withouten any fable,
The hors of bras, that may nat be remewed,
It stant as it were to the ground y-glewed;
Ther may no man out of the place it dryve
For noon engyn of wyndas ne polyve;
And cause why? for they kan nat the craft; 185
And therfore in the place they han it laft,
Til that the knyght hath taught hem the manere
To voyden hym, as ye shal after heere.

Greet was the prees that swarmeth to and fro
To gauren on this hors that stondeth so; 190
For it so heigh was, and so brood and long,

173. *unto*, *H* 6 *to.* 184. *wyndas ne polyve*, windlass
190. *gauren*, gaze.
So wel proporcionéd for to been strong,  
Right as it were a steede of Lumbardye;  
Ther-with so horsly, and so quyk of eye,  
As it a gentil Poileys courser were;  
For certés, fro his tayl unto his ere,  
Nature ne art ne koude hym nat amende  
In no degree, as al the peple wende.  
But everemoore hir moosté wonder was  
How that it koude go, and was of bras!  
It was of fairýe, as al the peple semed.  
Diversé folk diversély they demed;  
As many heddes as manye wittes ther been.  
They murmureden as dooth a swarm of been,  
And maden skiles after hir fantasies,  
Rehersynge of thise oldé poetries;  
And seyde that it was lyk the Pegasee,  
The hors that haddé wyngés for to flee;  
Or elles it was the Grekés hors, Synoun,  
That broghté Troié to destruccioun,  
As men may in thise oldé geestés rede.  
"Myn herte," quod oon, "is everemoore in drede;  
I trowe som men of armés been ther-inne,  
That shapen hem this citee for to wynne;  
It were right good that al swich thyng were knowe."  
Another rownéd to his felawe lowe,  
And seyde, "He lyeth! it is rather lyk  

195. Poileys, Apulian.  
205. skiles, reasons.  
211. geestes, stories.  

215. right, om. H.  
216. rowned, whispered.  
217. it, H for it.
An apparence, y-maad by som magyk;
As jogelours pleyen at thise feestés grete."
Of sondry doutés thus they jangle and trete,
As lewéd peple demeth comunly
Of thyngés that been maad moore subtilly
Than they kan in hir lewednesse comprehende,
They demen gladly to the badder ende.

And somme of hem wondred on the mirour
That born was up into the hyé tour,
Hou men myghte in it swiché thyngés se.

Another answerde and seyde it myghte wel be
Naturelly by composicions
Of anglis, and of slye reflexiouns;
And seyden that in Romé was swich oon.
They spoken of Alocen and Vitulon,
And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves
Of queynté mirours, and of prospectives,
As knowen they that han hir bookés herd.

And oother folk han wondred on the swerd
That woldé percen thurghout every thyng;
And fille in speche of Thelothys the kyng,
And of Achilles with his queynté spere,
For he koude with it bothé heele and dere,
Right in swich wise as men may with the swerd.

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226. *hye, H6 maistre.*
231. *in Rome,* an allusion to the wizardries attributed to Virgil.
232. *Alocen and Vitulon,* Alhaazen was an Arab astronomer of the 11th century, and Vitellio a Polish, of the 13th.
233. *And, H6 Of, and of*.
238. *Thelothys,* Telephus of Mysia, wounded and healed by the spear of Achilles.
240. *dere, harm.*
Of which right now ye han youre-selven herd.
They spoken of sondry hardyng of metal,
And speke of medicynès therwithal,
And how and whanne it sholde y-harded be,
Which is unknowe, algatez unto me.  
Tho speekè they of Canacèes ryng,
And seyden alle that swich a wonder thyng
Of craft of ryngès herde they nevere noon;
Save that he Moyses and kyng Salomon
Hadden a name of konnyng in swich art;
Thus seyn the peple and drawen hem apart.
But nathèlees somme seiden that it was
Wonder to maken of fern-asshen glas,
And yet nys glas nat lyk asshen of fern,
But for they han i-knownen it so fern
Therfore cesseth hir janglyng and hir wonder.
As soorè wondren somme on cause of thonder,
On ebbe, on flood, on gosser, and on myst,
And on alle thyng til that the cause is wyst.
Thus jangle they, and demen and devyse,
Til that the kyng gan fro the bord aryse.
Phebus hath laft the angle meridional,
And yet ascendynge was the beest roial,
The gentil Leon, with his Aldrian,
Whan that this Tartrè kyng Cambyuskan

246. algatez, at all events.
256. i-knownen, E's knownen.
    so fern, so long.
262. the (2), H's his.
263. angle meridional, the

southern angle answered
to the time from 10 A.M.
to noon.
265. Aldrian, or Aldiran, the
star marking the Lion's
fore-paws.
Roos fro his bord, ther as he sat ful hye.
Toforn hym gooth the loudē mynstralcye
Til he cam to his chambre of parementz;
Ther as they sownen diversē instrumentz
That it is lyk an hevene for to heere.
Now dauncen lusty Venus children deere,
For in the Fyssh hir lady sat ful hye,
And looketh on hem with a freendly eye.

This noble kyng is set up in his trone;
This strangē knyght is set to hym ful soone,
And on the daunce he gooth with Canacee.
Heere is the revel and the jolitee
That is nat able a dul man to devyse;
He moste han knowen love and his servyse,
And been a feestlych man, as fresh as May,
That sholdē yow devysen swich array.

Who koudē tellē yow the forme of daunces
So unkouthe, and so freshē contenaunces,
Swich subtil lookyng and dissymulynges
For drede of jalouse mennes aperceyvynges?
No man but Launcelet, and he is deed.
Therfore I passe of al this lustyheed;
I sey namore, but in this jolynesse
I lete hem til men to the soper dresse.

The styward byt the spices for to hye,
And eek the wyn, in al this melodye.

267. as, Et. that.
269. parements, adornments, state.
271. it is lyk, H is y-like, is lik.
273. the Fyssh, Venus is "exalted" in Piscis.
284. unkouthe, strange.
291. byt, biddeth.

khe, hasten.
The ushers and the squiers been y-goon,
The spices and the wyn is come anoon.
They ete and drynke, and whan this hadde an ende,
Unto the temple, as reson was, they wende. 296

The service doon they soupen al by day;
What nedeth yow rehercen hire array?
Éch man woot wel that a kyngés feeste
Hath plenteé to the mooste and to the leeste, 300
And deyntees mo than been in my knowyng.

At after soper gooth this noble kyng
To seen this hors of bras, with al the route
Of lordés and of ladyes hym aboute.
Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of bras 305
That syn the greté sege of Troié was,—
Ther as men wondreden on an hors also,—
Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho.
But fynally, the kyng axeth this knyght
The vertu of this courser, and the myght,
And preydé hym to telle his governaunce. 310

This hors anoon bigan to trippe and daunce
Whan that this knyght leyde hand upon his reyne,
And seydé, "Sire, ther is namoore to seyne,
But whan yow list to ryden anywhere 315
Ye mooten trille a pyn, stant in his ere,
Which I shal tellé yow bitwix us two.
Ye moote nempne hym to what place also,
Or to what contree, that yow list to ryde;
And whan ye come ther as yow list abyde,
Bidde hym descende, and trille another pyn,—
For therin lith the effect of al the gyn,—
And he wol doun descende and doon youre will,
And in that place he wol stondé stille.
Though al the world the contrarie hadde y-swore,
He shal nat thennés been y-drawe ne y-bore;
Or, if yow listé bidde hym thennés goon,
Trillé this pyn, and he wol vanysshé anoon
Out of the sighté of every maner wight,
And come agayn, be it by day or nyght,
Whan that yow list to clepen hym ageyn
In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn,
Bitwixé yow and me, and that ful soone.
Ride whan yow list, ther is namoore to doone.”

Enforméd whan the kyng was of that knyght,
And hath conceyvéd in his wit aright
The manere and the forme of al this thyng,
Ful glad and blithe this noble doughty kyng
Repeireth to his revel as bisorn.

The brydel is unto the tour y-born
And kept among hise juele leve and deere,
The hors vanysshed, I noot in what manere,
Out of hir sighté,—ye gete namoore of me;
But thus I leté in lust and jolitee
This Cambyuskan hise lordés festeiynge,
Til wel ny the day bigan to sprynge.

324. stonde, H& abyde. 333. Ful, E& Thus.
[PART II]

The noriche of digestioun, the sleepe,
Gan on hem wynke, and bad hem taken keepe
That muchel drynke and labour wolde han reste;
And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he keste, 350
And seydé, it was tyme to lye adoun,
For blood was in his domynacioun.
"Cherisseth blood, natûrés freend," quod he.
They thanken hym galpynge, by two, by thre,
And every wight gan drawe hym to his reste, 355
As sleepe hem bad; they tooke it for the beste.
Hire dremés shul nat been y-toold for me;
Ful were hire heddés of fumositee,
That causeth dreem, of which ther nys no charge.
They slepen til that it was prymé large, 360
The moosté part, but it were Canacee.
She was ful mesurable as wommen be,
For of hir fader hadde she také leve
To goon to reste, soone after it was eve.
Hir listé nat appalled for to be, 365
Ne on the morwe unfeestlich for to se,
And slepte hire firsté sleepe and thanne awook;
For swich a joye she in hir herté took,
Bothe of hir queynté ryng and hire mirour,
That twenty tyme she changéd hir colour,
And in hire sleepe, right for impressioun
Of hire mirour, she hadde a visioun.
Wherfore er that the sondé gan up glyde
She clepéd on hir maistresse hire bisyde,
And seydé that hire listé for to ryse.
Thise oldé wommen that been gladly wyse,
As is hire maistresse, answere hire anon,
And seydé, “Madame, whider wil ye goon
Thus erly, for the folk been alle on reste?”
“I wol,” quod she, “arisé,—for me leste
No lenger for to slepe,—and walke aboute.”
Hire maistresse clepeth wommen a greet route,
And up they rysen wel a ten or twelve;
Up riseth fresshé Canacee hir-selve,
As rody and bright as dooth the yongé sonne
That in the Ram is foure degrees up ronne.
Noon hyer was he whan she redy was,
And forth she walketh esily a pas,
Arrayed after the lusty sesoun soote,
Lítghtly for to pleye, and walke on foote,
Nat but with fyve or sixe of hir meynée,
And in a trench forth in the park gooth she.
The vapour which that fro the erthé glood

374. cleped, called.
377. is, om. E.
383. a, E² an, Corp.² om.
386. soure (H⁴ ten), cp. l. 51 and note. At its rising
389. soote, sweet.
393. glood, glided.

on the 16th March the sun would be passing from the 4th degree to the 5th.
Madé the sonne to semé rody and brood,
But nathélees it was so fair a sighte
That it made alle hire hertés for to lighte,—
What for the sesoun, and the morwénynge,
And for the foweles that she herdé synge ;
For right anon she wisté what they mente
Right by hir song, and knew al hire entente.

The knotté why that every tale is toold,
If it be taried til that lust be coold
Of hem that han it after herked yoor,  
The savour passeth ever lenger the moore,
For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee ;
And by the samé resoun thynketh me,
I sholdé to the knotte condescende
And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende.

Amydde a tree fordrye, as whit as chalk,
As Canacee was pleyyng in hir walk,
Ther sat a faucon over hire heed ful hye,
That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
That all the wode resounéd of hire cry.
Y-beten hath she hir-self so pitously
With bothe hir wyngés til the redé blood
Ran endélong the tree ther as she stood,
And evere in oon she cryde alwey and shrichte,
And with hir beek hir-selven so she prighte,
That ther nys tygre, ne noon so cruell beest,

402. lust, pleasure. 416. as, om. E².
409. fordrye, E² fordryed, dried 417. shrichte, shrieked.
   up. 418. prighte, pricked.
That dwelleth outhere in wode or in forest,
That nolde han wept, if that he wepé koude,
For sorwe of hire, she shrighte alwey so loude;
For ther nas nevere yet no man on lyve,—
If that I koude a fauen wel discryve,—
That herde of swich another of fairnesse,
As wel of plumage as of gentillesse
Of shape, and al that myghte y-rekened be.

A fauné peregryn thanne seméd she
Of fremdé land, and everemoore as she stood,
She swowneth now and now for lakke of blood,
Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.

This fairé kyngés doghter, Canacee,
That on hir fynger baar the queynté rynge,
Thurgh which she understood wel every thyng
That any fowl may in his leden seyn,
And koude anseren hym in his ledene ageyn,
Hath understondé what this fauné seyde,
And wel neigh for the routhe almoost she deyde;
And to the tree she gooth ful hastily,
And on this faucon looketh pitously,
And heeld hir lappe abrood, for wel she wiste
The faucon mosté fallen fro the twiste,
Whan that it swownéd next, for lakke of blood.
A longé while to wayten hire she stood,

420. outhere, either.
421. he, E² she.
428. peregryn, the pilgrim falcon, so called because it keeps away from its nest.
429. fremde, foreign.
430. everemoore, H ever.
431. leden, language.
436. anseren, H⁶ answer.
442. twiste, branch.
Til atté laste she spak in this manere
Unto the hauk, as ye shal after heere:
   "What is the cause, if it be for to telle,
That ye be in this furial pyne of helle?"
Quod Canacee unto the hauk above.
   "Is this for sorwe of deeth, or los of love?
For, as I trowé, thise been causes two
That causen moost a gentil herté wo.
Of oother harm it nedeth nat to speke,
For ye youre-self upon your-self yow wreke,
Which proveth wel that outhere love or drede
Moot been enchesoun of youre cruel dede,
Syn that I see noon oother wight yow chace.
For love of God, as dooth youre-selven grace,
Or what may been youre helpe; for West nor Est
Ne saugh I nevere, er now, no bryd ne beest
That ferde with hymself so pitously.
Ye sle me with youre sorwé verraillly;
I have of yow so greet compassioun.
For Goddés love com fro the tree adoun,
And as I am a kyngés doghter trewe,
If that I verraill the causé knewe
Of youre disese, if it lay in my myght,
I wolde amenden it er it were nyght,
As wisly helpe me greté God of kynde!
And herbés shal I right ynowe y-fynde
To heelé with youre hurtés hastily."

448. furial pyne, raging pain. 463. compassion, E passioun.
455. love, H5 ire. 468. it (2), so Camb. MS.;
456. enchesoun, occasion. E5 that it.
461. ferde, fared. 469. kynde, nature.
VOL. II
Tho shrighte this faucon yet moore pitously
Than ever she dide, and fil to grounde anon,
And lith aswownè, deed, and lyk a stoon,
Til Canacee hath in hire lappe hire take
Unto the tyme she gan of swough awake;
And after that she of hir swough gan breyde
Right in hir haukès ledene thus she seyde:
"That pitee renneth soone in gentil herte,
Feelynge his similitude in peynès smerte,
Is prevèd al day, as men may it see,
As wel by werk as by auctoritee;
For gentil hertè kitheth gentillesse.
I se wel that ye han of my distresse
Compassioun, my fairé Canacee,
Of verray wommanly benignyte
That nature in youre principles hath set;
But for noon hopè for to fare the bet,
But for to obeye unto youre hertè free,
And for to maken othere be war by me,
As by the whelpe chasted is the leoun;
Right for that cause and that conclusioun,
Whil that I have a leyser and a space,
Myn harm I wol confessen er I pace."
And evere whil that oon hir sorwe tolde
That oother weepe as she to water wolde,
Til that the faucon bad hire to be stille,
And with a syk right thus she seyde hir wille.

477. breyde, awake; H⁶ abreyde
    upbreide, omitting hir or gan.
478. ledene, speech.
479. to, om. E.
480. Feelynge his similitude in peynès smerte.
483. kitheth, shows; H⁶ kepeth.
487. set, E² y-set.
491. chasted, H⁶ chastised.
"Ther I was bred, alas! that hardé day,—
And fostred in a roche of marbul gray
So tendrély that no thyng eyléd me;—
I nysté nat what was adverstee
Til I koude flee ful hye under the sky—
Tho dwelte a tercélet me fasté by,
That seméd welle of allé gentillesse;
Al were he ful of tresoun and falsnesse,
It was so wrappéd under humble cheere,
And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,
Under plesance, and under bisy payne,
That I ne koude han wend he koudé feyne,
So depe in greyn he dyéd his coloure.
Right as a serpent hit hym under floures
Til he may seen his tymé for to byte,
Right so this god of love, this ypocryte,
Dooth so his cerymonyes and obeisaunces,
And kepeth in semblant alle his observaunces
That sowneth into gentillesse of love.
As in a tounbe is al the faire above,
And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,
Swich was the ypocryte, bothe coold and hoot,
And in this wise he servéd his entente,
That save the seend, noon wisté what he mente
Til he so longe hadde wopen and compleyned,
And many a yeer his service to me feyned,
Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce,
Al innocent of his corouned malice,
For-feréd of his deeth, as thoughté me,
Upon his othés and his seurétee,
Graunted hym love upon this condicioun,
That everemoore myn honour and renoun
Were savéd, bothé privee and apert;
This is to seyn, that after his desert,
I gaf hym al myn herté and my thoght,—
God woot, and he, that otherwise noght,—
And took his herte in chaunge for myn for ay;
But sooth is seyd, goon sithen many a day,
‘A trewe wight and a theef thanken nat oon;’
And whan he saugh the thyng so fer’ y-goon
That I hadde graunted hym fully my love,
In swich a gyse as I have seyd above,
And geven hym my trewé herte as fre
As he swoor that he gaf his herte to me;
Anon this tigre ful of doublenesse
Fil on hisne knees with so devout humbleesse,
With so heigh reverence, and, as by his cheere,
So lyk a gentil loveere of manere,
So ravysshed, as it seméd, for the joye,
That nevere Jason, ne Parys of Troye,—
Jason? Cértés, ne noon oother man
Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan
To loven two, as writen folk biforn;

525. nyce, foolish.
526. corouned, crowned, i.e. consummate.
Ne nevere, syn the firste man was born,
Ne koudé man, by twenty thousand part,
Coúntrefete the sophymes of his art,
Ne weré worthy unbokelen his galoché
Ther doublenesse or feynyng sholde approche,
Ne so koude thanke a wight as he dide me!
His manere was an hevene for to see
Til any womman, were she never so wys,
So peynted he, and kemblade at point-devys,
As wel hise wordés as his contenaunce;
And I so loved hym for his obeisaunce,
And for the trouthe I deméd in his herte,
That if so were that any thyng hym smerte,
Al were it never so lite, and I it wiste,
Me thoughte I felté deeth myn hérté twiste;
And shortly, so ferforth this thyng is went,
That my wyl was his willés instrument,—
This is to seyn, my wyl obeyed his wyl
In allé thyng, as fer as resoun fil,
Kepynghe the boundés of my worship evere;
Ne nevere hadde I thyng so lief ne levere
As hym, God woot! ne nevere shal namo.
This lasteth longer than a yeer or two
That I supposed of hym noght but good;
But finally thus atté laste it stood
That Fortune woldé that he mosté twynne
Out of that place which that I was inne.

555. galoché, a sort of patten.
559. Till, H² To.
560. kemblade at point-devys, arranged to a nicety.
562. so, om. E².
565. lite, H³ litél.
577. twynne, depart.
Wher me was wo, that is no questioun;
I kan nat make of it discripsioun,
For o thyng dare I tellen boldely,
I knowe what is the peyne of deeth ther-by;
Swich harme I felte for I ne myghte bileve!
So on a day of me he took his leve,
So sorwefully eek that I wende verraiy
That he had felt as muché harm as I,
Whan that I herde hym speke and saugh his hewe;
But nathélees I thoughte he was so trewe,
And eek that he repairé sholde ageyn
Withinne a litel while, sooth to seyn,
And resoun wolde eek that he mosté go
For his honóur, as ofte it happeth so,
That I made vertu of necessitee,
And took it wel, syn that it mosté be.
As I best myghte I hidde fro hym my sorwe
And took hym by the hond, Seint John to borwe,
And seyde hym thus: 'Lo, I am yourés al;
Beth swich as I to yow have been and shal.'
What he answerde it nedeth noght reherce;
Who kan sey bet than he, who kan do worse?
Whan he hath al i-seyd, thanne hath he doon.
'Therfore bihoveth hire a ful long spoon
That shal ete with a feend,' thus herde I seye;
So atté laste he mosté forth his weye,
And forth he fleeth til he cam ther hym leste.

Whan it cam hym to purpos for to reste,
I trowe he haddé thilke text in mynde,
That ‘Allé thyng repeirynge to his kynde
Gladeth hymself,—thus seyn men, as I gesse.
Men loven of propré kynde newesfangelnesse,
As briddés doon that men in cages fede;
For though thou nyght and day take of hem hede,
And strawe hir cage faire, and softe as silk,
And geve hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,
Yet right anon as that his dore is uppe,
He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,
And to the wode he wole, and wormès ete;
So newesfangel been they of hire mete
And loven novelrie of propré kynde;
No gentillesse of blood ne may hem bynde.

“So ferde this tercélet, allas, the day!
Though he were gentil born, fressh and gay,
And goodlich for to seen, humble and free.
He saugh upon a tymé a kytè flee,
And sodeynly he loved this kytè so
That al his love is clene fro me ago,
And hath his trouthe falséd in this wyse.
Thus hath the kyte my love in hire servysè,
And I am lorn withouten remedie.”
And with that word this facon gan to cry, And scownéd eft in Canacees barm.
Greet was the sorwe for the haukés harm
That Canacee and alle hir wommen made;
They nysté hou they myghte the facon glade,
But Canacee hom bereth hire in hir lappe,
And softély in plastres gan hire wrappe,
Ther as she with hire beek hadde hurt hirselve.
Now kan nat Canacee but herbés delve
Out of the ground and maké salvés newe
Of herbés preciouose, and fyne of hewe,
To heelen with this hauk; fro day to nyght
She dooth hire bisynesse and hire fulle myght,
And by hire beddés heed she made a mewe,
And covered it with veluettès blewe,
In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene,
And al withoute the mewe is peynted grene,
In which were peynted alle thise falsé fowles,
As beth thise tidyves, tercélettes and owles;
And pyés, on hem for to crie and chyde,
Right for despit, were peynted hem bisyde.

Thus lete I Canacee, hir hauk kepyng,
I wol namoore as now speke of hir ryng
Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
How that this facon gat hire love ageyn,
Repentant, as the storie telleth us,
By mediacioun of Cambalus,
The kyngës sone, of whichë I yow tolde;
But hennës-forth I wol my proces holde
To speken of aventures and of batailles,
That nevere yet was herd so greet mervailles. 660

First wol I tellë yow of Cambyusan,
That in his tymë many a citee wan;
And after wol I speke of Algarsif,
How that he wan Theodora to his wif,
For whom ful ofte in greet peril he was, 665
Ne hadde he ben holpë by the steede of bras;
And after wol I speke of Cambalo,
That faught in lystës with the bretheren two
For Canacee, er that he myghte hire wynne;
And ther I lefte I wol ageyn bigynne. 670

[PART III]

Appollo whirlith up his chaar so hye
Til that the god Mercurius hous, the slye—

Heere folwe the wordes of the Frankelyn to the Squier,
and the wordes of the Hoost to the Frankelyn

“In feith, Squier, thow hast thee wel y-quit
And gentilly, I preisë wel thy wit,"
Quod the Frankeley, “considerynge thy yowthe
So feelyngly thou spekest, sire, I allowe the,

657. whichë, E4 which. 672. The “half-told” tale breaks off here.
659. speken, Heng.2 speke. 676. allowe, approve.
As to my doom ther is noon that is heere
Of eloquencé that shal be thy peere,
If that thou lyve! God geve thee good chaunce,
And in vertu sende thee continuaunce;
For of thy speche I havé greet deyntee.
I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee!
I haddé levere than twenty pound worth lond,
Though it right now were fallen in myn hond,
He were a man of swich discrecioun
As that ye been; fy on possessioun,
But if a man be vertuous withal!
I have my soné snybbéd and yet shal,
For he to vertu listeth nat entende,
But for to pleye at dees, and to despende
And lese al that he hath, is his usage;
And he hath levere talken with a page,
Than to comune with any gentil wight
There he myghte lerné gentillesse aright.”

“Straw for youre ‘gentillessé,’” quod our Hoost.
“What! Frankéleyn, pardee, sire, wel thou woost
That ech of yow moot tellen atté leste
A tale or two, or breken his biheste.”

“That knowe I wel, sire,” quod the Frankélyn,
“I prey yow haveth me nat in desdeyn
Though to this man I speke a word or two.”

“Telle on thy tale, withouten wordés mo!”

“Gladly, sire Hoost,” quod he, “I wole obeye
Unto your wyl; now herkneth what I seye.
I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse

677. doom, judgment.
As fer as that my wittës wol suffyse;
I prey to God that it may plesen yow,
Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow."

*The Proluge of the Frankeleyns Tale*

Thise olde, gentil Britons, in hir dayes,
Of diverse aventurez maden layes,
Rymeyéd in hir firsté Briton tongue,
Whiche layës with hir instrumentz they songe,
Or ellës redden hem for hir plesaunce,
And oon of hem have I in rémembrance,
Which I shal seyn with good wyl as I kan.

But, sires, by-cause I am a burel man,
At my bigynnnyng first I yow biseche,
Have me excusëd of my rudë speche.
I lernéd nevere rethoric certeyn;
Thyng that I speke it moot be bare and pleyn.
I sleepe nevere on the Mount of Pernaso,
Ne lernéd Marcus Tullius Scithero.
Colours ne knowe I none, withouten drede,
But swiché colours as growen in the mede,
Or ellës swiché as men dye or peynë.

711. *Rymeyed* (rimed), Corp. ⁴ _Rymeden, remedyn._
714. *oon of hem,* etc., this distinct statement (cp. l. 813) leaves no doubt that this tale follows, probably with some closeness, a French or Breton story, unluckily now lost.
716. *burel,* unlettered.
721. To disapprove his claim of bureness he quotes Persius (Prol. l. 2), as noted in E².
722. *Ne,* Camb. ⁴ _Ne nevere, ne I never._
723. *Colours,* ornaments of style.
Colours of rethoryk been me to queyte;
My spirit feel eth nought of swich mateere,
But if yow list my talé shul ye heere.

FRANKLIN'S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Frankeleyns Tale

In Armorik, that calléd is Britayne,
Ther was a knyght that loved and did his payne
To serve a lady in his besté wise;
And many a labour, many a greet emprise,
He for his lady wroghte, er she were wonne;
For she was oon the faireste under sonne,
And eek therto come of so heigh kynrede,
That wel unnethés dorste this knyght for drede
Telle hire his wo, his peyne, and his distresse;
But atté laste she for his worthynesse,
And namely for his meke obeýsaunce,
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce,
That pryvèly she fil of his accord,
To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord,
Of swich lordshiphe as men han over hir wyves,
And for to ledé the moore in blisse hir lyves,
Of his free wyl he swoor hire as a knyght,
That nevere in al his lyf he, day ne nyght,
Ne sholde upon hym také no maistrie

726. been me, E ben; Heng. 739. namely, especially.
727. they ben, are too quaint 746. in al his lyf, etc., Corp. 8
    for me.
 736. unnethés, hardly.
Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe hire jalousie;
But hire obeye and folwe hir wyl in al,
As any lovero to his lady shal,
Save that the name of soveraynêtee,
That wolde he have, for shame of his degree.

She thankéd hym and with ful greet humblassee,
She seydê, "Sire, sith of youre gentillesse
Ye profre me to have so large a reyne,
Ne woldê nevere God bitwixe us twayne,
As in my gilt, were outhere werre or stryf.
Sire, I wol be youre humble, trewê wyf;
Have heer my trouthe, til that myn herté breste;"
Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste.

For o thyng, sirês, saufly dar I seye,
That freendês everych outhere moot obeye,
If they wol longê holden compaignye.
Love wol nat been constraynéd by maistrye.
Whan maistrie comth, the god of love, anon,
Beteth his wynges and, farewel, he is gon!
Love is a thyng as any spirit free.
Wommen of kynde desiren libertee,
And nat to been constraynéd as a thral;
And so doon men, if I sooth seyen shal.
Looke, who that is moost pacïent in love,
He is at his avantedge al above.
Pácience is an heigh vertú, certeyn,
For it venquysseth, as thise clerkês seyn,
Thyngês that rigour sholdê nevere atteyne;
For every word men may nat chide or pleyne.

748. kithe, show.  768. of kynde, naturally.
Lerneth to suffre, or elles so moot I goon,
Ye shul it lerne, wher so ye wole or noon;
For in this world, certein, ther no wight is
That he ne dooth or seith som tyme amys.

Irë, siknesse, or constellacioun,
Wyn, wo, or chaungynge of complexioun,
Causeth ful ofte to doon amys or speken.
On every wrong a man may nat be wreken;
After the tymë moste be temperaunce
To every wight that kan on governaunce;
And therfore hath this wisë, worthy knyght,—
To lyve in esë,—suffrancie hire bihight,
And she to hym ful wisly gan to swere
That nevere sholde ther be defaut in here.

Heere may men seen an humble, wys accord;
Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord,—
Servant in love, and lord in mariagé,—
Thanne was he bothe in lordshipe and servage.
Servagë? nay, but in lordshipe above;
Sith he hath both his lady and his love;
His lady, certës, and his wyf also,
The which that lawe of love acordeth to;
And whan he was in this prosperitee
Hoom with his wyf he gooth to his contree,
Nat fer fro Pedmark, ther his dwellyng was,
Wher as he lyveth in blisse and in solas.

Who koudë telle, but he hadde wedded be,
The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf?
A yeer and moore lastéd this blisful lyf,
Til that the knyght of which I speke of thus,
That of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,
Shoope him to goon and dwelle a yeer or tweyne
In Engélond, that cleped was eek Britaye,
To seke in armés worshipe and honour,
For al his lust he sette in swich labour;
And dwelléd there two yeer,—the book seith thus.

Now wol I stynten of this Arveragus,
And spoken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,
That loveth hire housbonde as hire hertés lyf;
For his absencé wepeth she and siketh,
As doon thise noble wyvés, whan hem liketh;
She moorneth, waketh, wyleth, fasteth, pleyeth;
Desir of his presence hire so distreyneth,
That al this wydé world she sette at noght.
Hire freendés, whiche that knewe hir hevy thoght,
Conforten hire in al that ever they may.
They prechen hire, they telle hire nyght and day,
That causélees she sleeth hirself, alas!
And every confort possible in this cas
They doon to hire with all hire bisynesse,
Al for to make hire leve hire hevynesse.

By proces, as ye knowen evericheoon,
Men may so longé graven in a stoon

808. Kayrrud, the Red City;
810. eek, Camb. er.
815. siketh, sighs.
820. distreyneth, vexes.
825. leve, Corp.² letè.
Til som figure therinne emprented be.
So longe han they comforted hire, til she
Recevyèd hath, by hope and by resoun,
The emprentyng of hire consolacioun,
Thurgh which hir gretè sorwè gan aswage;
She may nat alwey duren in swich rage.

And eek Arveragus in al this care
Hath sent hire lettres hoom of his welfare;
And that he wol come hastily agayn;
Or ellès hadde this sorwe hir herté slayn.

Hire freendès sawe hir sorwè gan to slake,
And preyède hir on knees, for Goddès sake,
To come and romen hire in compaignye,
Awey to dryve hire derké fantasye;
And finally she graunted that requeste,
For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.

Now stood hire castel fastè by the see,
And often with hire freendès walketh shee,
Hire to disporte upon the bank an heigh,
Where as she many a shipe and bargé seigh
Seillynge hir cours, where as hem listé go;
But thanne was that a parcel of hire wo,
For to hisself ful ofte “Allas!” seith she,
“Is ther no shipe, of so manye as I se,
Wol bryngen hom my lord? Thanne were myn
herte
Al warisshed of hise bittré peynès smerte.”

842. preyede, E3 preyde.
843. hire, her.
852. ofte “Allas! ”seith, Camb.
853. ofte seyde.
856. warisshed, cured.
Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and thynke,
And caste hir eyen dounward fro the brynke;
But whan she saugh the grisly rokkês blake,
For verray feere so wolde hir herté quake
That on hire feet she myghte hire noght sustene;
Thanne wolde she sitte adoun upon the grene,
And pitously into the see biholde,
And seyn right thus, with sorweful sikês colde,
"Eternê God, that thurgh thy purveiaunce,
Lestest the world by certein governaunce,
In ydel, as men seyn, ye nothyng make;
But, Lord, thise grisly, feendly rokkês blake,
That semen rather a foul confusioun
Of werk than any fair creacioun
Of swich a parfit wys God, and a stable,—
Why han ye wroght this werk unresonable?
For by this werk south, north, ne west, ne est,
Ther nys y-fostred man, ne bryd, ne beest;
It dooth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth;
Se ye nat, Lord, how mankynde it destroyeth?
An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
Han rokkês slayn, al be they nat in mynde,
Which mankynde is so fair part of thy werk,
That thou it masted lyk to thyn owene merk.
"Thanne semèd it ye hadde a greet chirtee
Toward mankynde, but how thanne may it bee,
That ye swiche meenês make it to destroyen,
Whiche meenês do no good, but evere anoyen?
I woot wel clerkês wol seyn as hem leste,
By argumentz, that al is for the beste,
Though I ne kan the causes nat y-knowe;
But, thilké God that madé wynd to blowe,
As kepe my lord; this is my conclusioun.
To clerkes leté I al disputisoun;
But woldé God that alle thise rokkés blake
Were sonken into hellé for his sake.
Thise rokkés sleen myn herté for the feere.”
Thus wolde she seyn with many a pitous teere.

Hire freendés sawe that it was no disport
To romen by the see, but disconfort,
And shopen for to pleyen somwher elles.
They leden hire by ryveres, and by welles,
And eek in othere places deltables;
They dauncen, and they pleyen at ches and tables.

So on a day, right in the morwe tyde,
Unto a gardyn that was ther bisyde,
In which that they hadde maad hir ordinaunce
Of vitaille, and of oother purveiaunce,
They goon and pleye hem al the longé day;
And this was on the sixté morwe of May,
Which May hadde peynted with his softé shoures
This gardyn, ful of levés and of flourés,
And craft of mannés hand so curiously
Arrayéd hadde this gardyn, treweley,
That nevere was ther gardyn of swich prys
But if it were the verry Paradys.
The odour of flourés and the fresshè sighte
Woldé han makèd any hertè lighte
That eve was born, but if to greet siknesse,
Or to greet sorwè, helde it in distresse,
So ful it was of beautee with plesaunce.

At after dyner gonnè they to daunce,
And synge also, save Dorigen allone,
Which made alwey hir compleint and hir moone,
For she ne saugh hym on the dauncè go
That was hir housbonde, and hir love also;
But nathèles she moste a tyme abyde
And with good hopè letè hir sorwe slyde.

Upon this daunce, amongès othere men,
Dauncèd a squier biforn Dorigen,
That fressher was, and jolyer of array,
As to my doom, than is the monthe of May;
He syngeth, daunceth, passynge any man
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.

Therwith he was, if men sholde hym discryve,
Oon of the bestè farynge man on lyve,
Yong, strong, right vertuous, and riche and wys,
And wel biloved, and holden in greet prys.

And, shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,
Unwityng of this Dorigen at al,
This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
Which that y-clepèd was Aurelius,
Hadde loved hire best of any créature
Two yeer and moore, as was his àventuere;
But nevère dorste he tellen hire his grevaunce;
Withouten coppe he drank al his penaunce.
He was despeyréd, nothyng dorste he seye,
Save in his songés somewhat wolde he wreye.
His wo, as in a general compleynyng;
He seyde he lovede, and was biloved no thyng.
Of swich matéré made he manye layes,
Songés, compleintés, roundels, virelayes;
How that he dorsté nat his sorwe telle,
But langwissheth as a furye dooth in helle;
And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.
In oother manere than ye heere me seye
Ne dorste he nat to hire his wo biwreye,
Save that paráventure somtyme at dâunces,
Ther yongé folk kepén hir observaunces,
It may wel be he lookéd on hir face
In swich a wise as man that asketh grace;
But no thyng wisté she of his entente;
Nathelees it happéd, er they thennés wente,
By-causé that he was híre neighebour;
And was a man of worshippe and honour,
And hadde y-knownen hym of tymé yoore,
They fille in speche and forthé, moore and moore,
Unto this purpos drough Aurelius.
And whan he saugh his tyme he saydé thus:
"Madame," quod he, "by God that this world
made,

941. tellen, Camb.3 telle. 950. furye, Heng.4 fuyre, fire,
perhaps a better reading.
944. wreye, betray. 965. drough, drew.
So that I wiste it myghte youre herté glade,
I wolde that day that youre Arveragus
Wente over the see, that I, Aurelius, 
Hadde went ther nevere I sholde have come agayn;
For wel I woot my servyce is in vayn,
My gerdoun is but brestyng of myn herte.
Madamé, reweth upon my peynés smerte,
For with a word ye may me sleen or save;
Heere at youre feete God wolde that I were grave!
I ne Havee, as now, no leyser moore to seye,—
Have mercy, sweete, or ye wol do me deye !"  
She gan to looke upon Aurelius:
"Is this your wyl," quod she, "and sey ye thus?
Nevere erst," quod she, "ne wiste I what ye mente;"
But now, Aurelie, I knowe youre entente,—
By thilké God that gaf me soule and lyf!
Ne shal I nevere been untrewé wyf,
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit,
I wol been his to whom that I am knyt!
Taak this for wynal answere, as for me;"
But after that in pley thus seydé she:
"Aurelie," quod she, "by heighé God above!
Yet wolde I graunte yow to been youre love,
Syn I yow se so pitously complayne.
Looké, what day that endélong Britayne,
Ye remeve alle the rokkés, stoon by stoon,
That they ne letté shipe ne boot to goon,—

994. lette, hinder.
I seye whan ye han maad the coost so clene
Of rokkës, that ther nys no stoon y-sene,
Thanne wol I love yow best of any man.
Have heer my trouthe, in al that evere I kan!
"Is ther noon oother grace in yow?" quod he.
"No, by that Lord," quod she, "that makëd me!
For wel I woot that it shal never bityde.
Lat swichë folies out of youre hertë slyde;
What deyntee sholde a man han in his lyf
For to go love another mannës wyf,
That hath hir body whan so that hym lyketh?"

Aurelius ful oftë soorë siketh.
Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,
And with a sorweful herte he thus anwerde:
"Madame," quod he, "this were an impossible,
Thanne moot I dye of sodeyn deth horrible!"
And with that word he turnëd hym anon.

Tho coome hir othere freendës many oon,
And in the aleyes romeden up and doun,
And no thyng wiste of this conclusioun;
But sodeynly bigonné revel newe,
Til that the brightë sonné loste his hewe,
For thorisonte hath reft the sonne his lyght,—
This is as muche to seye, as it was nyght;
And hoom they goon in joye and in solas,
Save oonly wrecche Aurelius, allas!
He to his hous is goon with sorweful herte;
He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterte,
Hym seméd that he felte his herté colde.
Up to the hevene hise handés he gan holde,
And on hise knowé, bare he sette hym doun,
And in his ravyng seyde his orisoun.
For verray wo out of his wit he breyde,
He nyysté what he spak, but thus he seyde.
With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigoné
Unto the goddes, and first unto the sonne.

He seyde, "Appollo, god and governour,
Of every plaunté, herbé, tree and flour,
That gevest after thy declinacioun
To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun;
As thyn herberwe chaungeth lowe or heighe;
Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable eighe
On wrecbus Aurelie, which that am but lorn!
Lo, lord, my lady hath my deeth y-swnorn
Withouté gilt; but thy benignytee
Upon my dedly herte have som pitee;
For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest
Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.
Now vouchethsauf that I may yow devyse
How that I may been holpen and in what wyse.

"Youre blissful suster, Lucina the sheéne,
That of the see is chief goddesse and queene,—
Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
Yet emperisse aboven hym is she,—

1025. knowes, knees. 1037. that, om. E.
1027. breyde, went suddenly. 1044. holpen, Heng. 8 holpe.
1035. herberwe, lodging. 1045. Lucina, or Diana, the moon.
1036. eighe, eye. sheene, beautiful.
Ye knowe wel, lord, that right as hir desir
Is to be quyked, and lightned of youre fir,
For which she folweth yow ful bisily,
Right so the see desireth naturelly
To folwen hire, as she that is goddesse,
Bothe in the see and ryveres moore and lesse.
Wherfore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste,
Do this mirâcle, or do myn hertè breste;
That now next at this opposicioun,
Which in the signeshal be of the Leoun,
As preieth hire so greet a flood to brynge,
That fyve sadme at the leeste it oversprynge
The hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne;
And lat this flood endurè yerès twayne,
Thanne certès to my lady may I seye,
‘ Holdeth youre heste, the rokkès been aweye.’

"Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me;
Preye hire she go no faster cours than ye;
I seyè, preyeth your suster that she go
No faster cours than ye thise yerès two;
Thanne shal she been evene attè fulle alway,
And spryng flood lastè bothè nyght and day;
And, but she vouchésauf in swich manere
To grauntè me my sovereign lady deere,
Prey hire to synken every rok adoun
Into hir owene dirkè regioun
Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth inne.

1060. *sadme*, fathoms.
1064. *Holdeth youre heste*, keep your promise.

1074. Under her name of Hecate Diana ruled also in hell.
Or nevere mo shal I my lady wynne.
Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot seke,—
Lord Phæbus, se the teeris on my cheke,
And of my peyne have som compassioun!"
And with that word in swowne he fil adoun,
And longë tyme he lay forth in a trauence.

His brother, which that knew of his penaunce,
Up caughte hym, and to bedde he hath hym
broght.
Dispeyrëd in this torment and this thoght,
Lete I this woful créaturë lye;
Chese he, for me, wher he wol lyve or dye.

Arveragus with heele and greet honour,
As he that was of chivalrie the flour,
Is comen hoom, and othere worthy men.
O, blisful artow now, thou Dorigen!
That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne armes,
The fresshë knyght, the worthy man of armes,
That loveth thee as his owene hertës lyf.
Nothyng list hym to been ymaginatyf,
If any wight had spoke, whil he was oute,
To hire of love; he hadde of it no doute.
He noght entendeth to no swich mateere,
But daunceth, justeth, maketh hire good cheere;
And thus in joye and blisse I lete hem dwelle,
And of the sike Aurelius wol I telle.

In langour and in torment furyus,

1087. heele, health. 1100. sike, sick.
1096. he hadde of it, Corp. he made ther-of. 1100. wol I, E3 I wol yow.
Two yeer and moore, lay wrecche Aurelyus
Er any foot he myghte on erthé gon;
Ne confort in this tymé hadde he noon,
Save of his brother, which that was a clerk.
He knewe of al this wo and al this werk,
For to noon oother créature certeyn,
Of this matere he dorste no word seyn;
Under his brest he baar it moore secree
Than evere dide Pamphilus for Galathee.
His brest was hool withouté for to sene,
But in his herte was the arwé kene;
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
In surgerye is perileous the cure,
But men myghte touche the arwe, or come therby.

His brother weepe and wayléd pryvély,
Til atté laste hym fil in remembraunce
That whiles he was at Orliens in Fraunce,—
As yongé clerkés, that been lykerous
To reden artés that been curious,
Seken in every halké and every herne
Particuler sciénces for to lerne,—
He hym remembred that, upon a day,
At Orliens in studie a book he say
Of magyk natureel, which his felawe,
That was that tymé a bacheler of lawe,—

1110. Pamphilus, etc., E gives the quotation "Vulneror et clausum porto subpectore telum," the opening line of the 13th century (?) poem of Pamphilus de Amore, of which Galatea was the heroine.
1113. sursanure, a wound healed on its surface.
1119. lykerous, desirous.
1121. halké and herne, nook and corner.
Al were he ther to lerne another craft,—
Hadde privély upon his desk y-laft,
Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns
Touchynge the eighte and twenty mansioouns
That longen to the moone, and swich folye
As in oure dayés is nat worth a flye,—
For hooly chirchés feith, in oure bileve,
Ne suffreth noon illusion us to greve;
And whan this book was in his remembraunce,
Anon for joye his herté gan to daunce,
And to hymself he seydé pryvély,
"My brothershal be warisshed hastily,
For I am siker that ther be sciénces
By whiche men maken diverse apparences,
Swiche as thise subtile tregetourés pleye;
For ofte at feestés have I wel herd seye
That tregetours withinne an hallé large
Have maad come in a water and a barge,
And in the hallé rowen up and doun.
Somtyme hath seméd come a grym leoun,
And somtyme flourés sprynge as in a mede;
Somtyme a vyne, and grapés white and rede;
Somtyme a castel, al of lym and stoon,
And whan hym lykéd vowyded it anoon,—
Thus seméd it to every mannés sighte.
Now thanne conclude I thus, that if I myghte
At Orliens som oold felawe y-fynde,
That hadde these moonés mansions in mynde,
Or oother magyk natureel above,
He sholde wel make my brother han his love;
For with an apparence a clerk may make,
To mannês sighte, that alle the rokkês Blake
Of Britaigne weren y-voyded everichon,
And shippés by the brynkê comen and gon;
And in swich forme enduren a wowke or two.
Thanne were my brother warisshed of his wo,
Thanne moste she nedês holden hire bieste,
Or ellês he shal shame hire atté leeste.”

What sholde I make a lenger tale of this?
Unto his brotheres bed he comen is,
And swich confort he gaf hym for to gon
To Orliens, that he up stirte anon,
And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare
In hope for to been lissed of his care.

Whan they were come almoost to that citee,
But if it were a two furlong or thre,
A yong clerk romynge by hymself they mette,
Which that in Latyn thriftily hem grette,
And after that he seyde a wonder thyng:
“I knowe,” quod he, “the cause of youre
comyng,”—

And er they ferther any footé wente,
He tolde hem al that was in hire entente.

This Briton clerk hym askêd of felawes
The whiche that he had knowe in oldê dawes;

1161. wowke (week), Heng.² 1170. lissed, relieved; Corp.²
day, Corp.³ yeer.
y-lissed.
1170. for, om. Corp.³ 1180. dawes, days.
And he anserde hym that they dede were, For which he weep ful ofté many a teere.
    Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte anon,
And forth with this magicien is he gon
Hoom to his hous, and maden hem wel at ese;
Hem lakkéd no vitaille that myghte hem plese,
So wel arrayéd hous as ther was oon
Aurelius in his lyf saugh nevere noon.
    He shewed hym, er he wenté to sopeer,
Forestés, parkés ful of wilde deer;
Ther saugh he hertés with hir hornés hye,
The gretteste that were evere seyn with eye,—
He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with houndes,
And somme with arwés blede of bittré woundes.
    He saugh, whan voyded were thise wilde deer,
Thise fauconers upon a faith ryver,
That with hir haukés han the heroun slayn.
Tho saugh he knyghtés justyng in a playn,
And after this he dide hym swich plesaunce
That he hym shewed his lady on a daunce,
On which hymselfe he dauncéd, as hym thoughte;
And whan this maister that this magyk wroughte
Saugh it was tyme, he clappe hise handés two,
And, farewel! al oure revel is y-do.
And yet remoeved they nevere out of the hous
Whil they saugh al this sighté merveillous,
But in his studie, ther as hise bookés be,
They seten stille, and no wight but they thre.

1184. *forth with*, E³ place *forth after magicien.*
1204. *is y-do*, E³ was *ago.*
To hym this maister calleth his squier,
And sayde hym thus: "Is redy oure soper?"
Almōost an houre it is, I undertake,
Sith I yow bad oure soper for to make,
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me
Into my studie, ther as my bookēs be."

"Sire," quod this squier, "whan it liketh yow
It is al redy, though ye wol right now."
"Go we thanne soupe," quod he, "as for the beste;
This amorous folk somtyme moote han hir reste."

At after soper fille they in tretee
What sommé sholde this maistrēs gerdoun be
To remoeven alle the rokke's of Britayne,
And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of Sayne.

He made it straunge, and swoor, so God hym save!
Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde nat have,
Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat goon.

Aurelius, with blisful herte anoon,
Answerdē thus: "Fy on a thousand pound!
This wyde world, which that men seye is round,
I wolde it geve, if I were lord of it!
This bargayn is ful dryve, for we been knyt.
Yeshal be payéd trewely, by my trouthe,
But looketh now, for no negligence or slouthe
Ye tarie us heere no lenger than to morwe."

"Nay," quod this clerk, "have heer my feith to borwe."

1224. Here H begins again.  
1230. *knyt*, agreed.  
1230. *dryve*, driven, completed.  
1234. *to borwe*, in pledge.
To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym leste, 1235
And wel ny al that nyght he hadde his reste.
What for his labour, and his hope of blisse,
His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.

Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,
To Britaigne tooke they the righté way,— 1240
Aurelius and this magicien bisyde;
And been descended ther they wolde abyde;
And this was, as thise bookes me remembre,
The coldé, frosty sesoun of Decembre.

Phebus wox old, and hewéd lyk latoun, 1245
That in his hooté declýnacioun
Shoon as the burnéd gold, with stremés brighté;
But now in Capricorn adoun he lighté,
Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.
The bittré frostès with the sleet and reyn 1250
Destroyéd hath the grene in every yerd;
Janus sit by the fyr with double berd,
And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn;
Biforn hym stant brawn of the tusked swyn,
And "Nowel" crieth every lusty man. 1255

Aurelius in al that evere he kan
Dooth to his maister chiere and reverence,
And preyeth hym to doon his diligence
To bryngen hym out of his peynés smerte,
Or with a swerd that he wolde slitte his herte. 1260

This subtil clerk swich routhe had of this man,
That nyght and day he spedde hym that he kan
To wayten a tyme of his conclusioun, 1263
This is to seye, to maken illusioun 1265
By swich an apparence or jogelrye,—
I ne kan no termés of astrologye,—
That she and every wight sholde wene and seye
That of Britaigne the rokkês were aweye,
Or ellis they were sonken under grounde.
So atté laste he hath his tyme y-founde
To maken his japês and his wrecchednesse
Of swich a supersticious cursednesse.
Hise tables Tolletanês forth he brought
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakkéd nought,
Neither his collect, ne his expans yeiris,
Né hisse rootês, ne hisse othere geeris,
As been his centris, and hise argumentz,
And hise proporciones convenientz
For hise equacionz in evey thyng;
And by his eighté speere in his wirkyng

1263. wayten, H4 wayte.
1264. maken, H5 make.
1265. an, E a.
1273. tables Tolletanes, the astronomical tables, drawn up by order of Alphonso X. of Castille, and primarily adapted to the city of Toledo.
1275. collect, a table of a planet’s motion during a round number of years, as opposed to the expans, or separate, years.
1276. Ne his rootes, etc. In his edition of the Astrolabe Dr. Skeat explains root as the tabulated quantity belonging to a given fixed date from which corresponding quantities for other dates can be reckoned. Arguments are the angles on which tabulated quantities depend.
1280. And by his eighte speere, the astrologer was calculating the precession of the equinoxes by the distance between the true equinoctial point—the head of the fixed Aries—and the nearest convenient bright star, for which Alnath was chosen.
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above,
That in the nynte speere considered is;
Ful subtilly he hadde kalkuled al this.

Whan he hadde founde his firsté mansioun,
He knew the remenaunt by proporcioun,
And knew the arisyng of his mooné weil,
And in whos face, and terme, and everydeel,
And knew ful weel the moonés mansioun
Acordaunt to his operacioun;
And knew also his eother observaunce,
For swiche illusiouns and swiche meschaunces
As hethen folk useden in thilké dayes;
For which no lenger makéd he delayes;
But thurgh his magik for a wyke or twewe
It semed that alle the rokkés were aweye.

Aurelius, which that yet despraired is
Wher he shal han his love or fare amys,
Awaiteth nyght and day on this myrácle;
And whan he knew that ther was noon obstácle,
That voyded were thise rokkés everychon,
Doun to his maistrés feet he fil anon,
And sayde, “I, wouful, wrecche Aurelius,
Thanké yow, lord, and lady myn, Venus,
That me han holpen fro my carés colde;”
And to the temple his wey forth hath he holde,
Where as he knew he sholde his lady see;

(see Skeat’s ed. of Astrolabe).
H reads thre for eighte, and
fourthe for nynte, wrongly.

1297. that yet, H om. that,
Heng.8 om. yet.
And whan he saugh his tyme anon right hee,
With dreadful herte and with ful humble cheere,
Salewed hath his sovereyn lady deere.

"My righté lady," quod this woful man,
"Whom I moost drede, and love as I best kan,
And lothest were of al this world displesse,
Nere it that I for yow have swich disese
That I moste dyen heere at youre foot anón; 1315
Noght wolde I telle .how me is wo bigon,
But certés, outhere moste I dye or pleyne.
Ye sle me giltélees for verray peyne,
But of my deeth, thogh that ye have no routhe,
Avyseth yow, er that ye breke youre trouthe. 1320

Repenteth yow, for thilké God above,
Er ye me sleen by-cause that I yow love,
For, madame, wel ye woot what ye han hight,—
Nat that I chalange anythyng of right,
Of yow, my sovereyn lady, but youre grace,— 1325
But in a gardyn yond, at swich a place,
Ye woot right wel what ye bighighten me,
And in myn hand youre trouthe plighten ye
To love me best,—God woot ye seydé so,
Al be that I unworthy be therto. 1330

Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,
Moore than to save myn hertés lyf right now,
I have do so as ye comanded me,
And, if ye vouchésauf, ye may go see. 1334

1310. Salewed, saluted.
1311. righté, H sovereyn, H. owne.
1317. outhere, either.
1318. giltélees, E4 giltéles.
1320. rightful.
Dooth as yow list, have youre bihest in mynde,
For, quyk or deed, right there ye shal me fynde.
In yow lith al to do me lyve or deye,
But wel I woot the rokkês been aweye."

He taketh his leve and she astonied stood;
In al hir facé nas a drope of blood,
She wendé nevere han come in swich a trappe!
"Allas!" quod she, "that evere this sholde happe,
For wende I nevere by possibilitee,
That swich a monstre or merveille myghte be;
It is agayns the proces of nature."

And hoom she goth a sorweful créature,—
For verray feere unnethé may she go.
She wepeth, wailleth al a day or two,
And swowneth, that it routhé was to see;
But why it was to no wight toldé shee,
For out of towne was goon Arveragus.
But to hisell she spak, and seydé thus,
With facé pale and with ful sorweful cheer,
In hire compleynt as ye shal after heere.

"Allas!" quod she, "on thee, Fortune, I pleyne,
That unwar wrappéd hast me in, thy cheyne,
For which tescapé woot I no socour,

1355. The next 102 lines in E have the marginal heading "The compleynt of Dorigene ageyns Fortune," and are accompanied by side-notes, summed up in the last "singulas has historias et plures hanc materiam concernentes recitat beatus Ieronimus contra Iouini-anum in primo suo libro capitulo 39" (ch. 41, § 306 sqq. in Migne). The length of this complaint is the only blot on the story.
Save oonly deeth or ellés dishonour.
Oon of thise two bihoveth me to chese,
But nathëles yet hawe I levere lese
My lif, than of my body have a shame,
Or knowe myselven fals, or lese my name;
And with my deth I may be quyt, y-wis;
Hath ther nat many a noble wyf er this,
And many a mayde, y-slayn hir self, allas!
Rather than with hir body doon trespas?

"Yis, certës, lo, thise stories beren witnesse
Whan Thretty Tirauntz ful of cursednesse
Hadde slayn Phidoun, in Athenës at feste,
They comanded hise doghtres for tarest,
And bryngen hem biforn hem in despit,
Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delit;
And in hir fadrès blood they made hem daunce
Upon the pavement,—God geve hem myschaunce!
For which thise woful maydens, ful of drede,
Rather than they wolde lese hir maydenhede
They privëly been stirt into a welle,
And dreynte hemselven, as the bookës telle.

"They of Mecenè leete enquire and seke,
Of Lacedomye, fifty maydens eke,
On whiche they wolden doon hir lecherye,
But was ther noon of al that compaignye
That she nas slayn, and with a good entente
Chees rather for to dyé, than assente
To been oppressed of hir maydenhede.

1385 Why sholde I thanne to dyé been in drede?

" Lo, eek the tiraunt Aristóclides,

That loved a mayden heet Stymphalides,

Whan that hir sader slayn was on a nyght,

Unto Dianês temple goth she right,

And hente the ymage in hir handés two,

Fro which ymage wolde she nevere go:

No wight ne myghte hir handes of it arace

Til she was slayn, right in the selvé place.

"Now sithe that maydens hadden swich despit

To been defouled with mannês foul delit,

Wel oghte a wyf rather hirselen sleeper

Than be defouled, as it thynketh me.

"What shal I seyn of Hasdrubalês wyf

That at Cartage birafte hirself hir lyf?

For whan she saugh that Romayns wan the toun,

She took hir children alle, and skipte adoun

Into the fyr, and chees rather to dye

Than any Romayn dide hire vileynye.

"Hath nat Lucresse y-slayn hirself, allas!

1405 At Romê, whan [that] she oppresséd was

Of Tarquyn? for hire thoughte it was a shame

To lyven whan she haddé loste hir name.

"The sevne maydens of Melesie, also,

Han slayn hemself for verray drede and wo,

1410 Rather than folk of Gawle hem sholde oppresse,—
Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,  
Koude I now telle as touchynge this mateere. 

"Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf.so deere  
Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to glyde  
In Habradates woundés depe and wyde,  
And seyde, 'My body, at the leesté way,  
Thershal no wight defoulen, if I may.'

"What sholde I mo ensamples heer-of sayn?  
Sith that so manye han hemselven slayn  
Wel rather than they wolde defouléd be,  
I wol conclude that it is bet for me  
To sleen my self than been defouléd thus.  
I wol be trewe unto Arveragus,  
Or rather sleen myself in some manere,  
As dide Democionès doghter deere  
By-cause that she wolde nat defouléd be.  
O Cedasus, it is ful greet pitee  
To reden how thy doghtren deyde, allas!  
That slowe hemself for swich a manere cas.  
As greet a pitee was it, or wel moore,  
The Theban mayden that for Nichanore  
Hirselven slow, right for swich manere wo.  
Another Theban mayden dide right so.  
For oon of Macidonye hadde hire oppressed  
She with hir deeth hir maydenhede redressed.

1414. *Habradate*, see Xenophon, *Cyropedia*, lib. vii.,  
for the story of Abra- 
dates and Panthea.  
1426. *Demociones doghter*, on  
the death of her be-
trothed, Leosthenes, she  
killed herself rather than  
take another as husband.  
1432. *Nichanore*, refused by the  
Theban maiden because  
he was her conqueror.
What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,  
That for swich cas biraft he himself hir lyf?  
How trewe eek was to Alcebiades  
His love, that rather for to dyen chees  
Than for to suffre his body unburyed be?  
Lo, which a wyf was Alcesté," quod she.  
"What seith Omer of goode Penalope?  
Al Grecé knoweth of hire chastitee.  
Pardee, of Laodomya is writen thus,  
That whan at Troie was slayn Protheselaus,  
No lenger wolde she lyve after his day.  
The same of noble Porcia telle I may;  
Withouté Brutus koudé she nat lyve,  
To whom she hadde al hool hir herté geve.  
The parfit wyfhod of Arthemesie  
Honuréd is thurgh al the Barbarie.  
O Teuta, queene, thy wyfly chastitee  
To allé wyvés may a mirour bee.  
The samé thyng I seye of Bilyea,  
Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria."  
Thus pleynéd Dorigene a day or tweye,  
Purposyng evere that she woldé deye;  
But nathélees upon the thriddé nyght  

1437. Nicerates wyf, at the time of the Thirty Tyrants.  
1440. that, om. E².  
1445. Laodomya, E² Lace-domya.  
1451. Arthemesie, of Caria, wife of Mausolus, whose tomb she built.  
1453. Teuta, Queen of Illyria.  
1454, 1455. Known only from E. The ladies are all mentioned by S. Jerome. Bilia was the wife of Duilius, consul B.C. 260; Rhodogone, daughter of Darius, killed her nurse for suggesting a second marriage.  
1457. pleynde, E pleyne.
Hoom cam Arveragus, this worthy knyght,
And asked hire why that she weepe so soore,
And she gan wepen ever lenger the moore.

"Alas!" quod she, "that evere I was born!
Thus have I seyd," quod she, "thus have I sworn,"

And toold hym al, as ye han herd before,
It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore.
This housbonde, with glad chiere, in frendly wyse,
Answerde and seyde as I shal yow devyse,
"Is ther oght ellës, Dorigen, but this?"
"Nay, nay," quod she, "God helpe me so as wys!

This is to muche, and it were Goddës wille."
"Ye, wyf," quod he, "lat sleepe that is stille,
It may be wel paráventure yet to day;
Ye shul youre trouthe holden, by my fay!
For God so wisly have mercy upon me,
I hadde wel levere y-stikëd for to be,
For verray love which that I to yow have,
But if ye sholde youre trouthe kepe and save!
Trouthe is the hyeste thyng that man may kepe,"
But with that word he brast anon to wepe,

And seyde, "I yow forbode, up peyne of deeth,
That nevere whil thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,

1470. as wys, surely.
1473. paráventure, H per-aunter, which gives the pronunciation.
1476. y-stikëd, stabbed.
1480. brast, broke out; H gan.
1481. of, om. E.
To no wight telle thou of this aventure,—  
As I may best I wol my wo endure,—  
Ne make no contenance of hevynesse  
That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse.”

And forth he cleped a squier and a mayde;  
“Gooth forth, anon, with Dorigen,” he sayde,  
“And bryngeth hire to swich a place, anon.”

They take hir leve and on hir wey they gon,  
But they ne wisté why she thider wente:  
He noldë no wight tellen his entente.

Parávente an heepe of yow, y-wis,  
Wol holden hym a lewed man in this,  
That he wol putte his wyf in jupartie.  
Herkneth the tale, er ye upon hire crie;  
She may have bëttrë fortune than yow semeth;  
And, whan that ye han herd the talé, demeth.

This squier, which that highte Aurelius,  
On Dorigen that was so amorus,  
Of aventuré happéd hire to meete  
Amydde the toun, right in the quykkest strete,  
As she was bown to goon the wey forth right  
Toward the gardyn, ther as she had hight;  
And he was to the gardynward also;  
For wel he spyéd whan she woldë go  
Out of hir hous to any maner place;  
But thus they mette, of aventure or grace,  
And he saleweth hire with glad entente,
And asked of hire whiderward she wente; And she answerdé, half as she were mad, “Unto the gardyn, as myn housbonde bad, My trouthe for to holde, alas! alas!”

Aurelius gan wondren on this cas, And in his herte hadde greet compassioun Of hire and of hire lamentacioun, And of Arveragus, the worthy knyght, That bad hire holden al that she had hight, So looth hym was his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe;

And in his herte he caughte of this greet routhe, Considerynge the beste on every syde, That fro his lust yet were hym levere abyde, Than doon so heigh a cherlyssh wrecchednesse Agayns franchise and allé gentillesse, For which in fewe wordés seyde he thus:

“Madame, seyeth to youre lord, Arveragus, That sith I se his greté gentillesse To yow, and eek I se wel youre distresse, That him were levere han shame,—and that were routhe,—

Than ye to me sholde breké thus youre trouthe, I have wel levere evere to suffre wo, Than I departe the love bitwix yow two. I yow releesse, madame, into youre hond, Quyt every surémement and every bond That ye han maad to me as heer biforn,

Sith thilké tymé which that ye were born.
My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never repreve
Of no bieste, and heere I take my leve,
As of the treweste and the besté wyf,
That evere yet I knew in al my lyf.  
But every wyf be war of hire bieste;
On Dorigene remembrith, atte leeste.
Thus kan a squier doon a gentil dede
As wel as kan a knyght, withouten drede.”

She thonketh hym upon hir knees al bare,
And hoom unto hir housbonde is she fare,
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd me sayd;
And be ye siker he was so weel apayd
That it were impossible me to wryte.
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte?

Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf
In sovereyn blissé leden forth hir lyf;
Nevere eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene.
He cherisseth hire, as though she were a queene,
And she was to hym trewe for everemoore.
Of thisé folk ye gete of me namoore.

Aurelius, that his cost hath al forlorn,
Curseth the tyme that evere he was born.
“Alas!” quod he, “allas, that I bighyte
Of puréd gold a thousand pound of wighte
Unto this philosophre! How shal I do?
I se namoore but that I am fordo;
Myn heritagé moot I nedés selle,
And been a beggere; heere may I nat dwelle

1548. apayd, pleased.
1560. puréd, refined.
And shamen al my kynrede in this place,
But I of hym may gete bettre grace;
But nathélees I wole of hym assaye
At certeyn dayés yeer by yeer to paye,
And thanke hym of his greté curteisy.
My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol nat lye."

With herté soor he gooth unto his cofre,
And broghté gold unto this philosophre,
The value of fyve hundred pound, I gesse,
And hym bisecheth, of his gentillesse,
To graunte hym dayés of the remenaunt,
And seydé, "Maister, I dar wel make avaunt
I faillé nevere of my trouthe as yit,
For sikerly my detté shal be quyty
Towardés yow, how evere that I fare
To goon a-begged in my kirtle bare;
But wolde ye vouchésauf, upon seuretee,
Two yeer, or thre, for to respiten me,
Thanne were I wel, for ellés moot I selle
Myn heritage, ther is namore to telle."

This philosophre sobrely answerde,
And seydé thus, whan he thise wordés herde:
"Have I nat holdé covenant unto thee?"
"Yes, certés, wel and trewely," quod he.
"Hastow nat had thy lady as thee liketh?"
"No, no," quod he, and sorwefully he siketh.
"What was the causé; tel me if thou kan."
Aurelius his tale anon bigan,
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd bifoore;
It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore.

He seide, "Arveragus, of gentillesse,
Hadde levere dye in sorwe and in distresse,
Than that his wyf were of hir trouthe fals;"
The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde hym als,—
How looth hire was to been a wikked wyf,
And that she levere had lost that day hir lyf,
And that hir trouthe she swoor thurgh innocence,
She nevere erst hadde herd speke of apparence;
"That made me han of hire so greet pitee,
And right as frely as he sente hire me,
As frely sente I hire to hym ageyn;
This is al and som, ther is namoore to seyn."

This philosophre answérde, "Leevè brother,
Everich of yow dide gentilly til oother;
Thou art a squier, and he is a knyght,
But God forbidè, for his blisful myght,
But if a clerk koude doon a gentil dede,
As wel as any of yow, it is no drede.

"Sire, I releessé thee thy thousand pound
As thou right now were cropen out of the ground,
Ne nevere er now ne haddest known me;
For, sire, I wol nat taken a peny of thee
For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.
Thou hast y-payéd wel for my vitaille;

1604, 1605. H reads: By-cause
hir housbond sente hir to
me, And ryght as frely,
etc.
1606. is (1), om. E².
1606. al and som, the whole story.
1611. a (2), H² as.
1614. cropen, crept.
It is ynogh, and farewel, have good day!"
And took his hors, and forth he goth his way. 1620

Lordynges, this questioun, thanne, wolde I aske now,
Which was the moosté fre, as thynketh yow?
Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende.
I kan namoore, my tale is at an ende.

1620. Chaucer has forgotten the philosopher to that Aurelius came to the philosopher, not 1621. thanne, om. H3.
GROUP G

SECOND NUN’S TALE

The Prologue of the Seconde Nonnes Tale

The ministre and the norice unto vice
Which that men clepe in Englissh ydelnesse,
That porter at the gate is of delices,
To eschue, and by hire contrarie hire oppresse,—
That is to seyn, by leveful bisynesse,—
Wel oghten we to don al our entente,
Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us hente,

For he that with his thousand cordës slye
Continuellly us waiteth to biclappe,
Whan he may man in ydelnesse espye,

Seconde Nonnes Tale: a translation, at first close, afterwards free, of the life of S. Cecilia in the Legenda Aurea of Jacobus de Voragine. The stanzas on idleness were probably suggested by the Prologue of the French translator, Jehan de Vignay, but in the Tale Chaucer follows the Latin.

3. porter, as in the Roman de la Rose.
5. at, E5 of.
7. hente, seize; E3 shente, harm.
9. biclappe, beat.
He kan so lightly cacche hym in his trappe,
Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,
He nys nat war the feend hath hym in honde:
Wel oghte us werche, and ydlenesse withstonde.

And though men dradden nevere for to dye,
Yet seen men wel by resoun, doutelees,
That ydlenesse is roten slogardyke,
Of which ther nevere comth no good encrees;
And seen that slouthe hir holdeth in a lees
Oonly to slepe and for to ete and drynke,
And to devouren al that othere swynk.

And for to putte us fro swich ydlenesse,
That cause is of so greet confusioun,
I have heer doon my feithful bisynesse,
After the Legende, in translacioun,
Right of thy glorious lif and passioun,
Thou with thy gerland wroght with rose and lilie,—
Thee, meene I, mayde and martir seint Cecilie.

Invocacio ad Mariam

And thow that flour of virginës art alle,
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to write;
To thee, at my bigynnyng, first I call,

12. *lappe*, the border or fringe of anything.
18. *encrees*, *E₂ n'encrees*.

28. *martir*, *E mooder*.

sithen(*s*).
Thou confort of us wrecches, do me endite
Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh hire merite,
The eterneel lyf, and of the feend victorie
As man may after reden in hire storie.

Thow mayde and mooter, doghter of thy sone,
Thow welle of mercy, synful soulés cure,
In whom that God for bountee chees to wonne,
Thow humble, and heigh over every creature,
Thow nobledest so ferforth oure nature,
That no desdeyn the Makere hadde of kynde
His sone in blood and flessh to clothe and wynde.

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis
Took mannés shape the eterneel Love and Pees,
That of the tryné compas lord and gyde is,
Whom ethe, and see, and hevene, out of relees
Ay·heryen ; and thou virgine wemmélees
Baar of thy body, and dweltest maydên pure,
The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence,
With mercy, goodnesse, and with swich pitee,
That thou that art the sonne of excellence
\* Nat oonly helpest hem that preyen thee,
\* But often tyme, of thy benygnytee,
\* Ful frely, er that men thynd help biseche
\* Thou goost biforn and art hir lyvës leche.

Now help, thow meeke and blisful faire mayde,
Me flemèd wrecche in this desert of galle;
Thynk on the womman Cananee, that sayde
That whelpes eten somme of the crommes alle
That from hir lordës table been y-falle,
And though that I, unworthy sone of Eve,
Be synful, yet acceptë my bileve.

And for that feith is deed withouten werkis,
So, for to werken, gif me wit and space,
That I be quit fro thennës that moost derk is.
O thou that art so fair and ful of grace,
Be myn advocat in that heighë place,
Theras withouten ende is songe Osanne,
Thow Cristës mooder, doghter deere of Anne!

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte,
That troubled is by the contagioun
Of my body, and also by the wighte
Of erthely lust and fals affeccioun!

56. and art hir lyvës leche, (cp. l. 78, reden that I write)
    Chaucer's addition.
58. flemèd, fugitive.
62. sone of Eve, the phrase
    shows that this legend was not
    written as one of the Canterbury
    Tales.
O havene of refut, O salvacioun
Of hem that been in sorwe and in distresse,
Now helpe, for to my werk I wol me dresse!

Yet preye I yow that reden that I write,
Forgewe me that I do no diligence
This ilké storie subtilly to endite,
For bothe have I the wordés and sentence
Of hym that at the seintès reverence
The storie wroot, and folwen hire legende;
I pray yow that ye wole my werk amende.

*Interpretacio nominis Cecilie*

First wolde I yow the name of Seinte Cecile
Expowne, as men may in hir storie see.
It is to seye in English “hevenes lilie,”
For puré chaastnesse of virginitee,
Or for she whitnesse hadde of honestee,
And grene of conscience, and of good fame
The sooté savour, lilie was hir name;

Or Cecile is to seye “the wey to blynde,"
For she ensample was by good techynge;
Or ellès Cecile, as I writen fynde,
Is joynèd by a manere conjoyynge

75. *refut, refuge.*
81. *sentence, purport.*
85. *yow, om. E.*
87. *hevenes lilie, “cæli lilia.”*

89. *honestee, purity.*
91. *savour, E favour.*
92. *the wey to blynde, “cæcis via.”*
Of "hevene" and "lia," and heere in figurynge
The "hevene" is set for thoght of hoolynesse
And "lia" for hire lastynge bisynesse.

Cecile may eek be seyd in this manere
"Wantyng of blyndnesse," for hir greté light
Of sapience, and for hire thewès cleere;
Or ellés, loo, this maydens name bright
Of "hevene" and "leos" comth, for which by right
Men myghte hire wel the hevene of peple calle,
Ensample of goode and wisé werkés alle.

For "leos" "peple" in English is to seye;
And right as men may in the hevene see
The sonne, and moone, and sterres, every weye,
Right so men goostly in this mayden free
Syen of feith the magnanymyte,
And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,
And sondry werkés brighte of excellence.

And right so as thise philosophres write
That hevene is swift, and round, and eek brennýnge,
Right so was fairé Cecilie the white,
Ful swift and busy evere, in good werkýnge;
And round and hool in good perséverýnge,
And brennyng evere in charite ful brighte:
Now have I yow declaréd what she highte.

96. Latin: "a cælo et lya . . .
ccelum per jugem con-
templationem, lya per
assiduam operationem."
101. thewes, good qualities.
103. leos, Gk. λέως.
110. Syen, see.
111. hool, whole.
Here bigynneth The Seconde Nonnes Tale of the lyf of Seinte Cecile

This mayden bright, Cecile, as hir lif seith, was comen of Romayns and of noble kynde,
And from hir cradel up fostred in the feith
Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir mynde.
She nevere cesséd, as I writen fynde,
Of hir preyere, and God to love and drede,
Bisekynge hym to kepe hir maydenhede.

And whan this mayden sholde unto a man
Y-wedde be, that was ful yong of age,
Which that y-cleped was Valerian,
And day was comen of hir marriage,
She ful devout and humble in hire corage,
Under hir robe of gold that sat ful faire,
Hadde next hire flessh y-clad hire in an haire;

And whil the organs maden melodie,
To God allone in herté thus sang she:
“O Lord, my soule and eek my body gye
Unwemmed, lest that I confounded be;”
And for his love that dyde upon a tree,

125. and God to love and drede, Chaucer’s addition.
131. ful devout, etc., added.
133. haire, hair-shirt.
134. organs, E orgues.
136. gye, guide.
137. Unwemmed, spotless.
138. And for his love, etc., added.
Every seconde or thriddé day she faste
Ay biddynge in hire orisons ful faste.

The nyght cam, and to beddé moste she gon
With hire housbonde, as ofte is the manere,
And pryvély to hym she seyde anon,
"O sweete and wel-bilovéd spouse deere,
Ther is a conseil, and ye wolde it heere,
Which that right fayn I wolde unto yow seye,
So that ye swere ye shul it nat biwreye."

Valerian gan faste unto hire swere
That for no cas, ne thyng that myghté be,
He sholdé nevere mo biwreyen here;
And thanne at erst to hym thus seydé she:
"I have an aungel which that loveth me,
That with greet love, wher so I wake or sleepe,
Is redy ay my body for to kepe;

And if that he may feelen, out of drede,
That ye me touche or love in vileynye,
He right anon wol sle yow with the dede,
And in youre yowthé thus ye sholden dye;
And if that ye in cléné love me gye,
He wol yow loven as me for youre clennesse,
And shewen yow his joye and his brightnesse."
Valerian, corrected as God wolde,  
Answerde agayn, “If I shal trusten thee  
Lat me that aungel se, and hym biholde,  
And if that it a verray angel bee,  
Thanne wol I doon as thou hast prayèd me;  
And if thou love another man, for sothe,  
Right with this swerd thanne wol I sle yow bothe!”

Cecile answerde anon right in this wise:
“If that yow list, the angel shul ye see,  
So that ye trowe in Crist, and yow baptize.  
Gooth forth to *Via Apia,* quod shee,  
“That fro this toun ne stant but milés three,  
And to the pouré folkés that ther dwelle  
Sey hem right thus as that I shal yow telle.”

“Tell hem that I, Cecile, yow to hem sente  
To shewen yow the goode Urban the olde,  
For secree needés, and for good entente;  
And whan that ye Seint Urban han biholde,  
Telle hym the wordés whiche that I yow tolde,  
And whan that he hath purged yow fro synne,  
Thanne shul ye see that angel, er ye twynne.”

Valerian is to the place y-gon,  
And right as hym was taught by his lernynge,

169, 175. *right in this wise, as that I shal yow telle,* says “the third milestone on the Appian road.”
170. *Via Apia,* Chaucer seems to take this as the name of a place. The Latin
172. **needes, E thynge** for good entente, added;  
178. so er ye twynne (depart).
He found this hooly olde Urban anon,
Among the seintes buryeles lotynge;
And he anon, withouten tariynge,
Dide his message; and whan that he it tolde,
Urban for joye his handés gan up holde;

The teiris from his eyen leet he falle.
“Almyghty Lord! O Jhesu Crist,” quod he,
“Sower of chast conseil, hierde of us alle,
The fruyt of thilké seed of chastitee
Thar thou hast sowe in Cecile, taak to thee!
Lo, lyk a bisy bee, withouten gile,
Thee serveth ay thyn owene thral Cecile;

For thilké spousé that she took right now,
Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere
As meke as evère was any lamb, to yow:”
And with that word anon ther gan appere
An oold man, clad in whité clothés cleere,
That hadde a book with lettre of gold, in honde,
And gan bfore Valerian to stonde.

Valerian, as deed, fil doun for drede
Whan he hym saugh, and he up hente hym tho,
And on his book right thus he gan to rede:
“O Lord, o feith, o God, withouten mo;

192. *hierde* (herdsman) of *us alle*, added.
203. Added.
205. *up hente*, uplifted.
O Cristendom, and Fader of alle also,
Aboven alle, and over alle, everywhere;"
This wordès al with gold y-writen were.

Whan this was rad, thanne seyde this oldé man,
"Leevestow this thyng; or no? Sey ye or nay."
"I leeve al this thyng," quod Valerian,
"For oother thyng than this, I dar wel say,
Under the hevenge no wight thynké may."
Tho vanysshed this olde man, he nysté where,
And Pope Urban hym cristned right there.

Valerian gooth hoom and fynt Cecile
Withinne his chambre with an angel stonde.
This angel hadde of roses and of lilie
Córones two, the which he bar in honde;
And first to Cecile, as I understonde,
He gaf that oon, and after gan he take
That oother to Valerian, hir make.

"With body clene, and with unwemmed thoght,
Kepeth ay wel thise córones," quod he;
"Fro paradys to yow have I hem broght,
Ne nevere mo ne shal they roten bee,
Ne lese hir sooté savour, trusteth me;
Ne nevere wight shal seën hem with his eye,
But he be chaast and haté vileynye;

And thow, Valerian, for thow so soone
Assentedest to good conseil also,
Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han thy boone."
"I have a brother," quod Valerian tho,
"That in this world I lovè no man so;
I pray yow that my brother may han grace
To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this place."

The angel seyde, "God liketh thy requeste,
And bothè with the palm of martirdom
Ye shullen come unto his blissful feste;"
And with that word Tiburce his brother coom,
And whan that he the savour undernoom
Which that the roses and the lilies caste,
Withinne his herte he gan to wondre faste;

And seyde, "I wondre, this tyme of the yeer,
Whennès that sootè savour cometh so
Of rose and lilies that I smellè heer;
For though I hadde hem in myne handès two
The savour myghte in me no depper go;
The sweetè smel that in myn herte I fynde
Hath chaungèd me al in another kynde."

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238. *in this place*, "mecum."
243. _undernoom_, perceived.
241. *unto his blissful feste*, "ad
245. Added.
251. "*Ita sum refectus.*"
Valerian sayde, “Two corones han we,
Snow white and roue reed, that shynen cleere,
Whiche that thyne eyen han no myght to see;
And as thou smellest hem thurgh my preyere,
So shaltow seen hem, leevè brother deere,
If it sa be thou wol withouten slouthe
Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe.”

Tiburce answerdè, “Seistow this to me
In soothnesse, or in dreem I herknè this?”
“In dremès,” quod Valerian, “han we be
Unto this tymè, brother myn, y-wis;
But now at erst in trouthe our dwellyng is.”
“How woostow this,” quod Tiburce, “in what wyse?”
Quod Valerian, “That shal I thee devyse.

The aungel of God hath me the trouthe y-taught,
Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wol renye
The ydoles, and be clene, and elles naught.”
(And of the myracle of this corones tweye,
Seint Ambrose in his preface list to seye,—
Solempnely this noble doctour deere
Commendeth it, and seith in this manere:

“The palm of martirdom for to receyve
Seinte Cecile, fulfild of Goddes gifte,
The world and eek hire chambre gan she weyve;
Witnesse Tyburcès and Valerians shrifte,
To which God of his bountee woldé shifte
Córones two of floures wel smellynge,
And made his angel hem the córones brynge; 280

The mayde hath broght thise men to blisse above;
The world hath wist what it is worth certeyn,
Devocioun of chastitee to love.
Tho shewéd hym Cecile, al open and pleyn,
That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in veyn; 285
For they been dombe and therto they been deve,
And chargéd hym hisse ydoles for to leve.

"Who so that troweth nat this, a beest he is,"
Quod tho Tiberce, if that I shal nat lye,
And she gan kisse his brest that herdé this,
And was ful glad he koudé trouthe espye.
"This day I také thee for myn allye,"
Seydé this blissful, fairé maydé, deere,
And after that she seyde as ye may heere:

"Lo, right so as the love of Crist," quod she, 295
"Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in that wise

276. hirechambre,""thalamus."
weyve, forgo.
277. shrifte, confession.
278-280. "Quos, domine, an-
gelica manu odoriferis
floribus coronasti."
281. thise, om. E³.
286. Added.
289. if that I shal nat lye, with
ll. 291, 293, 294, poor
tags.
292. "Hodie te fateor meum
esse cognatum," I own
you are really of my
kin.
Anon for myn allyee heer take I thee,
Syn that thou wolt thyne ydolés despise;
Go with thy brother now, and thee baptise,
And make thee clene so that thou mowe biholde
The angeles face, of which thy brother tolde."  

Tiburce answerde and seydé, "Brother dere,
First tell me whider I shal, and to what man?"
"To whom?" quod he; "com forth with right
   good cheere;
I wol thee lede unto the Pope Urban."
"Til Urban, brother myn Valerian?"
Quod tho Tiburce; "woltow me thider lede?
Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menestow nat Urban," quod he tho,
"That is so ofte dampnéd to be deed,
And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,
And dar nat onés putté forth his heed,
Men sholde hym brennen in a fyr só reed
If he were founde, or that men myghte hym spye,
And we also to bere hym compaignye;  

And whil we seken thilke divinitee,
That is y-hid in hevene pryvély,
Algate y-brend in this world shul we be!"
To whom Cecile answerd boldly,
"Men myghten drenen wel and skilfully
This lyf to lese, myne owene deere brother,
If this were lyvynge oonly, and noon oother;

But ther is bettre lif in oother place,
That nevere shal be lost, ne drede thee noght,
Which Goddës sone us toldë thurgh his grace;
That Fadrës sone hath allè thyng y-wroght,
And al that wroght is with a skilful thoght
The Goost, that fro the Fader gan procede,
Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by myracle, Goddës sone,
Whan he was in this world, declarëd heere
That ther was oother lyf ther men may wonë.

To whom answerde Tiburce, "O suster deere,
Ne seydestow right now in this manere,
'Ther nys but o God, lord in soothfastnesse,'—
And now of three how maystow bere witnesse?"

"That shal I tellë," quod she, "er I go.
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,
So in o beynge of divinitee

319. boldly, added; so myne owene deere brother.
320. skilfully, reasonably.
322. "Si haec sola esset vita."
324-329. ne drede thee noght, with a skilful thoght,
329. Hath sowled, "animavit."
334. 335. in this manere, lord in soothfastnesse, added.
337. Added.
339. engyn, "ingenium."
Thré personés may ther right wel bee;"
Tho gan she hym ful bisely to preche
Of Cristés come, and of his peynés teche;

And many pointés of his passioun,
How Goddés sone in this world was withholde 345
To doon mankyndé playn remissioun,
That was y-boundé in synne and carés colde;
Al this thyng she unto Tiburcè tolde,
And after this Tiburcè in good entente
With Valerian to Pope Urban he wente,

That thanked God, and with glade herte and light,
He cristned hym, and made hym in that place
Parfit in his lernyngé, Goddés knyght;
And after this Tiburcè gat swich grace
That every day he saugh in tyme and space 355
The angel of God, and every maner Boone
That he God axéd, it was sped ful soone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn
How manye wondres Jhesus for hem wroghte;
But atté laste, to tellen short and pleyn, 360
The sergeantz of the toun of Rome hem soghte,
And hem biforn Almache, the Prefect, broghte,
Which hem apposed, and knew al hire entente,
And to the ymage of Juppiter hem sente;

And seyde, "Whoso wol nat sacrificse,
Swape of his heed; this my sentencé heer!"
Anon thise martirs that I yow devyse,
Oon Maximus that was an officer
Of the Prefectes, and his corniculer,
Hem hente, and whan he forth the seintés ladde,
Hysmelf he weepe for pitee that he hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintés loore,
He gat hym of the tormentourés leve,
And ladde hem to his hous, withouté moore,
And with hir prechyng, er that it were eve,
They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone,
The falsé feith, to trowe in God allone.

Cecilé cam, whan it was woxen nyght,
With preestés, that hem cristned all y-feere;
And afterward, whan day was woxen light,
Cecile hem seyde with a ful stedefast cheere,
"Now, Cristés owene knyghtés, leeye and deere,
Cast alle awey the werkés of derknesse,
And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse.

363. apposed, examined.  373. tormentoures, E tormentours.
366. Swape of, strike off.  374. ladde, H bad, Corp. hadde.
369. corniculer, adjutant.  380. y-feere, together.
Ye han, for sothe, y-doon a greet bataille,
Youre cours is doon, youre feith han ye conserved.
Gooth to the corone of lyf, that may nat faille;
The rightful Jugé, which that ye han served,
Shal geve it yow, as ye han it deserved;"
And whan this thing was seyd as I devyse,
Men ledde hem forth to doon the sacrefise.

But whan they weren to the place y-brotch,—
To tellen shortly the conclusioun,—
They nolde encense ne sacrificse right noght,
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
With humble herte and sad devocioun,
And loshen bothe hir hevedes in the place;
Hir soules wenten to the kyng of grace.

This Maximus, that saugh this thyng bityde,
With pitous teeris tolde it anon right,
That he hir soules saugh to hevene glyde,
With aungels ful of cleerness and of light;
And with his word converted many a wight,
For which Almachius dide hym so to-bete,
With whippe of leed, til he his lif gan lete.

Cecile hym took, and buryed hym anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softey
Withinne hire buriyng-place under the stoon;

396-392. Added. 406. his, E the.
398. hevedes, heads. gan lete, forsook.
406. whippe, H whippes; Lat. "plumbatis."
409. Added.
And after this Almachius hastily
Bad hise ministres fecchen openly
Cecile, so that she myghte in his presence
Doon sacrifice, and Juppiter encense;

But they, converted at hir wisé loore,
Wepten ful soore, and gaven ful credence
Unto hire word, and cryden moore and moore,
"Crist, Goddes sone, withouten difference
Is verray God, this is al oure sentence,
That hath so good a servant hym to serve;
This with o voys we trowen, thogh we sterve!"

Almachius that herde of this doynge
Bad fecchen Cecile that he myghte hire see;
And alderfirst, lo this was his axtynge,
"What maner womman artow?" tho quod he.
"I am a gentil womman born," quod she.
"I axe thee," quod he, "though it thee greeve,
Of thy religioun, and of thy bileeve."

"Ye han bigonne youre question folily,"
Quod she, "that wolden two answeres conclude
In o demande; ye axéd lewedly."
Almache answerde unto that similitude,
“Of whennēs comth thyn answering so rude?”
“Of whennēs?” quod she, whan that she was freyned;
“Of conscience, and of good feith unfeyned.”

Almachius seyde, “Ne takestow noon heede Of my powēr?” And she anserde hym this:
“Youre myght,” quod she, “ful litel is to dreede,
For every mortal mannēs power nys
But lyke a bladdre, ful of wynd, y-wys;
For with a nedles poynyt when it is blowe
May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe.”

“Ful wrongfully bigonnē thow,” quod he,
“And yet in wrong is thy perseveraunce;
Wostow nat how oure myghty princes free
Han thus comanded and maad ordinaunce,
That every Cristen wight shal han penaunce,
But if that he his Cristendom withseye,
And goon al quit, if he wole it reyne?”

“Yowre princes erren, as youre nobleye dooth,”
Quod tho Cecile, “and with a wood sentence
Ye make us gilty, and it is nat sooth;
For ye that knowen wel oure innocence,—
For as muche as we doon a reverence
To Crist, and for we bere a Cristen name,—
Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blame;

433. freyned, asked. 447. withseye, contradict.
436. this, om. E. 448. reneye, deny.
442-469. Chaucer’s addition. 450. wood, mad.
But we, that knowen thilké name so
For vertuous, we may it not withseye.”
Almache answerde, “Chees oon of thisé two,—
Do sacrifice, or Cristendom renye,
That thou moue now escapen by that weye.”
At which the hooly blisful fairé mayde
Gan for to laughe, and to the jugé sayde,

“O jugé, confus in thy nycéete!
Woltow that I renyé innocence,
To maké me a wikked wight?” quod she.
Lo, he dissymuleth heere in audience,
He stareth, and he woodeth in his advertence.
To whom Almachius, “Unsely wrecche!
Ne woostow nat how far my myght may strecche?

Han noght oure myghty princes to me geven,
Ye, bothé power and auctoritee
To maken folk to dyen or to lyven?
Why spekestow so proudly thanne to me?”
“I speké noght but stedfastly,” quod she,
“Nat proudly, for, I speke as for my syde,
We haten deedly thilké vice of pryde;

And if thou dredé nat a sooth to heere,
Thanne wol I shewe al openly by right
That thou hast maad a ful gret lesyng heere.
Thou seyst thy princes han thee geven myght
Bothe for to sleen and for to quyken a wight;
Thou that ne mayst but oonly lyf bireve,
Thou hast noon oother power, ne no leve:

But thou mayst seyn thy princes han thee maked
Ministre of deeth, for if thou speke of mo,
Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked!"
"Do wey thy booldnesse!" seyde Almachius tho,
"And sacrificie to oure goddes er thou go!
I recché nat what wrong that thou me profre,
For I can suffre it as a philosophre,

But thilké wrongés may I nat endure,
That thou spekest of oure goddes heere," quod he.
Cecile answerde, "O nycé créature!
Thou seydest no word syn thou spak to me
That I ne knew therwith thy nycée, 495
And that thou were in every maner wise
A lewéd officer and a veyn justise!

Ther lakketh no thyng to thyne outer eyen
That thou nart blynd, for thyng that we seen alle
That it is stoon,—that men may wel espyen,—
That ilké stoon a god thow wolt it calle.
I rede thee, lat thyn hand upon it falle,
And taste it wel, and stoon thou shalt it fynde,
Syn that thou seest nat with thyne eyen blynde.

489-497. Chaucer's addition.
It is a shamé that the peple shal
So scorné thee, and laughe at thy folye;
For communly men woot it wel overal
That myghty God is in hise hevenès hye,
And thisé ymáges, wel thou mayst espye,
To thee, ne to hemself, mowen noght profite, 510
For in effect they been nat worth a myte."

Thise wordés and swiche other seydé she;
And he weex wrooth, and bad men sholde hir lede
Hom til hir house, and "In hir hous," quod he,
"Brenne hire right in a bath of flambés rede;" 515
And as he bad, right so was doon in dede,
For in a bath they gone hire fasté shetten,
And nyght and day greet fyre they under betten.

The longé nyght, and eek a day also,
For al the fyr, and eek the bathés heete, 520
She sat al coold and felte of it no wo;
It made hire nat a dropé for to sweete;
But in that bath hir lyf she mosté lete,
For he, Almachius, with ful wikke entente,
To sleen hire in the bath his sondé sente.

Thre strokés in the nekke he smoot hire tho,
The tormentour, but for no maner chaunce
He myghté noght Smyte al hir nekke atwo;

505-511. Added.
510. mowen, H8 may, move.
516. in, H8 the.
518. betten, kindled.
521. felte of it, H om. it; E3 feeled, feeledé.
525. sonde, messenger.
528. al hir, H hir fayre.
And for ther was that tyme an ordinaunce,
That no man sholde doon men swich penaunce
The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or soore,
This tormentour ne dorsté do namoore;

But half deed, with hir nekke y-corven there,
He lefte hir lye, and on his wey is went.
The Cristen folk which that aboute hire were,
With sheetés han the blood ful faire y-hent.
Thre dayés lyvéd she in this torment,
And nevere cesséd hem the feith to teche
That she hadde fostred; hem she gan to preche;

And hem she gaf hir moebles, and hir thyng,
And to the Pope Urban bitook hem tho,
And seyde, "I axéd this at hevene kyng,
To han respit thre dayés and namo,
To recomende to yow, er that I go,
This soules, lo, and that I myghte do werche
Heere of myn hous perpetuellly a cherche."

Seint Urban, with his deknés, privély
The body fette, and buryed it by nyghte
Among hise other seintés honestly.
Hir hous the chirche of Seinte Cecilie highte;
Seint Urban halwéd it, as he wel myghte,
Feynthe peple shal come and layne at thy folye;
and sote wel in wer it wel overal
of hir home at hir hevenes hye,
and hir wor, we thou mayst espye,
how in a meynen men noght profite,
or of a sone noworth a myte.”

The kyrke and sone other seyd she;
and a man sholde hir lede
and a men mask, and “In hir hous,” quod he,
“there were nought in a bost of dambes rede;”
and as he bled, right so was doen in dere,
for in a bost, they gonem hire mistere shetten,
and nyght and day grace they under better
and lang, and a dryn also,
for in the eke, and eke the bathe heeter,
and tere was no good, and sote of it no way,
and eke a dryn for to sweate
in hir bost, with hir lyf she moste do
and bathe this, with ful wike
and bathe this, with the bath his son.
...in heete;

Would you come; to crye,
And to compaignye!
That the lord for your sake,

And thine also.
And to thee, arteisye,
Artleisye; the morwe tyde,
Though you ryde,
Thought we and my soverayn,
That yow is ful fayn;
With dialiuncye;
warnyng God geve thee good

Sure Hoost, "for certes it wolde

Days, and so I may wel deme;

Also, dar I leye!

The de-

with

August-

577. clove-leaf; burdock-leaf.
581. paritorie, pellitory.
586. this, E som.
591. that, om. E; Camb. for.
594. certes, certain.
In which, into this day, in noble wyse,
Men doon to Crist and to his seinte servyse.

_The prologe of the Chanons Yemannes Tale_

Whan toold was al the lyf of Seinte Cecile,
Er we hadde riden fully fyvē mile,
At Boghton-under-Blee, us gan atake
A man that clothēd was in clothēs blake,
And underneteth he had a white surplys;
His hackeney, which that was al pomely grys,
So swatē that it wonder was to see;
It semed as he had priked milēs three.
The hors eek that his Yeman rood upon
So swatē that unnethē myghte it gon;
Aboute the peytrel stood the foom ful hye,
He was of foom al flekkēd as a pye.
A male tweyfoold upon his croper lay,
It semēd that he caried lite array.
Al light for somer rood this worthy man,
And in myn hertē wondren I bigan
What that he was, til that I understood
How that his cloke was sowēd to his hood,
For which, when I hadde long avysēd me,
I deméd hym som Chanoun for to be.
His hat heeng at his bak doun by a laas,
For he hadde ridden moore than trot or paas;
He hadde ay prikéd lik as he were wood.
A cloté-leef he hadde under his hood
For swoot, and for to kepe his heed from heete;
But it was joyé for to seen hym swete!
His forheed dropped as a stillatorie
Were ful of plantayne and of paritorie;
And whan that he was come he gan to crye,
"God save," quod he, "this joly compaignye!
Faste have I prikéd," quod he, "for youre sake,
By-cause that I woldé yow atake
To riden in this myrie compaignye."
His Yeman eek was ful of curteisye,
And seydé, "Sires, now in the morwe tyde,
Out of youre hostelrie I saugh you ryde,
And warnéd heer my lord, and my soverayn,
Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn;
For his desport he loveth daliaunce."
"Freend, for thy warnyng God geve thee good
chaunce!"
Thanne seyde oure Hoost, "for certês it wolde
seme
Thy lord were wys, and so I may wel deme;
He is ful jocunde also, dar I leye!

573. *som* Chanoun, the description accords with that of a "black Augustinian."
574. *laas*, string.
586. *this*, E *som*.
594. *certês*, E *certein*. 
Can he oght telle a myrie tale or tweye,  
With which he gladè may this compaignye?"

"Who, sire? my lord? ye, ye, withouten lye!
He kan of murthe, and eek of jolitee
Nat but ynough, also, sire, trusteth me;
And ye hym knewe as wel as do I,
Ye woldè wondre how wel and craftily
He koudè werke, and that in sondry wise.
He hath take on hym many a greet emprise,
Which were ful hard for any that is heere
To brynge about, but they of hym it leere.
As hoomely as he rit amongès yow,
If ye hym knewe it wolde be for youre prow;
Ye woldè nat forgoon his áqueytaunce
For muchel good; I dar leye in balàunce
Al that I have in my possessioun.
He is a man of heigh discrecioun;
I warne yow wel, he is a passyng man."

"Wel," quod oure Hoost, "I pray thee tel me
than
Is he a clerk or noon? Telle what he is."

"Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, y-wis,"
Seydè this Yeman, "and in wordès fewe,
Hoost, of his craft somwhat I wol yow shewe.
"I seye, my lord kan swich subtilitee,—
But al his craft ye may nat wite at me,
And somwhat helpe I yet to his wIRkyng,—
That al this ground on which we been ridyng,
Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,
He koude al clenè turne it up-so-doun,
And pave it al of silver and of gold."

And whan this Yeman hadde this tale y-told
Unto oure Hoost, he seydè, "Benedicite!"
This thyng is wonder merveillous to me,
Syn that thy lord is of so heigh prudence,
By cause of which men sholde hym reverence,
That of his worship reketh he so lite.
His overslopè nys nat worth a myte,
As in effect to hym, so moot I go!
It is al baudy and to-tore also.
Why is thy lord so sluttissh, I the preye,
And is of power betтрè clooth to beye,—
If that his dede accordè with thy speche?
Tellè me that, and that I thee biseche."

"Why?" quod this Yeman, "wherto axe ye me?
God help me so, for he shal nevere thee!—
But I wol nat avowè that I seye,
And theryfore keepe it seccree, I yow preye,—
He is to wys, in feith, as I bileeve;
That that is overdoon it wol nat preeve
Aright; as clerkès seyn, it is a vice;
Wherfore in that I holde hym lewed and nyce;
For whan a man hath over greet a wit,
Ful oft hym happeth to mysusen it.

627. this tale, H8 thus, Camb. this.
633. overslopè, upper garment.
637. clooth, H8 clothis, clothes.
641. thee, thrive.
645. preeve, stand testing.
So dooth my lord, and that me greveth soore. 650
God it amende! I kan sey yow namoore.”

“Ther-of no fors, good Yeman,” quod oure Hoost,
“Syn of the konnyng of thy lord thow woost,
Telle how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,
Syn that he is so crafty and so sly ;
Where dwellé ye, if it to tellé be?”

“In the suburbés of a toun,” quod he,
“Lurkynge in hernés, and in lanés blynde,
Where as thise robbours and thise theves by kynde,
Holden hir pryvee fereful residence,
As they that dar nat shewn hir presence;
So faren we, if I shal seye the sothe.”

“Now,” quod oure Hoost, “yet lat me talke to the;
Why artow so discoloured of thy face ? ”

“Peter!” quod he, “God geve it hardé grace,
I am so uséd in the fyr to blowe,
That it hath chaungéd my colóur, I trowe.
I am nat wont in no mirour to prie,
But swynké soore, and lerné multiplie ;
We blondren evere, and pouren in the fir,
And for al that we faille of our desir,
For evere we lakken oure conclusioun.
To muchel folk we doon illusioun,
And borwé gold, be it a pound or two,
Or ten, or twelve, or manye sommés mo,

651. yow, H4 now. 669. multiplie, i.e. gold.
658. hernés, corners. 672. lakken, E lakke of.
And make hem wenен, at the leestē weye,  
That of a pound we koudē makē tweye;  
Yet is it fals; but ay we han good hope  
It for to doon and after it we grope;  
But that sciēnce is so fer us biforn  
We mowen nat, al though we hadde it sworn,  
It over-take, it slit awey so faste.  
It wole us maken beggers atte laste.”

Whil this Yeman was thus in his talkyng  
This Chanoun drough hym neer, and herde al thyng  
Which this Yeman spak, for suspecioun  
Of mennēs speche evere hadde this Chanoun;  
For Catoun seith that he that gilty is  
Demeth alle thyng be spoke of hym, y-wis.  
That was the cause he gan so ny hym drawe  
To his Yeman, to herknen al his sawe,  
And thus he seyde unto his Yeman tho:

“Hoold thou thy pees, and spek no wordēs mo!  
For if thou do, thou shalt it deere abye!  
Thou sclaunderest me, heere in this compaignye,  
And eek discoverest that thou sholdest hyde.”

“Ye?” quod our Hoost, “telle on what so bityde;  
Of al his thretynge rekke nat a myte!”
“In feith,” quod he, “namoore I do but lyte.”
And whan this Chanoun saugh it wolde nat be,
But his Yeman wolde telle his pryvete,
He fledde awey for verray sorwe and shame.
“A!” quod the Yeman, “heere shal arise a game,
Al that I kan anon now wol I telle,
Syn he is goon,—the foulé feend hym quelle!
For nevere heer-after wol I with hym meete,
For peny ne for pound, I yow biheete!
He that me broghté first unto that game,
Er that he dye, sorwe have he and shame;
For it is ernest to me, by my feith!
That feele I wel, what so any man seith.
And yet for al my smert, and al my grief,
For al my sorwe, labour, and meschief,
I koudë nevere leve it in no wise.
Now woldé God, my witté myghte suffise
To tellen al that longeth to that art;
And nathéëes yow wol I tellen part;
Syn that my lord is goon I wol nat spare;
Swich thyng as that I knowe I wol declare.”

703. a, om. EH4. 707. biheete, promise.
706. heer-after, E heer. 711. so, E that.
With this Chanoun I dwelt have seven yeer, And of his science am I never the neer;
Al that I hadde I havé lost ther-by,
And, God woot, so hath many mo than I.
Ther I was wont to be right fressh and gay
Of clothynge and of oother good array,
Now may I were an hose upon myn heed;
And wher my colour was bothe fressh and reed,
Now is it wan and of a leden hewe,—
Who so it useth, sooré shal he rewe,—
And of my swynk yet bleréd is myn eye;
Lo, which avantage is to multiplie!
That slidynge science hath me maad so bare,
That I have no good wher that evere I fare;
And yet I am endetted so ther-by,
Of gold that I have borwéd, trewely,
That whil I lyve I shal it quité nevere,—
Lat every man be war by me for evere.
What maner man that casteth hym ther-to,
If he continue, I holde his thrift y-do;
For, so helpe me God, ther-by shal he nat wynne,
But empte his purs, and make his wittés thynne;  
And whan he thurgh his madnesse and folye  
Hath lost his owene good thurgh jupartye,  
Thanne he exciteth oother folk ther-to,  
To lesen hir good, as he hymself hath do;  
For unto shrewés joye it is and ese,  
To have hir felawes in peyne and disese,—  
Thus was I onés lernéd of a clerk.  
Of that no charge, I wol speke of oure werk.  

Whan we been there as we shul excercise  
Oure elvysshe craft, we semen wonder wise,  
Oure termés been so clergial and so queynte;  
I blowe the fir til that myn herté feynte.  

What sholde I tellen eche proporcioun  
Of thyngés whiché that we werche upon;  
As on fyve or sixe ounces, may wel be  
Of silver, or som oother quantitee;  
And bisye me to tellé yow the names  
Of orpyment, brent bonés, iren squames,  
That into poudré grounden been ful smal?  
And in an erthen pot how put is al,  
And salt y-put in and also papeer  
Bisorn thise poudrés that I speke of heer,  
And wel y-covered with a lampe of glas;  
And muchel oother thyng which that ther was,  
And of the pot and glasses enlutyn,  
That of the eyr myghté passe out no thyng.
And of the esy fir, and smart also,
Which that was maad, and of the care and wo
That we hadden in oure matires sublymyng,
And in amalgamyng and calcenyng
Of quyk-silver, y-clept mercurie crude;
For alle our sleightés we kan nat conclude.
Oure orpyment and sublymèd mercurie,
Oure grounden litarge eek on the porfurie,
Of ech of thise of ounces a certeyn,
Noght helpeth us, oure labour is in veyn;
Ne eek oure spirités ascencioun,
Ne oure matires that lyen al fix adoun,
Mowe in oure werkyng no thyng us availle;
For lost is al oure labour and travaille,
And al the cost, a twenty devel way,
Is lost also, which we upon it lay.

Ther is also ful many another thyng
That is unto oure craft apertenynge,
Though I by ordre hem nat rehercé kan,
By-causé that I am a lewed man;
Yet wol I telle hem as they come to mynde,
Thogh I ne kan nat sette hem in hir kynde,—
As boole armonyak, verttrees, boras,
And sondry vessels maad of erthe and glas;
Oure urynals, and our descensories,
Violes, crosletz, and sublymatories,

771. amalgamyng, E almamyng.
calcenyng, E calceniyng.

775. litarge, white lead.
on, E in.

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Cucurbités, and alambikés eek,
And othere swiché, deere ynough a leek ;
Nat nedeth it for to rehearse hem alle,—
Wátres rubífiyng, and bolés galle,
Arsenyk, sal armonyak, and brymstoyn ;
And herbés koude I telle eek many oon,
As egremoyne, valerian, and lunárie,
And othere swiche, if that me listé tarie ;
Oure lampés brennyng bothé nyght and day,
'To brynge aboute oure purpos if we may ;
Oure fourneyes eek of calcinacioun,
And of watrés albícacioun,
Unslekkéd lym, chalk, and gleyre of an ey,
Poudrés diverse, asshes, donge, pisse, and cley,
Cered pokettes, sal-peter and vitriole,
And diverse firés maad of wode and cole ;
Sal-tartre, alkaly and sal-preparat ;
And combust matières, and coagulat ;
Cley maad with hors and mannés heer, and oille
Of tartre, alum, glas, berme, wort and argoille,
Resalgar, and oure matières enbïbyng,
And eek of oure matières encorporyng,
And of oure silver citrinacioun,
Oure cémentyng and fermentacioun,
Oure yngottés, testès, and many mo.
I wol yow telle as was me taught also
The fouré spirites and the bodies sevène,
By ordre, as ofte I herde my lord hem nevène.
The firsté spirit quyk-silver called is,
The seconde orpyment, the thridde, y-wis,
Sal-armonyak, and the ferthe brymstoone.
The bodyes sevène eek, lo, hem heere anoon!
Sol gold is, and Luna silver we threpe,
Mars iren, Mercurie quyk-silver we clepe,
Saturnus leed, and Juppiter is tyn,
And Venus copèr, by my fader kyn.
This curséd craft who so wol exercice
He shal no good han that hym may suffice;
For al the good he spendeth ther-aboute
He lesé shal, ther-of have I no doute.
Whoso that listeth outen his folie,
Lat hym come forth and lerné multiplie;
And every man that oght hath in his cofre,
Lat hym appiere and wexe a philosophre,
Ascauncé that crafte is so light to leere!
Nay, nay, God woot, al be he monk or frere,
Preest or chanoun, or any oother wyght,
Though he sitte at his bothe day and night
In lernyng of this elvysshe nycé loore,
Al is in veyn, and, parde, muchel moore!
To lerne a lewed man this subtiltee,—
Fy! spek nat ther-of, for it wol nat bee;
And konne he letterure, or konne he noon,
As in effect he shal fynde it al oon;
For bothè two, by my salvacioun,
Concluden in multiplicacioun
Ylike wel, whan they han al y-do,—
This is to seyn, they faillen bothè two.
Yet forgat I to maken rehersaille
Of watre's corosif, and of lymaille,
And of bodies mollificacioun,
And also of hire induracioun, 855
Oilës, ablucions, and metal fusible,—
To tellen al wolde passen any Bible
That owher is; wherfore, as for the beste,
Of alle thise namës now wol I me reste,
For as I trowe I have yow toold ynowe 860
To reyse a feend, al looke he never so Rowe.
A! nay! lat be; the philosophres soon,
Elixer clept, we sechen faste echoon,
For hadde we hym, thanne were we siker ynow;
But, unto God of hevene I make avow, 865
For al oure craft, whan we han al y-do,
With al oure sleighte, he wol nat come us to.
He hath y-made us spenden muchel good,
For sorwe of which almoost we wexen wood,
But that good hope crepeth in oure herte,
Supposynge ever, though we sore smerte,
To be releeved by hym afterward.
Swinch supposyng and hope is sharpe and hard;
I warne yow wel it is to seken evere;
That futur temps hath maad men dissevere,
In trust ther-of, from al that evere they hadde.
Yet of that art they kan hat wexen sadde,
For unto hem it is a bitter-sweete,—
So semeth it,—for nadde they but a sheete,
Which that they myghte wrappe hem inne at nyght,
And a brat to walken inne by day-lyght,
They wolde hem selle, and spenden on the craft;
They kan nat styntë til no thyng be laft;
And everemoore, where that evere they goon,
Men may hem knowë by smel of brymstoon.
For al the world they stynken as a goot;
Hir savour is so rammyssh and so hoot
That though a man a milë from hem be
The savour wole infecte hym, trustë me.
Lo thus by smellyng, and threedbare array,
If that men liste, this folk they knowë may;
And if a man wole aske hem pryvëly,
Why they been clothëd so unthriftily,
They right anon wol rownen in his ere
And seyn, that if that they espiéd were,
Men wolde hem slee by-cause of hir science.
Lo, thus this folk bitrayen innocence!
   Passe over this, I go my tale unto.
Er that the pot be on the fire y-do,
Of metals with a certeyn quantitee
My lord hem tempreth, and no man but he,—
Now he is goon I dare seyn boldely,—
For as men seyn he kan doon craftily,
Algate I woot wel he hath swich a name,
And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame;
And wite ye how? Ful ofte it happeth so
The pot to-brekethe, and farewel, al is go.
Thise metals been of so greet violence
Oure wallés mowe nat make hem resistence,
But if they weren wroght of lym and stoon,
They percen so, and thurgh the wal they goon,
And somme of hem synken into the ground,—
Thus han we lost by tymés many a pound,—
And somme are scatered al the floor aboute,
Somme lepe into the roof, withouten doute.
Though that the feend noght in oure sighte hym shewe,
I trowe he with us be, that ilké shrewe!
In hellé, where that he is lord and sire,
Nis ther moore wo, ne moore rancour, ne ire;

895. that (r), om. H§.
899. that, H⁴ than.
912. synken, E² synke.
915. lepe, E lepte.
918. is lord, E lord is.
919. H§ Nis ther no more wo, ne anger, ne ire.
Whan that ounre pot is broke, as I have sayd, 920
Every man chit and halt hym yvele apayd.
Somme seyde it was along on the fir makyng,
Somme seydé nay, it was on the blowyng,—
Thanne was I sered, for that was myn office.
"Straw!" quod the thridé, "ye been lewed
and nyce,
It was nat tempréd as it oghté be."
"Nay," quod the fourthé, "stynct and herkné me;
By-caus our fir ne was nat maad of beech,
That is the cause, and oother noon, so theech."
I kan nat telle wherón it was along, 930
But wel I woot greet strif us is among.
"What!" quod my lord, "ther is namoore to
doone;
Of thise perils I wol be war eft-soone.
I am right siker that the pot was crase;
Be as be may, be ye no thyng amase.
As usage is, lat swepe the floor as swithe,
Plukke up your hertés and beeth glad and blithe!"
The mullok on an heepe i-swepe was,
And on the floor y-cast a canévas,
And al this mullok in a syve y-throwe, 940
And sifted and y-pikéd many a throwe.
"Pardee!" quod oon, "somwhat of ounre metal

921. chit, chides. 936. as swithe, quickly.
halt, holds. 938. mullok, débris.
922. long. 941. y-piked, picked over; H5 y-plukked.
929. theech, thrive I.
Yet is ther heere, though that we han nat al.
Al though this thyng myshappéd have as now,
Another tyme it may be wel ynow.
Us mosté putte oure good in áventure;
A marchant, pardee! may nat ay endure,
Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee.
Somtyme his good is drenchéd in the see,
And somtyme comth it sauf unto the londe.”

“Pees!” quod my lord, “the nexte tyme I shal fonde
To bryngen oure craft al in another plite;
And but I do, sires, lat me han the wite;
Ther was defaute in somwhat, wel I woot.”

Another seyde the fir was over hoot;
But, be it hoot or coold, I dar seye this,
That we concluden everemoore amys.
We faille of that which that we wolden have,
And in oure madnesse everemoore we rave;
And whan we been togïdrés everichoon
Every man semeth a Salomon;
But al thyng which that shyneth as the gold,
Nis nat gold, as that I have herd it told;
Ne every appul that is fair at eye
Ne is nat good, what so men clappe or crye.
Right so, lo, fareth it amongës us:

949. drenched, H^{6} drowned.
953. wite, blame.
956. But, E And.
962. al, E every.
    shyneth, E seineth, Corp.²
    semeth.
963. it, only in Corp.³; ? om. and read Ne is for Nis.
964. at, E to.
965. Ne is, E Nis.
966. lo, om. E.
Hé that semeth the wiseste, by Jhesus, 
Is moost fool, whan it cometh to the preef; 
And he that semeth trewest is a theef.
That shul ye knowe er that I fro yow wende, 
By that I of my tale have maad an ende.

[PART II]

Ther is a Chanoun of Religioun 
Amongés us wolde infecte al a toun.
Thogh it as greet were as was Nynyvee,
Rome, Alisaundre, Troye, and other three.  
His sleightés and his infinit falsnesse 
Ther koudé no man writen, as I gesse,
Though that he lyvé myghte a thousand yeer.
In al this world of falshede nis his peer,
For in hise termés so he wolde hym wynde,
And speke his wordés in so sly a kynde,
Whanne he communé shal with any wight,
That he wol make hym doten anon right,
But it a feend be, as hymselven is.
Ful many a man hath he bigiled er this,
And wole, if that he lyvé may a while; 
And yet men ride and goon ful many a mile
Hym for to seke and have his aqueyntaunce,
Noght knowynge of his falsé governaunce;
And if yow knowe to geve me audience,
I wol it tellè heere in youre presence.

968. preef, proof. 972. is, E was. 976. sleightes, EH sleighte. 978. lyve myghte, H® mighte lyven. 979. nis, E nas.
But, worshipful chanouns religious,
Ne demeth nat that I desclaundre youre hous,
Although my talé of a chanoun bee;
Of every ordré som shrew ye is, pardee,
And God forbede that al a compaignye
Sholde rewe o singuleer mannès folye.
To sclaundre yow is no thyng myn entente,
But to correcten that is mys, I mente.
This talé was nat oonly toold for yow,
But eek for othere mo; ye woot wel how
Thät among Cristès apostles twelve
Ther nas no traytour but Judas hymselve.
Thanne why sholde al the remenant have a blame,
That giltlees were? By yow I seye the same,—
Save oonly this, if ye wol herkne me,—
If any Judas in youre covent be,
Remoeveth hym bitymès, I yow rede,
If shame, or los, may causen any drede;
And beeth no thyng displeséd, I yow preye,
But in this cas herketh what I shal seye.

In Londoun was a preest, an annuèleer,
That ther-inne dwelléd haddé many a yeer,
Which was so plesaunt and so servysable
Unto the wyf, where as he was at table,
That she wolde suffre hym no thyng for to paye

993. desclaundre, H8 sclaundre. 1013. dwelléd hadde, E had
dployed to sing anni-
994. Although, E Although that. versary masses for the
dead.
997. o singuleer, one particular. 1012. an, om. E.
1015. That she wolde suffre hym no thyng for to paye

annuèleer, a priest em-
dwelléd.
For bory ne clothynge, wente he never so gaye;
And spendyng silver hadde he right nowe,
Ther-of no fors, I wol procede as nowe,
And tellé forth my tale of the chanoun
That broghté this preest to confusioun.

This falsé chanoun cam upon a day
Unto this preestés chambre wher he lay,
Bisechynge hym to lene hym a certeyn
Of gold, and he wolde quite it hym ageyn.
"Leene me a marc," quod he, "but dayés three,
And at my day I wol it quiten thee;
And if so be that thow me fyndé fals
Another day, do hange me by the hals."

This preest hym took a marc, and that as swithe,
And this chanoun hym thankéd ofté sithe,
And took his leve, and wenté forthe his weye,
And at the thriddé day broghte his moneye,
And to the preest he took his gold agayn,
Wher-of this preest was wonder glad and fayn.
"Certês," quod he, "no thyng anoyeth me
To lene a man a noble, or two, or thre,
Or what thyng were in my possessioun,
Whan he so trewe is of condicioun
That in no wise he breké Wolfe his day;
To swich a man I kan never seye nay."
"What!" quod this chanoun, "sholde I be untrewe?

1024. *lene*, lend.
1029. *do hange me, H* hang me up.
1030. *as swithe*, quickly.
1031. *sithe*, times.
Nay, that were thyng y-fallen al of newe.
Trouthe is a thyng that I wol evere kepe,
Unto that day in which that I shal crepe
Into my grave, or ellis, God forbede!
Bileveth this, as siker as the Crede.
God thanke I, and in good tymé be it sayd,
That ther was nevere man yet yvele apayd
For gold ne silver that he to me lente;
Ne nevere falshede in myn herte I mente;
And, sire,” quod he, “now of my pryvetee,—
Syn ye so goodlich han been unto me,
And kithéd to me so greet gentillesse,—
Somwhat to quyté with youre kyndénesse
I wol yow shewe, and if yow list to leere.
I wol yow teché pleynly the manere
How I kan werken in philosophie;
Taketh good heede ye shul wel seen at eye
That I wol doon a maistrie er I go.”

“Ye,” quod the preest, “ye, sire, and wol ye so?
Marie! ther-of I pray yow hertely.”

“At youre comandément, sire, trewely,”
Quod the chanoun, “and ellis God forbeede.”

Loo, how this theef koude his service beede!
Ful sooth it is that swiche profréd servyse
Stynketh, as witnesse thise oldé wyse;
And that ful soone I wol it verifie

1043. *thynge*, E² a thyng.
1045. *Unto*, E² *Into*.
1046. *or*, H⁸ *and*.
1047. *as the*, H⁴ *as your*, as is *youre*.
1054. *kithed*, shown.
1056. *and if*, E *if that*.
1061. *sire*, E *sire*, quod *he*.
1065. *beede*, offer.
In this chanoun, roote of alle trecherie,
That evere moore delit hath and gladnesse,—
Swiche feendly thoughtés in his herte impresse,—
How Cristés peple he may to meschief brynge.
God kepe us from his false dissymulynge!

Noght wisté this preest with whom that he delt,
Ne of his harm comynge he no thyng felte.  
O sely preest, O sely innocent!
With coveitise anon thou shalt be blent.
O gracélees, ful blynd is thy conceite,
No thyng ne artow war of the deceite
Which that this fox y-shapen hath for thee;
Hise wily wrenchés thou ne mayst nat flee;
Wherfore, to go to the conclusioun
That refereth to thy confusioun,
Unhappy man, anon I wol me hye
To tellen thyn unwit and thy folye,
And eek the falsnesse of that oother wrecche,
As ferforth as my konnyngé may strecche.

This chanoun was my lord, ye wolden weene—
Sire Hoost, in feith, and by the hevenes queene,
It was another chanoun and nat hee,
That kan an hundred foold moore subtiltee.
He hath bitrayéd folkés many tyme;
Of his falshede it dulleth me to ryme.
Évere whan I speke of his falshede,
For shame of hym my chekës wexen rede,—
Algatës they bigynnen for to glowe,—
For reednesse have I noon, right wel I knowe,
In my visagé, for fumës diverse
Of metals, whiche ye han herd me reherce,
Consumed and wasted han my reedënesse.
Now taak heede of this chanons cursednesse.

"Sire," quod he to the preest, "lat youre man
gon
For quyk-silver, that we hadde it anon,
And lat hym bryngen ounces two or three,
And whan he comth, as fastë shal ye see
A wonder thyng which ye saugh nevere er this."

"Sire," quod the preest, "it shal be doon y-wis."
He had his servant fecchen hym this thyng,
And he al redy was at his biddynge,
And wente hym forth, and cam anon agayn
With this quyk-silver, soothe for to sayn;
And toke thise ounces thre to the chanoun,
And he hem leydë faire and wel adoun,
And bad the servant colës for to brynge,
That he anon myghte go to his werkynge.

The colës right anon weren y-fet,
And this chanoun took out a crosselet
Of his bosom, and shewed it to the preest.
"This instrument," quod he, "which that thou
seest,
Taake in thyn hand and put thy self therinne
Of this quyk-silver an ounce, and heer bigynne,
In the name of Crist, to wexe a philosofre.
Ther been ful fewe to whiche I woldé profre
To shewen hem thus muche of my science:
For ye shul seen heer by experience,
That this quyk-silver wol I mortifye,
Right in youre sighte anon, I wol nat lyé,
And make it as good silver and as fyn,
As ther is any in youre purse or myn,
Or elléswhere, and make it malliable;
And ellés holdeth me fals and unable
Amongés folk for evere to appeere.
I have a poudre heer, that coste me deere,
Shal make al good, for it is cause of al
My konnyng, which that I yow shewen shal.
Voydith youre man and lat hym be ther-oute,
And shette the doré whils we been aboute
Oure pryvêtee, that no man us espie,
Whilés we werke in this philosophie."

Al as he bad fulfilléd was in dede;
This ilké servant anonright out yede,
And his maister shetté the dore anon,
And to hire labour spedily they gon.

1123. to whiche, H whiche that, Camb. to whiche that.
1126. mortifye, transmute.
1127. I wol nat, H withouten, withoute.
1128. it, om. E.
1130. and make it malliable; or elléswhere, and make it malliable.
1135. voydith, E Voyde.
1139. Whiles, E Whils that.
1141. yede, went.
This preest at this curséd chanouns biddying
Upon the fir anon sette this thyng,
And blew the fir and bisyed hym ful faste;
And this chanoun into the crosselet cast
A poudre,—noot I wher-of that it was
Y-maad, outhere of chalk, outhere of glas,
Or somwhat ellés, was nat worth a flye,—
To blynde with the preest, and bad hym hye
The colés for to coucher al above
The crosselet; “For in tokenyng I thee love,”
Quod this chanoun, “thynye owene handés two
Shul werche al thyng which shal heer be do.”

“Graunt mercy!” quod the preest, and was ful glad,
And couchéd colés as that chanoun bad;
And while he bisy was, this feendly wrecche,
This false chanoun,—the foulé feend hym fecche!—
Out of his bosom took a bechen cole,
In which ful subtilly was maad an hole,
And therinne put was of silver lemaille
An ounce, and stoppéd was withouten faille
The hole with wex, to kepe the lemaille in;
And understonde, that this falsé gyn
Was nat maad ther, but it was maad bfore;
And othere thyngés I shal tellen moore
Herafterward, whiche that he with hym broghte,
Er he cam there hym to bigile he thoghte;

1149. outher, E² or, Pet. or elliis.
1151. the, H⁴ this.
1152. The, H⁴ Thise.
1150. couchen, lay.
1152. couchen, lay.
1157. coles, E² cole.
1150. took, E he took.
1162. lemaille, filings.
And so he dide, er that they wente atwynne;
Til he had tervéd hym, he koude nat blynne.
It dulleth me, whan that I of hym speke;
On his falschede sayn wolde I me wreke,
If I wiste how, but he is heere and there,
He is so variaunt, he abit nowhere.

But taketh heede now, sires, for Goddes love!
He took this cole of which I spak above,
And in his hand he baar it pryvely,
And whylès the preest couched bisily
The colès, as I toldè yow er this,
This chanoun seydè, “Freend, ye doon amys,
This is nat couched as it oghtè be;
But soone I shal amenden it,” quod he.
“Now lat me medle ther-with but a while,
For of yow have I pitee, by Seint Gile!
Ye been right hoot, I se wel how ye swete;
Have heer a clooth, and wipe away the wete.”
And whylès that the preest wipèd his face,
This chanoun took his cole with hardè grace,
And leyde it above upon the myddéward
Of the crosselet, and blew wel afterward,
Til that the colès gonné fasté brenne.

“Now geve us drynkè,” quod the chanoun thenne,
"As swithe al shal be wel, I undertake.
Sittè we doun, and lat us myrie make;"
And whan that this chanonès bechen cole
Was brent, al the lemaille out of the hole
Into the crosselet fil anon adoun,
And so it mosté nedès, by resoun,
Syn it so evene aboven couchêd was;
But ther-of wiste the preest no thyng, alas!
He deméd alle the coles ylichê good,
For of that sleighte he no thyng understood;
And whan this alkanystre saugh his tyme,—
"Ris up," quod he, "sire preest, and stonde by me,
And for I woot wel ingot have ye noon,
Gooth walketh forth, and brynge us a chalk stoon,
For I wol make it of the samè shape
That is an ingot, if I may han hape;
And bryngeth eek with yow a bolle or a panne
Ful of water, and ye shul se wel thanne
How thatoure bisynesse shal thrbye and preeve;
And yet, for ye shul han no mysbileewe,
Ne wrong conceite of me in your absence,
I ne wol nat been out of youre presence,
But go with yow, and come with yow ageyn."
The chambre doré, shortly for to seyn,
They openèd and shette, and went hir weye,
And forth with hem they carieden the keye,
And coome agayn withouten any delay.
What sholde I tarien al the longé day?
He took the chalk and shoope it in the wise
Of an ingot, as I shal yow devyse.

I seye, he took out of his owene sleeve
A teyne of silver—yvele moot he cheeeve!—
Which that ne was nat but an ounce of weighte;
And taketh heede now of his cursed sleighe.

He shoope his ingot in lengthe and eek in breed
Of this teyne, withouten any drede,
So slyly that the preest it nat espide;
And in his sleve agayn he gan it hide,
And fro the fir he took up his mateere
And in thyngot putte it with myrie cheere,
And in the water vessel he it caste,

Whan that hym luste, and bad the preest as faste,
“Look what ther is, put in thin hand and grope,
Thow fyndé shalt ther silver, as I hope.”
What, deval of hellé! sholde it ellis be?

Shavyng of silver silver is, *parde!*
He putte his hand in, and took up a teyne
Of silver fyn, and glad in every veyne
Was this preest, whan he saugh that it was so.

“Goddès blessyng, and his moodres also,
And allè halwès, have ye, sire chanoun!"
Seydé this preest, "and I hir malisoun!
But, and ye vouchésauff to techen me
This noble craft and this subtilitee,
I wol be youre in al that evere I may."

Quod the chanoun, "Yet wol I make assay
The seconde tyme, that ye may taken heede
And been expert of this, and in youre neede
Another daye assaye in myn absence
This disciplyne, and this crafty science.
Lat take another ouncé," quod he tho,
"Of quyk-silver, withouten wordés mo,
And do therwithe as ye han doon er this
With that oother, which that now silver is."

This preest hym bisieth in al that he kan
To doon as this chanoun, this curséd man,
Comanded hym, and faste he blew the fir,
For to come to theeffect of his desir;
And this chanoun, right in the meené while,
Al redy was the preest est to bigile,
And for a contenaunce in his hand he bar
An holwé stikké,—taak kepe and be war,—
In the ende of which an ouncé and namoore
Of silver lemaille put was (as before
Was in his cole) and stopped with wex weel,
For to kepe in his lemaille every deel.
And whil this preest was in his bisynesse,
This chanoun with his stikké gan hym dresse
To hym anon, and his poudré caste in
As he did er,—the devel out of his skyn
Hym terve, I pray to God, for his falshede!
For he was evere fals in thoght and dede,—
And with this stikke above the crossélet,
That was ordeynéd with that falsé get,
He stired the colés, til relenté gan
The wrex agayn the fir, as every man,
But it a fool be, woot wel it moot nede;
And al that in the stikké was out yede,
And in the crosselet hastily it fel.

Nów, good sires, what wol ye bet than wel?
Whan that this preest thus was bigiled ageyn,
Supposynge noght but treuthé, sooth to seyn,
He was so glad that I kan nat expresse
In no manere his myrthe and his gladnesse,
And to the chanoun he profred eftsoone
Body and good. "Ye," quod the chanoun soone,
"Though poure I be, crafty thou shalt me fynde;
I warné thee yet is ther moore bihynde.
Is ther any coper her-inne?" seyde he.

"Ye," quod the preest, "sire, I trowe wel ther be."

"Ellés go bye us som, and that as swithe.
Now, goodé sire, go forth thy wey and hy the."

He wente his wey, and with the coper cam,

1274. terve, H⁶ torne, turne; see l. 1171.
1277. get (E² jet), contrivance.
1281. yede, ran.
1284. as, om. H⁶.
1285. kan, E he kan.
1294. goode, E good.
1295. the, H⁶ this.
And this chanoun it in his handes nam,
And of that coper weyed out but an ounce.
Al to symple is my tongue to pronounce,
As ministre of my wit, the doublenesse
Of this chanoun, roote of alle cursednesse.
He semed frendly to hem that knewe hym noght,
But he was frendly bothe in werk and thoght.
It weerieth me to telle of his falsnesse,
And nathélees yet wol I it expresse
To that entent men may be war therby,
And for noon oother causé, trewely.
He putté the ounce of coper in the crosselet,
And on the fir as swithe he hath it set,
And caste in poudre, and made the preest to blowe,
And in his werkyng for to stoupé lowe,
As he dide er, and al nas but a jape.
Right as hym liste the preest he made his ape;
And afterward in the ingot he it caste,
And in the panné putte it at the laste,
Of water. In he putte his owene hand;
And in his sleve, as ye biforen-hand
Herdé me telle, he hadde a silver teyne;
He slyly tooke it out,—this curséd heyne,—
Unwityng this preest of his falsé craft,
And in the pannés botme he hath it laft,
And in the water rombleth to and fro,
And wonder pryvély took up also
The coper teyne, noght knowyngé this preest,
And hidde it, and hym henté by the breest,
And to hym spak and thus seyde in his game,
“Stoupeth adoun, by God, ye be to blame,
Helpeth me now, as I dide yow whil-eer,
Putte in youre hand, and looketh what is theer.”

This preest took up this silver teyne anon,
And thanné seyde the chanoun, “Lat us gon
With this thre teynés whiche that we han wroght
To som goldsmyth, and wite if they been ought;
For, by my feith, I noldé for myn hood,
But if they weré silver fyn and good,
And that as wíthé preevéd it shal bee.”

Unto the goldsmyth with this teynés three
They wente, and putte thise teynés in assay
To fir and hamer; myghte no man seye nay,
But that they weren as hem oghté be.

This sottéd preest, who was gladder than he?
Was nevere brid gladder agayn the day,
Ne nyghtyngale in the sesoun of May.
Nas nevere man that lusté bet to synge,
Ne ladye lustier in carolyngne,
Or, for to speke of love and wommanhede,
Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy dede
To stonden in gráce of his lady deere,
Than hadde this preest this soory craft to leere;
And to the chanoun thus he spak and seyde:
"For love of God, that for us allé deyde,
And as I may deserve it unto yow,
What shal this receite costé, telleth now?"
"By oure lady," quod this chanoun, "it is
deeere,
I warne yow wel, for save I and a frere
In Engeland ther kan no man it make."
"No fors," quod he, "now, sire, for Goddés
sake,
What shal I payé? Telleth me, I preye."
"Y-wis," quod he, "it is ful deeere, I seye.
Sire, at o word, if that thee list it have,
Ye shul paye fourty pound, so God me save;
And nere the freendshipe that ye dide er this
To me ye sholdé payé moore y-wis."
This preest the somme of fourty pound anon
Of noblés fette, and took hem everichon
To this chanoun, for this ilké receit.
Al his werkyng nas but fraude and deceit.
"Sire preest," he seyde, "I kepé han no loos
Of my craft, for I wolde it kept were cloos,
And, as ye love me, kepeth it secre;
For, and men knewen al my soutiltee,
By God, they wolden han so greet envye
To me, by cause of my philosophye,
I sholde be deed; ther were noon oother weye."
"God it forbeedé," quod the preest; "what sey ye?"
Yet hadde I levere spenden al the good
Which that I have,—and ellés wexe I wood!—
Than that ye sholden falle in swiche mescheef."
"For youre good wyl, sire, have ye right good preef,"
Quod the chanoun, "and farwel, grant mercy!"
He wente his wey and never the preest hym sy
After that day; and whan that this preest sholde
Maken assay at swich tyme as he wolde
Of this receit, farwel, it wolde nat be!
Lo, thus byjapéd and bigiled was he.
Thus maketh he his introduccioun,
To bryngé folk to hir destruccioun.

Considereth sires, how that in ech estaat,
Bitwixé men and gold ther is debaat
So ferforth, that unnethé is ther noon.
This multiplying blent so many oon,
That, in good feith, I trowé that it bee
The causé grettest of swich scarsetee.
Philosophers spokén so mystily
In this craft, that men kan nat come therby,
For any wit that men han now-a-dayes.
They mowe wel chiteren as doon these jayes,
And in hir termés sette hir lust and payne,
But to hir purpos shul they never atteyne.
A man may lightly lerne, if he have aught,
To multiplie, and brynge his good to naught.

Lo, swich a lucre is in this lusty game
A mannès myrthe it wol turne unto grame,
And empten also grete and hevye purses,
And maken folk for to purchacen curses
Of hem that han hir good therto y-lent.
O fy, for shamé! they that han been brent,
Allas! kan they nat flee the firès heete?
Ye that it use I redé ye it leete,
Lest ye lese al, for "bet than never is late;"

Nevere to thryvé were to long a date.
Though ye prolle ay, ye shul it never se fynde.
Ye been as boold as is Bayard the blynde,
That blondreth forth and peril casteth noon.
He is as boold to renne agayn a stoon,
As for to goon bisidés in the weye.
So faren ye that multiplie, I seye;
If that youre eyen kan nat seen aright,
Looke that youre myndé lakké noght his sight,
For though ye looken never so brode, and stare,
Ye shul nat wynne a myte on that chaffare,

But wasten al that ye may rape and renne.
Withdraweth the fir, lest it to fasté brenne,—
Medleth namooré with that art, I mene,
For if ye doon youre thrift is goon ful clene; 1425
And right as swithe, I wol yow tellen heere,
What philosophres seyn in this mateere.

Lo, thus seith Arnold of the Newe-Toun,
As his Rosarie maketh mencion;
He seith right thus, withouten any lye,
Ther may no man mercurie mortifie,
But it be with his brother knowlechyng.

[Lo,] how that he which that first seyde this thyng
Of philosophres fader was, Hermes.
He seith how that the dragon doultéees
Ne dyeth nat, but if that he be slayn
With his "brother;" and that is for to sayn
By the dragon Mercurie, and noon oother,
He understood, and Brymstoon by his brother,
That out of Sol and Luna were y-drawe;

"And therfore," seyde he, "taak heede to my sawe;
Lat no man bisye hym this arte for to seche,
But if that he thentencioun and speche
Of philosophres understondé kan;
And, if he do, he is a lewed man,
For this science and this konnyng," quod he,
"Is of the secre of secrees, pardee."

1427. What, all MSS. What that the.
1428. Arnold of the Newe-Town, Arnoldus de Villanova, a philoso-
13th century.
1431. mortifie, transmute.
1433. Lo, om. MSS.
1434. Hermes, i.e. Hermes Trismegistus.
1435. the dragon, Mercury.
1440. Sol and Luna, i.e. gold and silver.
1447. of secrees, E the secretes.
The allusion is to the pseudo-Aristotelian Secreta Secretorum.
Also ther was a disciple of Plato
That on a tymè seyde his maister to,
As his book Senior wol bere witnesse,
And this was his demande, in soothfastnesse,
"Telle me the namè of the privee soon."
And Plato answersed unto hym anoon,
"Takè the soon that Titanos men name"—
"Which is that?" quod he. "Magnasia is the
same,"
Seydé Plato. "Ye, sire, and is it thus?
This is ignotum per ignocius.
What is Magnasia, good sire, I yow preye?"
"It is a water that is maad, I seye,
Of elementès fourè," quod Plato.
"Telle me the rootè, good sire," quod he tho,
"Of that water, if it be yourè wille."
"Nay, nay," quod Plato, "certein that I nylle;
The philosophres sworn were everychoon
That they sholden discovere it unto noon,
Ne in no book it write in no manere,
For unto Crist it is so lief and deere,
That he wol nat that it discovered bee,
But where it liketh to his deitee

1450. his book Senior, "the
told, with some varia-
book alluded to is
tions, of Solomon"
printed in the Theatrum
(Tyrwhitt). Dr. Skeat
Chemicum under this
notes that the name Plato
title: 'Senioris Zadith
occurs three times only
fil. Hamuelis tabula
a few lines below, which
chemica.' The story
explains Chaucer's mis-
which follows of Plato
take.
and his disciples is there
1461. roote, H6 roche.
Man for tenspire, and eek for to defende
Whom that hym liketh; lo, this is the ende.”

Thanne conclude I thus, sith that God of hevene
Ne wil nat that the philosophres nevene
How that a man shal come unto this stoon,
I rede as for the besté lete it goon;
For who so maketh God his adversarie,
As for to werken anythyng in contrarie
Of his wil, certés never shal he thryve,
Thogh that he multiplie terme of his lyve;
And there a poynct; for ended is my tale.
God sende every trewe man boote of his bale.

_Amen._

1470. _defende_, forbid.  1479. _of, H^5_ unto.
1473. _nevene_, name.  1481. _boote of his bale_, cure of
1475. _as, E us._  his harm.
GROUP H

Words of Divers of the Pilgrims

Woot ye nat where ther stant a litel toun,
Which that y-clepéd is Bobbe-up-and-doun,
Under the Blee in Caunterbury weye?
Ther gan oure Hoosté for to jape and pleye,
And seydé, "Siros, what! Dun is in the Myre!"
Is ther no man for prayere ne for hyre,
That wole awake oure felawe al bihynde?
A theef myght hym ful lightly robbe and bynde.
See how he nappeth, see how, for cokkes bones!
As he wol fallé fro his hors atones.

2. Bobbe-up-and-doun, usually identified with Harbledown, but in the parish of Thannington there is a field of "Up-and-Down" which, if, as is probable, the old Canterbury road took a somewhat different direction from the modern one, may be the site intended.

3. the Blee, Blean forest.

5. Dun is in the Myre (the horse is stuck), the name of an old game in which the company had to extricate a wooden "Dun" from an imaginary slough.

9. how, for cokkes, H⁴ for Goddes.

10. As, H⁴ That.
Is that a Cook of Londoun? with meschaunce!
Do hym come forth, he knoweth his penance,
For he shal telle a talé, by my fey!
Although it be nat worth a botel hey.
Awake, thou Cook," quod he, "God geve thee
sorwe!

What eyleth thee to slepe by the morwe?
Hastow had fleen al nyght, or artow dronke?
Or hastow with som queene al nyght y-swonke,
So that thow mayst nat holden up thyn heed?"

This Cook, that was ful pale and no thyng reed,
Seyde to oure Hoost, "So God my soulé blesse,
As ther is falle on me swich hevynesse,
Noot I nat why, that me were levere slepe
Thán the besté galon wyn in Chepe."

"Wel," quod the Maunciple, "if it may doon ese
To thee, sire Cook, and to no wight displesse
Which that heere rideth in this compaignye,
And that oure Hoost wole of his curteisy,
I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale,
For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale,
Thyne eyen daswen eek, as that me thynketh,
And wel I woot thy breeth ful souré stynketh,
That sheweth wel thou art nat wel disposed;
Of me certeyn thou shalt nat been y-glosed.
See how he ganeth, lo, this dronken wight!
As though he woldé swolwe us anonright.
Hoold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader kyn!

14. botel hey, bundle of hay.
29. as now, E now.
34. y-glosed, flattered.
35. ganeth, yawns.
The devel of hellé sette his foot ther-in!
Thy cursed breeth infecté Wolfe us alle.
Fy, styntkyng swyn! fy, foulé moote thou falle!
A! taketh heede, sires, of this lusty man!
Now, sweete sire, wol ye justen atte fan?
Therto me thynketh ye been wel y-shape!
I trowe that ye drunken han wyn ape,
And that is whan men pleyen with a straw.”

And with this speche the Cook wax wrooth and wraw,
And on the Manciple he gan noddé faste
For lakke of speche, and doun the hors hym caste;
Where as he lay till that men up hym took.
This was a fair chyvachee of a Cook.
Allas! he naddé holde hym by his ladel!
And er that he agayn were in his sadel
Ther was greet showvyng, bothé to and fro,
To lifte hym up, and muchel care and wo,
So unweeldy was this sory, palléd goost;
And to the Manciplé thanne spak oure Hoost:
“By-causé drynke hath dominacioun
Upon this man, by my savacioun,
I trowe, lewedly he wolde telle his tale,
For were it wyn, or oold or moysty ale,
That he hath dronke, he speketh in his nose,

42. justen atte fan, ride at the quintain.
44. wyn ape, the lion, ape, sheep, and pig represented degrees of drunkenness; the ape answering to the “joy-ous” stage, an unkind jest at the cook’s sullen-ness.
46. wraw, indignant.
50. chyvachee, adventure.
And fneseth faste, and eek he hath the pose.
He hath also to do moore than ynough
To kepe hym and his capul out of slough;
And if he fallè from his capul eftsoone,
Thanne shal we allè have ynogh to doone,
In liftyng up his hevy, dronken cors;
Telle on thy tale, of hym make I no fors.

"But yet, Manciple, in feith thou art to
nyce,
Thus openly repreve hym of his vice;
Another day he wole, peráventure,
Reclaymé thee and bryngé thee to lure,—
I meene, he spekè wole of smalé thynges
As for to pynchen at thy rekenynges:
That were nat honeste, if it cam to preef."

"No," quod the Manciple, "that were a greet
mescheef,
So myghte he lightly brynge me in the snare,
Yet hadde I levere payen for the mare
Which he rit on, than he sholde with me stryve.
I wol nat wratthe hym, al so moot I thryve!
That that I spake I seyde it in my bourde;
And wite ye what? I have heer in a gourde
A dрагhte of wyn, ye, of a ripé grape,
And right anon ye shul seen a good jape.

62. fneseth, snorts; II² sneseth.
    pose, catarrh.
64. kepe, E² kepèn.
72. lure, the bait held out to
    bring a hawk back to
    the fist.
VOL. II
This Cook shal drynke ther-of, if that I may.
Up peyne of deeth, he wol nat seye me nay."
   And certeynly, to tellen as it was,
Of this vessel the Cook dranke faste, allass!
What neded hym? he drank ynombre biforn;
And whan he hadde pouped in this horn, 90
To the Manciple he took the gourde agayn;
And of that drynke the Cook was wonder fayn,
And thankéd hym in swich wise as he koude.
   Thanne gan oure Hoost to laughen wonder
   loude,
And seyde, "I se wel it is necessarie,
Where that we goon, good drynke we with us
carie,
For that wol turné rancour and disese
Tacord and love, and many a wrong apese.
   "O thou Bacus! y-blessed be thy name!
That so kanst turnen ernest into game,
Worshipe and thank be to thy deitee!
Of that mateere ye gete namoore of me;
Telle on thy tale, Manciple, I thee preye."
   "Wel, sire," quod he, "now herkneth what I
seye."

89. hym, H3 it. 98. Tacord, to accord.
90. pouped, blown 99. thou, om. E*. 
96. good, E that.
MANCIPLE’S TALE

Heere bigynneth The Manciple’s Tale of the Crowe

Whan Phebus dwelled heere in this erthe adoun,
As oldé bookés maken mencioun,
He was the moosté lusty bachiler
In al this world, and eek the best archer.
He slow Phitoun, the serpent, as he lay
Slepynge agayn the sonne upon a day,
And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wroghte, as men may rede.

Pleyen he koude on every mynstralcie,
And syngen that it was a melodie
To heeren of his cleere voys the soun.
Certes the kyng of Thebés, Amphioun,
That with his syngyng walled that cithé,
Koude nevere syngen half so wel as hee.
Therto he was the semelieste man
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.
What nedeth it hise fetures to discryve,
For in this world was noon so fair on lyve.
He was ther-with fulfild of gentillesse,
Of honour, and of parfit worthynesse.

Manciple’s Tale. "The fable of the Crow, which is the subject of the Manciple’s Tale, has been related by so many authors from Ovid down to Gower that it is impossible to say whom Chaucer principally followed. His skill in new-dressing an old story was never, perhaps, more successfully exerted” (Tyrwhitt).
This Phebus that was flour of bachilrie,
As wel in fredom as in chivalrie,
For his desport, in signe eek of victorie
Of Phitoun, so as telleth us the storie,
Was wonto to beren in his hand a bowe.

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a crowe
Which in a cage he fostred many a day,
And taughte it speké, as men teche a jay.
Whit was this crowe as is a snow-whit swan,
And countrefete the speche of every man
He koudé, whan he sholdé telle a tale;
Ther-with in al this world no nyghtyngale
Ne koudé, by an hondred thousand deel,
Syngen so wonder myrily and weel.

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a wyf,
Which that he lovede moore than his lyf,
And nyght and day dide evere his diligence
Hir for to plese, and doon hire reverence;
Save oonly, if the sothe that I shal sayn,
Jalous he was and wolde have kept hire fayn,
For hym were looth byjapéd for to be;
And so is every wight in swich degree;
But all in ydel, for it availleth noght.
A good wyf that is clene of werk and thoght
Sholde nat been kept in noon awayt certayn;
And trewely the labour is in vayn
To kepe a shrewé, for it wol nat bee.

132. teche, H3 doon.
133. is, om. E.
143. if, om. E3.
147. in ydel, H4 for nought.
149. in noon awayt, under any watch.
This holde I for a verray nycetee
To spillè labour for to kepè wyves;
Thus writen oldè clerkès in hir lyves.

But now to purpos, as I first bigan;
This worthy Phebus dooth all that he kan
To plesen hire, wenynge by swich plesaunce,
And for his manhede and his governaunce,
That no man sholde han put hym from hire grace;
But God it woot, ther may no man embrace
As to destreyne a thyng which that nature
Hath natureelly set in a creature.

Taak any bryd, and put it in a cage,
And do al thyn entente, and thy corage,
To fostre it tendrely with mete and drynke
Of allè deyntees that thou kanst bithynke,
And keepe it al so clenly as thou may,
Al though his cage of gold be never so gay,
Yet hath this brid by twenty thousand foold
Levere in a forest that is rude and coold,
Goon etè wormès and swich wrecchednesse;
For evere this brid wol doon his bisynesse
To escape out of his cagè, if he may;
His libertee this brid desireth ay.

Lat take a cat, and fostre hym wel with milk
And tendré flessh, and make his couche of silk,
And lat hym seen a mous go by the wal,

157. by, E² that, Heng. for.
161. destreyne, constrain.
167. clenly, H kyndly.
170. in a, H to be in.
170. rude, Corp.³ wilde; H wyd, omitting that is.
173. if, H³ when.
176. couche, H bed.
Anon he weyveth milk, and flessh, and al,
And every deyntee that is in that hous,
Swich appetit he hath to ete a mous.
Lo, heere hath lust his dominacioun,
And appetit fleemeth discrecioun.
A she-wolf hath also a vileyns kynde;
The lewedesté wolf that she may fynde,
Or leest of reputacioun, that wol she take
In tymé whan hir lust to han a make.
Alle thise ensamples speke I by thise men
That been untrewé, and no thyng by wommen;
For men han eveere a likerous appetit,
On lower thyng to parfourne hir delit
Than on hire wyvés, be they never so faire,
Ne never so trewe, ne so debonaire;
Flessh is so newéfangel, with meschaunce!
That we ne konne in no thyng han plesaunce,
That sowneth into vertu, any while.
This Phebus, which that thoghte upon no gile,
Deceyvèd was for al his’jolitee,
For under hym another hadde shee,
A man of litel reputacioun,
Nat worth to Phebus in comparisoun;
The moore harm is, it happeth ofte so,
Of which ther cometh muchel harm and wo.
And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent,
His wyf anon hath for hir lemmman sent.

178. weyveth, abandons.
182. fleemeth, chases away.
183. kynde, nature.
185. that, H him.
187. speke, H tell.
195. sowneth into, tends to.
"Hir lemmam?" certes this is a knavyssh speche!
Forgeveth it me, and that I yow biseche.

The wisé Plato séith, as ye may rede,
"The word moot nede accordé with the dede;"
If men shal tellé properly a thyng
The word moot cosyn be to the werkyng.
I am a boystous man; right thus seye I,
Ther nys no difference trewély
Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree,
If of hire bodydishoneste she bee,
And a pouré wenche, oother than this,—
If it so be they werké both amys,—
But that the gentile in hire estaat above,
She shal be cleped his "lady," as in love;
And for that oother is a poure womman,
She shal be cleped his "wenche," or his "lemman,"
And God it woot, myn owene deeré brother,
Men leyn that oon as lowe as lith that oother.

Right so bitwixe a titleless tiraunt
And an outlawe, or a theef erraunt,
The same I seye, ther is no difference,—
To Alisaundré was toold this sentence,—
That for the tiraunt is of gretter myght
By force of meyne, for to sleen doun right,
And brennen hous and hoom, and make al playn,
Lo, therfore is he cleped a "capitayn;"


211. boystous, rough.

223. titleless, i.e. without good claim to his throne.
And for the outlawe hath but smal meynee,
And may nat doon so greet an harm as he,
Ne brynge a contree to so greet mescheef,
Men clepen hym an "outlawe," or a "theef;"
But for I am a man noght textueel,
I wol noght tellé of textés never a deel;
I wol'go to my tale as I bigan.
Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir lemman,
Anon they wroghten al hire lust volage.

The white crowe that heeng ay in the cage
Biheeld hire werk and seydé never a word;
And whan that hoom was come Phebus, the lord,
This crowe sang "Cokkow! Cokkow! Cokkow!"

"What! bryd," quod Phebus, "what song
syngestow?"
Ne were thow wont so myrily to synge
That to myn herte it was a rejoysynge
To heere thy voys? Allas! what song is this?"

"By God!" quod he, "I synge nat amys.
Phebus," quod he, "for al thy worthynesse,
For al thy beautee and thy gentilesse,
For al thy song and al thy mynstralcye,
For al thy waitying, bleréd is thyn eye
With oon of litel reputacioun,
Noght worth to thee as in comparisoun
The montance of a gnat, so moote I thryve!
For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh hym swyve."

What wol ye moore? The crowe anon hym tolde
By saddé tokens, and by wordés bolde,
How that his wyf had doon hire lecherye,
Hym to greet shame and to greet vileyny,
And tolde hym ofte he saugh it with his eyen.

This Phebus gan aweyward for to wryen,
And thoughte his sorweful herté brast atwo;
His bowe he bente, and sette ther-inne a flo,
And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he slayn,—
This is theeffect, ther is namoore to sayn;
For sorwe of which he brak his mynstralci,
Bothe harpe, and lute, and gyterne, and sautrie,
And eek he brak hise arwes and hise bowe,
And after that thus spak he to the crowe:

"Traitour," quod he, "with tonge of scorpioun
Thou hast me broght to my confusioun.
Allas! that I was wroght! why nere I deed?
O deeré wyf! O gemme of lustiheed!
That were to me so sad, and eek so trewe,
Now listow deed, with facé pale of hewe,
Ful gyltéles,—that dorste I swere, y-wys!
O rakel hand! to doon so foule amys.
O trouble wit! O ire, recchéles!
That unavyséd smyteth gyltéles!
O wantrust! ful of fals suspeciou,
Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?

258. sadde, earnest. 276. listow, liest thou.
262. wryen, turn. 277. gyltéles, E4 gillees.
263. And, H4 Hym. 278. rakel, hasty.
264. fleo, dart. 279. 280. recchéles... gillees,
265. his wyf, etc., H4 he hath 279. 280. recchéles... gillees,
(hath he) his wyf i-slayn. E recchéles... gillees.
273. wroght, H born. 281. wantrust, distrustful.
O every man, be war of rakenesse,
Ne trowe no thyng withouten strong witnesse.
Smyt nat to soone, er that ye witen why;
And beeth avyséd wel and sobrely,
Er ye doon any executioun
Upon youre iré for suspectioun!
Allas! a thousand folk hath raken ire
Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the mire!
Allas! for sorwe I wol myselven slee."

And to the crowe, "O falsé theef!" seyde he,
"I wol thee quite anon thy falsé tale.
Thou songé whilom lyk a nyghtyngale;
Now shaltow, falsé theef, thy song forgon,
And eek thy white fetherés everichon;
Ne nevere in al thy lif ne shaltou speke;
Thus shal men on a traytour been awreke.
Thou, and thyn of-spryng, evere shul be blake,
Ne nevere sweeté noysé shul ye make,
But evere crie agayn tempest and rayn,
In tokenynge that thurgh thee my wyf is slayn."
And to the crowe he stirte, and that anon,
And pulled hisé white fetherés everychon,
And made hym blak, and refte hym all his song,
And eek his speche, and out at dore hym slong,
Unto the devel, which I hym bitake!
And for this caas been allé crowës blake.

Lordynges, by this ensample I yow preye,
Beth war, and taketh kepè what I seye;
Ne telleth nevere no man in youré lyf
How that another man hath dight his wyf;
He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.
Daun Salomon, as wisé clerkés seyn,
Techeth a man to kepen his tonge weel;
But as I seyde, I am noght textueel,
But nathèles, thus taughté me my dame:
"My sone, thenk on the crowe, on Goddés name;
My sone, keepe wel thy tonge and keepe thy freend;
A wikked tonge is worsé than a feend;
My soné, from a feend men may hem blesse;
My sone, God of his endeles goodnesse
Wallèd a tonge with teeth and lippés eke,
For man sholde hym avysé what he speeke;
My sone, ful ofte for to muché speche
Hath many a man been spilt, as clerkés teche,
Bút for litel speche avysély
Is no man shent, to speké generally.
My sone, thy tongé sholdestow restreyne
At allé tymes, but whan thou doost thy peyne
To speke of God, in honour and preyere.
The firsté vertu, sone, if thou wolt leere,
Is to restreyne and kepè wel thy tonge;
Thus lerné children whan that they been yonge.
My sone, of muchel spekyng yvele avysed,
Ther lassé spekyng hadde ynough suffised,
Comth muchèl harm, thus was me toold and taught;

310. I seye, H₄ ye seye.  316. textueel, H₄ texted (text) wel.
318. on, H in, Heng.₅ a.
In muchel spechē synné wanteth naught. Wostow wher-of a rakel tongē serveth? Right as a swerd for-kutteth and for-kerveth 340 An arm atwo, my deerē sone, right so A tongē kutteth freendshiphe al atwo. A jangler is to God abhomynable. Reed Salomon, so wys and honourable, Reed David in hise Psalmēs, reek Senekke. 345 My sone, spek nat, but with thyn heed thou bekke; Dissimule as thou were deef, if that thou heere A jangler speke of perilous mateere. The Flemyng seith, and lerne it if thee leste, That ‘litel janglyng causeth muchel rest.’ 350 My sone, if thou no wikked word hast seyd, Thee thar nat drede for to be biwreyd; But he that hath mysseyd, I dar wel sayn, He may by no wey clepe his word-agayn. Thyng that is seyd is seyd, and forth it gooth, 355 Though hym repente, or be hym leef or looth. He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd A tale of which he is now yvele apayd. My sone, be war, and be noon auctour newe Of tidynges, whetheir they been false or trewe; 360 Wher so thou come, amongēs hye or lowe, Kepe wel thy tonge, and thenk upon the crowe.”

352. thar, need. 354. clepe, call. 356. leef or, H4 never so.
GROUP I

Heere folweth the Prologe of the Persons Tale

By that the Maunciple hadde his tale al ended
The sonné fro the south lyne was descended
So lowé that he ne nas nat to my sighte
Degreës nyne-and-twenty as in highte;
[Foure] of the clonke it was tho, as I gesse,
For ellevene foot, or litel moore or lesse,
My shadwe was at thilké tyme, as there,
Of swiche feet as my lengthè parted were
In sixe feet equal of proporcioyn.
Ther-with the moonës exaltacioun,
I meene Libra, alwey gan ascende

1. the Maunciple, according to the notes of time some other tales must have intervened, and Maunciple is only the guess of the copyists.
2. was, II⁴ is.
3. Foure, MSS. Ten, which accords with neither line 4 nor line 72.
4. as there, i.e. in that latitu-
As we were entryng at a thropés ende; For which our Hoost, as he was wont to gye, As in this caas, oure joly compaignye, Seyde in this wisé, "Lordynges everichoon; Now lakketh us no talés mo than oon; Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree; I trowe that we han herd of ech degree. Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce; I pray to God so geve hym right good chaunce That telleth this tale to us lustily.

"Sire Preest," quod he, "artow a vicary, Or arte a Person? sey sooth, by thy fey! Be what thou be, ne breke thou nat our pley, For every man save thou hath toold his tale. Unbokele, and shewe us what is in thy male; For treweý, me thynketh by thy cheere, Thou sholdest knytte up wel a greet mateere. Telle us a fable anon, for cokkès bones!"

This Persoune answerde al atones,

"Thou getest fable noon y-toold for me, For Paul, that writeth unto Thymothee, Repreveth hem that weyveth soothefastnesse, And tellen fables, and swich wrecchednesse. Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest, Whan I may sowen whete, if that me lest?

12. *thropes*, hamlet's. 22. *vicary*. Person, like a rector the parson claimed the great tithes as well as the small; a vicar had to surrender them to a monastery or layman.


34. *draf*, dregs.
For which I seye, if that yow list to heere
Moralitee and vertuous mateere,
And thanne that ye wol geve me audience,
I wol ful fayn, at Cristés reverence,
Do yow plesaunce leefull, as I kan;
But, trusteth wel, I am a southren man,
I kan nat geeste 'rum, ram, ruf;' by lettre;
Ne, God woot, rym holde I but litel bettre;
And thensore, if yow list,—I wol nat glose,—
I wol yow telle a myrie tale in prose,
To knytte up al this feeste, and make an ende;
And Jhesu, for his gracie, wit me sende
To shewè yow the wey, in this viage,
Of thilké parfit, glorious pilgrimag, 50
That highte Jerusalem celestial;
And if ye vouchesaf, anon I shal
Bigynne upon my tale, for whiche I preye
Telle youre avys. I kan no bettre seye.

"But nathèles this meditacioun
I putte it ay under correccioun
Of clerkès, for I am nat textueel.
I takè but the sentencè, trusteth weel;
Therfore I make a protestacioun
That I wol stondè to correccioun."

Upon this word we han assented soone,
For as us seméd, it was for to doone,

40. *ful*, om. E.
41. *leeful*, lawful.
43. *geeste*, etc., tell tales in alliterative metres like the northern poets.
44. *rym*, rhyme.
58. *the* (om. E) *sentence*, meaning as opposed to letter.
To enden in som vertuous sentence,
And for to geve hym space and audience;
And bede oure Hoost he sholdé to hym seye
That allè we to telle his tale hym preye.

Oure Hoosté hadde the wordés for us alle:
"Sire Preest," quod he, "now fairè yow bifalle!
Sey what yow list, and we wol gladly heere;"
And with that word, he seyde in this manere:
"Telleth," quod he, "youre meditacioun;
But hasteth yow, the sonné woèle adoun.
Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,
And to do wel, God sendé yow his grace."

PARSON'S TALE

Heere bigynneth the Persouns Tale

[75] Oure sweetè Lord God of hevene, that no man
wole perisse, but wole that we comen alle to the
knoweleche of hym and the blissful lif that is perdu-

Parson's Tale. The treatise
on the Deadly Sins and
their cure which is
wedged into this account
of Penitence is taken
from the Somme de
Vices et de l'Vertus of
Frère Lorens, a thir-
teenth century writer.
Chaucer's authorship of
these sections has been
doubted, perhaps need-
lessly; but the sermon
is unmercifully long.
Jer. vi., v. 16.
semitis, Eviiis.
75. that no man wole perisse,
who desires to destroy
no man.
perdurable, lasting.
able, amonesteth us by the prophete Jeremie, and seith in this wyse: "Stondeth upon the weyes, and seeth, and axeth of olde pathes, that is to seyn olde sentences, which is the goode wey, and walketh in that wey, and ye shal fynde refreshynge for youre soules."

Manye been the weyes espirituels that leden folk to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and to the regne of glorie; [86] of whiche weyes ther is a ful noble wey, and a covenable, which may nat fayle to man, ne to womman, that thurgh synne hath mysgoon fro the righte wey of Jerusalem celestial, and this wey is cleped penitence; of which man sholde gladly herknen and enquire with al his herte to wyten what is penitence, and whennes it is cleped penitence, and in how manye maneres been theacciouns or werkynge of penitence, and how manye species ther been of penitence, and whiche thynges aperten in and bihoven to penitence, and whiche thynges destourben penitence.

Seint Ambrose seith that penitence is the pleynynge of man for gilt that he hath doon and namoore to do any thyng for which hym oghte to pleyne; [85] and som doctour seith, "Penitence is the waymentynge of man that sorweth for his synne, and pyneth hym self for he hath mysdoon." Penitence with certeyne circumstancies is verray repentance of a man that halt hym self in sorwe and oother peyne for his giltes;

76. amonesteth, warns. 77. sentences, maxims. 80. covenable (suitable), H6 ful covenable.
81. man ... his, H6 men
... H2 here.
85. waymentynge, lamenting.
 oother peyne, H in woo.

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and for he shall be verray penitent, he shal first biwaylen the synnes that he hath doon and stidestalyst purpisen in his herte to have shrift of mouthe and to doon satisfaccioun, and nevere to doon thyng for which hym oghte moore biwayne or to compleyne, and continue in goode werkes, or elles his repentance may nat availle; for, as seith Seint Ysidre, "He is a japer and a gabber and no verray repentant that eftsoone dooth thyng for which hym oghte repente." [90] Wepynge, and nat for to stynt to do synne, may nat avaylle; but natheelees men shal hope that at every tyme that man falleth, be it never so ofte, that he may arise thurghe penitence if he have grace; but certeiny it is greet doute, for, as seith Seint Gregorie, unnethe ariseth he out of his synne that is charged with the charge of yvel usage; and therfore repentant folk that stynte for to synne, and forlete synne er that synne forlete hem, hooly chirche holdeth hem siker of hire savacioun. And he that synneth and verraily repenteth hym in his laste ende, hooly chirche yet hopeth his savacioun, by the grete mercy of oure Lord Jhesu Crist for his repentaunce; but taak the siker wey.

[95] And now sith I have declared yow what thyng is penitence, now shul ye understonde that ther been thre acciouns of penitence. The firste accioun of penitence is that a man be baptized after that he hath

87. shrift of mouthe, verbal confession.  92. his, om. E.
89. Seint Ysidre, St. Isidore.  94. ende, om. E3.
   at every tyme, E om. at.  that a man, H4 that if a man.
synned. Seint Augustyn seith, "But he be penytent for his olde synful lyf, he may nat bigynne the newe clene lif;" for certes, if he be baptized withouten penitence of his olde gilt, he receyveth the mark of baptesme, but nat the grace, ne the remission of his synnes, til he have repentance verry. Another daute is this, that men doon deedly synne after that they han receyved baptesme. [100] The thridde daute is that men fallen in venial synnes after hir baptesme fro day to day. Ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that penitence of goode and humble folk is the penitence of every day.

The species of penitence been thre. That oon of hem is solempne, another is commune, and the thridde is privee. Thilke penance that is solempne is in two maneres; as to be put out of hooly chirche in Lente for slaughtre of children, and swich maner thyng. Another thyng is whan a man hath synned openly, of which synne the fame is openly spoken in the contree, and thanne hooly chirche by juggement destreyneth hym for to do open penaunce. [105] Commune penaunce is that preestes enjoynen men in certeyn caas, as for to goon peraventure naked in pilgrimages, or bare-foot. Pryvee penaunce is thilke that men doon aldai for privee synnes, of whiche they shryve hem prively, and receyve privee penaunce.

104. Another thyng, H\(^6\) om. thyng.

destreyneth, constrains.

105. enjoynen men, H\(^6\) enjoynen men communly.
naked, i.e. without upper garments.
Now shaltow understande what is bihovely and necessarie to verray perfite penitence. And this stant on thre thynges: Contricioun of herte, Confessioun of mouth, and Satisfaccioun; for which seith Seint John Crisostom, "Penitence destreyneth a man to accepte benygnely every peyne that hym is enjoyned with contricioun of herte, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaccioun, and in werkyng of alle manere humilitee;" [110] and this is fruytful penitence agayn thre thynges in whiche we wratthe oure Lord Jhesu Crist. This is to seyn, by delit in thynkyng, by recchelesnesse in spekynge, and by wikked synful werkyng; and agayns thise wikkedede giltes is penitence that may be likned unto a tree.

The roote of this tree is contricioun, that hideth hym in the herte of hym that is verray repentaunt, right as the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the erthe. Of the roote of contricioun spryngeth a stalke, that bereth braunches and leves of confessioun, and fruyt of satisfaccioun. [115] For which Crist seith in his gospel, "Dooth digny fruyt of penitence;" for by this fruyt may men knowe this tree, and nat by the roote that is hyd in the herte of man, ne by the braunches, ne by the leves of confessioun; and therfore oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith thus, "By the fruyt of hem ye shul knowen hem." Of this roote eek spryngeth a seed of grace, the which seed is mooder of sikerness, and this seed is egre and hoot. The grace of this seed spryngeth of God
thurg remembrance of the day of doome and on the peynes of helle. Of this matere seith Salomon, that in the drede of God man forleteth his synne. [120] The heete of this seed is the love of God, and the desiryng of the joye perdurable. This heete draweth the herte of a man to God, and dooth hym haten his synne; for soothly ther is no thyng that savoureth so wel to a child as the milk of his norice, ne no thyng moore abhomynable than thilke milk whan it is medled with oother mete. Right so the synful man that loveth his synne, hym semeth that it is to him moost sweete of any thyng; but fro that tyme that he loveth sadly oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and desireth the lif perdurable, ther nys to him no thyng moore abhomynable; [125] for soothly the lawe of God is the love of God. For which David the prophete seith, “I have loved thy lawe, and hated wikkednesse and hate; he that loveth God kepeth his lawe and his word.” This tree saugh the prophete Daniel in spirit upon the avysioun of Nabugodonosor, whan he con-seiled hym to do penitence. Penaunce is the tree of lyf to hem that it receyven, and he hath holdeth hym in verray penitence is blessed, after the sentence of Salomon.

In this penitence or contricioun man shal under-stonde foure thynges; that is to seyn, what is con-tricioun, and whiche been the causes that moeven a

122. ne no thyng, H* ne no thyng is to him.
124. sadly, constantly.
216. in spirit upon the avysioun
126. Nabugodonosor, Nebuchadnezzar.
man to contricioun, and how he sholde be contrit, and what contricioun availleth to the soule. Thanne is it thus that contricioun is the verray sorwe that a man receyveth in his herte for his synnes, with sad purpos to shryve hym and to do penaunce, and neveremoore to do synne; [130] and this sorwe shall been in this manere, as seith Seint Bernard; it shall been heavy and grevous, and ful sharpe and poynant in herte. First, for man hath agilt his Lord and his Creatour, and moore sharpe and poynaunt for he hath agilt hys Fader celestial, and yet moore sharpe and poynaunt for he hath wrathed and agilt hym that boghte hym, which with his precious blood hath delivered us fro the bondes of synne, and fro the crueltee of the devel, and fro the peynes of helle.

The causes that oghte moeve a man to contricioun been sexe. First, a man shal remembre hym of hise synnes; but looke he that thilke remembraunce ne be to hym no delit by no wey, but greet shame and sorwe for his girt; for Job seith, synful men doon werkes worthy of confessioun. [135] And therfore seith Ezechie, “I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lyf in bitternesse of myn herte.” And God seith in the Apocalipse, “Remembreth yow fro whennes that ye been falle;” for biforn that tyme that ye synned ye were the children of God, and lymes of the regne of God; but for youre synne ye been woxen thral and foul, and membres of the feend, hate of

131. agilt, deceived, wronged.
aungels, sclaunde of hooly chirche, and foode of the false serpent, perpetueel matere of the fir of helle; and yet moore foul and abhomynable, for ye trespassen so ofte tyme as dooth the hound that retourneth to eten his spewyng; and yet be ye fouler for youre longe continuynge in synne and youre synful usage, for which ye be roten in youre synne as a beest in his dong. [140] Swiche manere of thoghtes maken a man to have shame of his synne and no delit, as God seith by the prophete Ezechiel, “Ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes and they shuln displese yow.” Soothly synnes been the weyes that leden folk to helle.

The seconde cause that oghte make a man to have desdayn of synne is this, that, as seith Seint Peter, “Who-so that dooth synne is thral of synne;” and synne put a man in greet thraldom, and thersfore seith the prophete Ezechiel, “I wente sorweful in desdayn of my self;” and certes, wel oghte a man have desdayn of synne and withdwre hym from that thraldom and vileynye. And lo, what seith Seneca in this matere? He seith thus: “Though I wiste that God—neither God ne man—ne sholde nevere knowe it, yet wolde I have desdayn for to do synne.” [145] And the same Seneca also seith, “I am born to gretter thynges than to be thrall to my body, or than for to maken of my body a thrall;” ne a fouler thrall may no man ne womman maken of his body than for to geven his body to synne. Al were it the fouleste cherl, or

137. sclaunde, slander.
the fouleste womman that lyveth, and leest of value, yet is he thanne moore foule and moore in servitute. Evere fro the hyer degree that man falleth, the moore is he thral, and moore to God and to the world vile and abhomynable. O goode God! wel oghte man have desdayn of synne, sith that thurgh synne ther he was free now is he maked bonde; [150] and therfore seyth Seint Augustyn, “If thou hast desdayn of thy servant, if he agilte, or synne, have thou thanne desdayn that thou thyself sholdest do synne; take reward of thy value, that thou ne be to foul to thyself.” Allas! wel oghten they thanne have desdayn to been servaun tz and thralles to synne, and soore been ashamed of hem self, that God of his endeles goodnesse hath set hem in heigh estaat, or geven hem wit, strengthe of body, heele, beautee, prosperitee, and boghte hem fro the deeth with his herte blood, that they so unkyndely agayns his gentilesse quiten hym so vileynsly to slaughtre of hir owene soules. [155] O goode God! ye wommen that been of so greet beautee, remembreth yow of the proverbe of Salomon, he seith, “Likneth a fair womman that is a fool of hire body lyk to a ryng of gold that were in the groyn of a soughe, for right as a soughe wroteth in everich ordure, so wroteth hire beautee in the stynkynge ordure of synne.”

The thridde cause that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is drede of the day of doome and of the

148. vile and, om. E. 156. soughe, sow.
151. reward, regard. 157. wroteth, digs with the snout.
horrible peynes of helle; for as Seint Jerome seith, "At every tyme that me remembreth of the day of doome, I quake, [160] for whan I ete, or drynke, or what so that I do, evere semeth me that the trompe sowneth in myn ere, 'Riseth up, ye that been dede, and cometh to the juggement.'" O goode God! muchel oghte a man to drede swich a juggement, ther as we shullen been alle, as Seint Poul seith, biforn the seete of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, wher as he shal make a general congregacioun, wher as no man may been absent, for certes there availleth noon essoyne, ne excusacioun. [165] And nat oonly that oure defautes shullen be jugged, but eek that alle oure werkes shullen openly be knowe. And as seith Seint Bernard, "Ther ne shal no pledyne availle ne sleighte, we shullen geven rekenynge of everich ydel word, ther shul we han a juge that may nat been deceyved ne corrupt." And why? for certes alle oure thoughtes been discovered as to hym; ne for preyere, ne for meede, he shal nat been corrupt. And therfore seith Salomon, "The wratthe of God wol nat be corrupte;" and therefore saith Salomon, "The wrecche ne wol nat spare no wight for preyere ne for gifte;" and therfore, at the day of doom ther nys noon hope to escape.

Wherfore, as seith Seint Anselm, "Ful great angwyssh shul the synful folk have at that tyme.

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164. essoyne, excuse for non-appearance.
168. wol nat be . . . the wrecche, om. E3.
       wrecche, vengeance.
[170] Ther shal the stierne and wrothe juge sitte above, and under hym the horrible put of helle open to destroyen hym that moot biknownen his synnes, whiche synnes openly been shewed biforn God and biforn every creature; and in the left syde mo develes than herte may bithynke, for to harye and drawe the synful soules to the peyne of helle; and withinne the hertes of folk shal be the bitynge conscience, and withoute forth shal be the world al brennynge." Whider shal thanne the wrecched synful man flee to hiden hym? Certes, he may nat hyden hym,—he moste come forth and shewen hym; for certes, as seith Seint Jerome, "The erthe shal casten hym out of hym, and the see also, and the eyr also, that shal be ful of thonder clappes and lightnynges."

[175] Now soothe, who so wel remembreth hym of thise thynge, I gesse that his synne shal nat turne hym to delit, but to greet sorwe, for drede of the peyne of helle. And therfore seith Job to God, "Suffre, Lord, that I may awhile biwaille, and wepe, er I go withoute returnynge to the derke lond covered with the derknesse of deeth, to the lond of mysese and of derknesse, where as is the shadwe of deeth, where as ther is noon ordre or ordinaunce, but grisly drede that evere shal laste." Loo, heere may ye seen that Job preyde respit a while to biwpe and waille his trespas, for soothe oon day of respit is bettre than al

170. put, pit. 175. to delit, E in delit. 176. noot, E noot. 177. into delit. biknownen, confess. mysese, discomfort. 178. oon day, E a day.
the tresor of this world; and forasmuche as a man may acquiten hymself biforn God by penitence in this world, and nat by tresor, therfore sholde he preye to God to geve hym respit a while to biwepe and bi-waillen his trespas; [180] for certes, al the sorwe that a man myghte make fro the bigynnnyng of the world nys but a litel thyng at regard of the sorwe of helle.

The cause why that Job clepeth helle the lond of derknesse. Understonde that he clepeth it londe or erthe, for it is stable and nevere shal faille; dirk, for he that is in helle hath defaute of light material, for certes, the derke light that shal come out of the fyr that evere shal brenne shal turne hym al to payne that is in helle, for it sheweth hym to the horrible deveses that hym tormenten; covered with the derknesse of deeth; that is to seyn, that he that is in helle shal have defaute of the sighte of God; for certes, the sighte of God is the lyf perdurable.

[185] The derknesse of deeth been the synnes that the wrecched man hath doon, whiche that destourben hym to see the face of God, right as dooth a derk clowde bitwixe us and the sonne. Lond of misese, by-cause that ther been thre maneres of defautes agayn thre thynges that folk of this world han in this present lyf; that is to seyn, honours, delices, and richesses. Agayns honour have they in helle shame and cons-fusioun; for wel ye woot that men clepen honour the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is noon honour ne reverence, for certes, namoore reverence

178. this world, E the world. 182. or erthe, E of erthe.
shal be doon there to a kyng than to a knave. For which God seith by the prophete Jeremye, "Thilke folk that me despisen shul been in despit." [190] Honour is eek cleped greet lordshipe. Ther, shal no wight serven oother but of harm and torment. Honour is eek cleped greet dignyteee and heighnesse, but in helle shul they been al forstoden of develes. And God seith, "The horrible develes shulle goon and comen upon the hevedes of the damned folk;" and this is forasmuche as the hyer that they were in this present lyf, the moore shulle they been abated and desouled in helle.

Agayns the richesses of this world shul they han mysese of povertie; and this povertie shal been in foure thynges. In defaute of tesor, of which that David seith, "The riche folk that embraced and oneden al hire herte to tesor of this world, shul slepe in the slepynge of deeth, and no thyng ne shal they fynden in hir handes of al hir tesor." And mooreover the myseyse of helle shal been in defaute of mete and drinke, [195] for God seith thus by Moyses, "They shul been wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shul devouren hem with the bitter deeth, and the galle of the dragon shal been hire drynke, and the venym of the dragon hire morsels." And fortherover hire myseyse shal been in defaute of clothynge, for they shulle be naked in body, as of clothynge, save

190. Ther shal . . . dignyteee, 193. oneden, devoted entirely.
    om. E. 195. the bitter deeth, H bitter teeth.
191. hevedes, heads.
the fyr in which they brenne, and othere filthes; and naked shul they been of soule, as of alle manere vertues which that is the clothyng of the soule. Where been thanne the gaye robes, and the softe shetes, and the smale shertes? Loo, what seith God of hem by the prophete Ysaye? That under hem shul been strawed mothhes, and hire covertures shulle been of wormes of helle. And forther-over hir myseyse shal been in defaute of frendes, for he nys nat poure that hath goode frendes; but there is no frend; [200] for neither God, ne no creature, shal been freend to hem; and everich of hem shal haten oother with deedly hate. The sones and the doghtren shullen rebellen agayns fader and mooder, and kynrede agayns kynrede, and chiden and despisen everich of hem oother bothe day and nyght, as God seith by the prophete Michias. And the lovynge children that whilom loveden so flesshly everich oother wolden everich of hem eten oother if they myghte; for how sholden they love togidre in the peyne of helle, whan they hated ech of hem oother in the prosperitee of this lyf? For truste wel, hir flesshly love was deedly hate, as seith the prophete David, "Whoso that loveth wikkednesse he hateth his soule;" [205] and whoso hateth his owene soule, certes, he may love noon oother wight in no manere; and therfore in helle is no solas, ne no freendshipe, but evere the moore flesshly kynredes that been in helle, the moore

197. softe . . smeale, E transposes the epithets.
203. togidre, H6 hem togidre.
cursynges, the more chidynges, and the moore deedly hate ther is among hem.

And forther-over they shul have defaute of alle manere delices; for certes delices been after the appetites of the five wittes, as sighte, herynge, smell-ynge, savorynge, [210] and touchynge: but in helle hir sighte shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke, and therfore ful of teeres, and hir herynge ful of wayment-ynge and of gryntyngge of teeth, as seith Jhesu Crist. Hir nose-thirles shullen be ful of stynkynge stynk; and, as seith Ysaye the prophete, hir savoryng shal be ful of bitter galle; and touchynge of al hir body y-covered with fir that nevere shal quench and with wormes that nevere shul dyen, as God seith by the mouth of Ysaye. And forasmuch as they shul nat wene that they may dyen for peyne, and by hir deeth flee fro peyne, that may they understonden by the word of Job, that seith, "Ther as is the shadwe of deeth." Certes a shadwe hath the likness of the thynge of which it is shadwe, but shadwe is nat the same thynge of which it is shadwe. Right so fareth the peyne of helle; it is lyk deeth for the horrible angwissh; and why? For it peyneth hem evere as though they sholde dye anon, but certes, they shal nat dye, for as seith Seint Gregorie, "To wrecche caytyves shal be deeth withoute deeth, and ende withouten ende, and defaute withoute failynge, [215] for hir deeth shal alwey lyven and hir ende shal everemo bigynne, and hir defaute shal nat faille;" and therfore seith

211. nose-thirles, nostrils.
Seint John the Evaungelist, "They shullen folwe deeth and they shul nat fynde hym, and they shul desiren to dye and deeth shal flee fro hem."

And eek Job seith that in helle is noon ordre of rule, and al be it so that God hath creat alle thynges in right ordre and no thyng withouten ordre, but alle thynges been ordeyned and nombred; yet nathelees, they that been dampped been no thyng in the ordre, ne holden noon ordre, for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt, [220] for, as the prophete David seith, "God shal destroie the fruyt of the erthe as fro hem, ne water ne shal geve hem no moisture, ne the eyr no refresshyng, ne fyr no light." For as seith Seint Basilie, "The brennynge of the fyr of this world shal God geven in helle to hem that been dampped, but the light and the cleernesse shal be geven in hevene to hise children, right as the goode man geveth flessh to hise children and bones to his houndes." And for they shullen have noon hope to escape, seith Seint Job atte laste, that ther shal horrour and grisly drede dwelwen withouten ende.

Horrour is alwey drede of harm that is to come, and this drede shal evere dwelle in the herties of hem that been dampped; and therfore han they lorn al hire hope for severe causes. [225] First, for God that is hir juge shal be withouten mercy to hem, and they may nat plese hym ne noon of hise halwes; ne they ne may geve no thyng for hir raunsoun; ne they have no voyts to speke to hym; ne they may nat fle fro

225. halwes, saints.
peyne; ne they have no goodnesse in hem that they mowe shewe to delivere hem fro peyne. And therefore seith Salomon, "The wikked man dyeth, and whan he is deed he shal have noon hope to escape fro peyne." Whoso thanne wolde wel understande these peynes and bithynke hym weel that he hath deserved thilke peynes for his synnes, certes, he sholde have moore talent to siken and to wepe, than for to syngen and to pleye, for as that seith Salomon, "Whoso that hadde the science to know the peynes that been establisshed and ordeyned for synne, he wolde make sorwe." [230] Thilke science, as seith Seint Augustyn, maketh a man to waymenten in his herte.

The fourthe point that oghte maken a man to have contricioun is the sorweful remembraunce of the good that he hath left to doon heere in erthe, and eek the good that he hath lorn. Soothly, the goode werkes that he hath [lorn], outhere they been the goode werkes that he hath wroght er he fel into deedly synne, or elles the goode werkes that he wroghte while he lay in synne. Soothly, the goode werkes that he dide biforn that he fil in synne been al mortesfied and astoned, and dulled, by the ofte synnyng. The othere goode werkes that he wroghte while he lay in deedly synne, thei been outrely dede as to the lyf perdurable in hevene.

228. these peynes, E the peynes. 231. left to doon, left undone;
talent, desire. Camb.⁴ lost to don.
siken, sigh. 232. [lorn], EH³ left, Camb.⁴
lost.
Thanne thilke goode werkes that been mortised by ofte synnyng, whiche goode werkes he dide whil he was in charitee, ne mowe nevere quyken agayn withouten verray penitence; and ther-of seith God by the mouth of Ezechiel, “That if the rightful man returne agayn from his rightwisnesse and werke wikkednesse, shal he lyve? Nay, for alle the goode werkes that he hath wroght ne shul nevere been in remembrance, for he shal dyen in his synne.” And upon thilke chapitre seith Seint Gregorie thus: “That we shullle understonde this principally, that whan we doon deedly synne it is for noght thanne to rehercen or drawen into memorie the goode werkes that we han wroght biforn;” [240] for certes, in the werkynge of the deedly synne ther is no trust to no good werk that we han doon biforn, that is for to seyn, as for to have therby the lyf perdurable in hevene; but natheelees, the goode werkes quyken agayn and comen agayn and helpen and availlen to have the lyf perdurable in hevene whan we han contricioun. But soothly, the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne, forasmuch as they were doon in deedly synne, they may nevere quyke agayn; for certes, thynge that nevere hadde lyf may nevere quykene; and natheelees, al be it that they ne availlen noght to han the lyf perdurable, yet availlen they to abregge of the peyne of helle, or elles to geten temporal richesse, or elles that God wole the rather enlumyne and lightne the herte of the synful man to

239. it is for noght, it is useless.
have repentance. [245] And eek they availlen for to usen a man to doon goode werkes that the feend have the lasse power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lord Jhesu Crist wole that no good werk be lost, for in somewhat it shal availle. But, forasmuche as the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in good lyf been al mortesfied by synne folwynge, and eek sith that alle the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne been outrely dede, for to have the lyf perdurable, wel may that man that no good werk ne dooth synge thilke newe Frenshe song, "Jay tout perdu—mon temps et mon labour."

For certes synne bireveth a man bothe goodnesse of nature and eek the goodnesse of grace; [250] for soothly, the grace of the Hooly Goost fareth lyk fyr that may nat been ydel, for fyr fayleth anoon as it forleteth his wirkynge; and right so grace fayleth anoon as it forleteth his werkynge. Then leseth the synful man the goodnesse of glorie that oonly is bihight to goode men that labouren and werken. Wel may he be sory thanne that oweth al his lif to God, as longe as he hath lyved and eek as longe as he shal lyve, that no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his dette to God, to whom he oweth al his lyf; for, trust wel, he shal geven acountes, as seith Seint Bernard, of alle the goodes that han be geven hym in this present lyf, and how he hath hem despended; noght so muche that ther shal nat perisse an heer of

248. *thilke newe Frenshe song*, quoted again in the *Fortune*, 1. 7.
252. *bihight*, promised.
his heed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat perisse of his tyme, that he ne shal geve of it a rekenyng.

[255] The fifthe thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is remembrance of the passioun that oure Lord Jhesu Crist suffred for oure synnes, for, as seith Seint Bernard, "Whil that I lyve I shal have remembrance of the travailes that oure Lord Crist suffred in prechyng, his werynesse in travaillyng, hise temptaciouns whan he fasted, hise longe wakynges whan he preyde, hise teeres whan that he weepe for pitee of good peple, the wo and the shame and the filthe that men seyden to hym, of the foule spittyng that men spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men gaven hym, of the foule mowes and of the repreves that men to hym seyden, of the nayles with whiche he was nayled to the croys, and of al the remenaunt of his passioun that he suffred for my synnes and no thyng for his gilt."

[260] And ye shul understonde that in mannes synne is every manere of ordre or ordinaunce turned up-so-doun. For it is sooth that God and resoun and sensualitee and the body of man been ordeyned that everich of thise foure thynges sholde have lord-shipe over that oother; as thus: God sholde have lord-shipe over resoun, and resoun over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man; but soothly, whan man synneth al this ordre or ordinaunce is turned up-so-doun. And therfore thanhe, forasmuche as the resoun of man ne wol nat be subget ne obeisant

258. mowes, grimaces.  261. thynges, om. H.
to God, that is his lord by right, therfore leseth it the lordshiphe that it sholde have over sensualitee, and eek over the body of man. \[265\] And why? For sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoun, and by that wey leseth resoun the lordshiphe over sensualitee and over the body, for, right as resoun is rebel to God, right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to resoun and the body also.

And certes, this disordinaunce and this rebellioun our Lord Jhesu Crist aboghte upon his precious body ful deere; and herkneth in which wise. For as muche thanne as resoun is rebel to God, therfore is man worthy to have sorwe and to be deed. This suffred our Lord Jhesu Crist for man, after that he hadde be bitrayesd of his disciple, and distreyned and bounde, so that his blood brast out at every nayl of his handes, as seith Seint Augustyn. \[270\] And forther-over for as muchel as resoun of man ne wol nat daunte sensualitee whan it may, therfore is man worthy to have shame, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man whan they spetten in his visage. And forther-over for as muchel thanne as the caytyf body of man is rebel bothe to resoun and to sensualitee, therfore is it worthy the deeth, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man upon the croys where as ther was no part of his body free withouten greet peyne and bitter passioun.

And al this suffred Jhesu Crist that nevere forfeeted, and therfore resonably may be said of Jhesu in this

267. aboghte, atoned for. 273. and therfore . . . manere, om. E².
269. distreyned, compelled.
manere: "To muchel am I peynd for the thynges that I nevere deserved, and to muche desouled for shendshipe that man is worthy to have." And therefor may the synful man wel seye, as seith Seint Bernard, "Acursed be the bitternesse of my synne, for which ther moste be suffred so muchel bitternesse;" [275] for certes, after the diverse disconcordaunces of oure wikkednesse was the passioun of Jhesu Crist ordeyned in diverse thynges, as thus; certes, synful mannes soule is bitrayed of the devel by covetise of temporeel prosperitee, and scornd by deceite whan he cheseth flesslyy delices, and yet is it tormented by inpaicience of adversitee, and by-spit by servage and subjeccioun of synne, and atte laste it is slayn finally. For this disordinaunce of synful man was Jhesu Crist first bitrayed, and after that he was bounde that cam for to unbynden us of synne and of peyne. Thanne was he by-scorned that oonly sholde han been honoured in alle thynges and of alle thynges. Thanne was his visage, that oghte be desirde to be seyn of al mankynde, in which visage aungels desiren to looke, vileynsly bispet; [280] thanne was he scourgde that no thyng hadde agilt; and finally thanne was he crucified and slayn. Thanne was acompliced the word of Ysaye, "He was wounded for oure mysdedes and desouled by oure felonies." Now, sith that Jhesu Crist took upon
hymself the peyne of alle oure wiki<st>kednesses, muchel oghte synful man wepen and biwayne that for hise synnes Goddes sone of hevene sholde al this peyne endure.

The sixte thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is the hope of thre thynges; that is to seyn, forgisnesse of synne, and the gifte of grace wel for to do, and the glorie of hevene, with which God shal gerdone a man for hise goode dedes.

And, for as muche as Jhesu Crist geveth us thise giftes of his largesse, and of his sovereyn bountee, therfore is he cleped Jhesus Nazarenus, rex Judeorum. [285] Jhesus is to seyn saveour, or salvacioun, on whom men shul hope to have forgisnesse of synnes, which that is proprely salvacioun of synnes; and therfore seyde the aungel to Joseph, "Thou shalt clepen his name Jhesus that shal saven his peple of hir synnes." And heer-of seith Seint Peter, "Ther is noon oother name under hevene that is geve to any man by which a man may be saved," but oonly Jhesus. Nazarenus is as muche for to seye as florisshyne, in which a man shal hope that he that geveth hym remissioun of synnes shal geve hym eek grace wel for to do, for in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme comynge, and in forgisnesse of synnes, hope of grace wel for to do. "I was atte dore of thyn herte," seith Jhesus, "and cleped for to entre; he that openeth to me shal have forgisnesse of synne; [290] I wol entre into hym by my grace and soupe with hym (by the goode

290. soupe, sup.
werkes that he shal doon, whiche werkes been the foode of God), and he shal soupe with me” (by the grete joye that I shal geven hym).

Thus shal man hope for his werkis of penance that God shal geven hym his regne, as he bihooteth hym in the gospel.

Now shal a man understand in which manere shal been his contricioun. I seye that it shal been universal and total. This is to seyn, a man shal be verryay repentaunt for alle his synnes that he hath doon in delit of his thoght, for delit is ful perilous. For ther been two manere of consentynges; that oon of hem is cleped consentyng of affeccioun, whan a man is moeved to do synne, and deliteth hym longe for to thynke on that synne, and his resoun apercseyveth it wel that it is synne agayns the laue of God, and yet his resoun refreyneth nat his foul delit or talent, though he se wel aperly that it is agayns the reverence of God; although his resoun ne consente nought to doon that synne in dede, [295] yet seyn somme doctours that swich delit that dwelleth longe it is ful perilous, al be it nevere so lite. And also a man sholde sorwe namely, for al that evere he hath desired agayn the laue of God with perfit consentyng of his resoun, for ther-of is no doute that it is deedly synne in consentyng; for certes, ther is no deedly synne that it nas first in mannes thought, and after that in his delit and so forth into consentyng, and

291. bihooteth, promises.
294. aperly, clearly.
294. talent, desire.
295. lite, little.
into dede. Wherfore, I seye that many men ne repenten hem nevere of swiche thoghtes and delites, ne nevere shryven hem of it, but oonly of the dede of grete synnes outward; wherfore, I seye that swiche wikked delites and wikked thoghtes been subtile bigileres of hem that shullen be damnedef.

[300] Moore-over, man oghte to sorwe for hise wikkede wordes, as wel as for hise wikkede dedes; for, certes, the repentaunce of a synguler synne, and nat repente of alle hise othere synnes, or elles repenten hym of alle hise othere synnes and nat of a synguler synne, may nat available. For certes, God Almyghty is al good, and therfore he forgerveth al, or elles right noght. And heer-of seith Seint Augustyn, I wot certeynly that God is enemy to everich synnere, and how thanne he that observeth o synne, shal he have forgifnesse of the remenaunt of hise othere synnes? Nay.

[305] And farther-over contricioun sholde be won-der sorweful and angwissous, and therfore geveth hym God pleynly his mercy, and therfore “whan my soule was angwissous with-inne me, I hadde remembrance of God, that my preyere myghte come to hym.” Forther-over contricioun moste be continueel, and that man have stedefast purpos to shriven hym, and for to amenden hym of his lyf; for, soothly, whil contricioun lasteth man may evere have hope of forgif-nesse, and of this comth hate of synne, that destroyeth synne bothe in him-sel and eek in oother folk, at his

300. synguler, particular. 302. I wot certeynly, om. E.
power; for which seith David, "Ye that loven God, hateth wikkednesse," for, trusteth wel, to love God is for to love that he loveth and hate that he hateth.

The laste thyng that man shal understande in contricioun is this, "Wher-of avayleth contricioun?" I seye that som tyme contricioun delivereth a man fro synne; of which that David seith, "I seye," quod David, that is to seyn, "I purposed fermely to shryye me, and thow, Lord, releseedest my synne." [310] And right so as contricioun availleth noght withouten sad purpos of shirfete, if man have oportunitee, right so litel worth is shirfete or satisfaccioun withouten contricioun. And moore-over contricioun destroyeth the prisoun of helle, and maketh wayk and sieble alle the strengths of the develes, and restoreth the giftes of the Hooly Goost and of alle goode vertues; and it clenseth the soule of synne and delivereth the soule fro the peye of helle, and fro the compaignye of the devel, and fro the servage of synne, and restoreth it to alle goodes espirituels, and to the compaignye and communyoun of hooly chirche.

And forther-over it maketh hym that whilom was sone of ire to be sone of grace, and alle thise thynges been preved by hooly writ, and therfore he that wolde sette his entente to thise thynges, he were ful wys, for, soothly, he ne sholde nat thanne in al his lyf have corage to synne, but geven his body and al his herte to the service of Jhesu Crist, and ther-of doon hym

312. alle the strengths, H⁵ 312. goode vertues, H⁶ om. om. alle. goode.
hommage; [315] for soothly oure sweete Lord Jhesu Crist hath spared us so debonairly in our folies, that if he ne hadde pitee of mannes soule a sory song we myghten alle synge.

Explicit prima pars penitentie. Et sequitur secunda pars eiusdem

The seconde partie of penitence is confessioun that is signe of contricioun. Now shul ye understande what is confessioun, and wheither it oghte nedes be doon or noon, and whiche thynges been covenable to verray confessioun.

First shalow understonde that confessioun is verray shewynge of synnes to the preest; this is to seyn "verray," for he moste confessen hym of alle the condiciouns that bilongen to his synne, as ferforth as he kan; [320] al moot be seyd and no thyng excused, ne hyd, ne for-wrapped, and noght avaunte thee of thy goode werkes. And forther-over it is necessarie to understonde whennes that synnes spryngen, and how they encreessen, and whiche they been.

Of the spryngynge of synnes seith Seint Paul in this wise, that "Right as by a man synne entred first into this world, and thurgh that synne deeth; right so thilke deeth entred into alle men that synneden;" and this man was Adam, by whom synne entred into this world whan he brak the comaundementz of God. And therfore, he that first was so myghty that he

315. soothly, H4 certes. 320. thee of thy, H5 him of his.
sholde nat have dyed, bicam swich oon that he moste
nedes dye wheither he wolde or noon, and al his
progenye in this world that in thilke man synneden.

[325] Looke, that in thestaat of innocence, whan
Adam and Eve naked weren in Paradys and no
thyng ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, how that
the serpent, that was moost wily of alle othere beestes
that God hadde maked, seyde to the womman, "Why
comaund God to yow ye sholde nat eten of every
tree in Paradys?" The womman answerde, "Of the
fruyt," quod she, "of the trees in Paradys we feden
us, but soothe, of the fruyt of the tree that is in the
myddel of Paradys God forbad us for to ete, and nat
touchen it, lest peraventure we sholde dyen." The
serpent seyde to the womman, "Nay, nay, ye shul nat
dyen of deeth, for sothe, God woot that what day that
ye eten ther-of youre eyen shul opene and ye shul
been as goddes, knowynge good and harm."

The womman thanne saugh that the tree was good
to seedyng, and fair to the eyen, and delitable to the
sighte. She took of the fruyt of the tree, and eet it,
and gaf to hire housbonde, and he eet, and anoon
the eyen of hem bothe openeden; [330] and whan
that they knewe that they were naked they sowed of
fige leves a maner of breches, to hiden hire membres.

There may ye seen that deedly synne hath first
suggestioun of the seend, as sheweth heere by the

324. progenye in, H progenye that is in.
328. dyen, H drede.
329. thanne, om. H.
330. a maner, H in maner.
CANTERBURY

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1.
The as man is not obeisaunt
Therefore is the flesh to hym
Piscence, which yet is cleped
Occasion of synne. There-
Hath in hym the peyne of
Possible but he be tempted
His flesh to synne, [340] and
As longe as he lyveth. It
faille by vertu of batpesme,
Thurgh penitence, but fully
Rich, that he ne shal som tyme
But if he were al refreyded by
Of sorcerie, or colde drynkes.
Seint Paul, “The flesh coveith
The spirit agayn the flesh; they
Not so stryven that a man may nat
" The same Seint Paul after
Water and in lond; in water by
Greet peril and in greet peyne,
Eburst, in coold, and cloothles,
Cost to the deeth, yet seyde he,
Who shal delivere me fro the
Body?” [345] And Seint Jerome,
Hadd woned in desert, where as
Wynne, but of wilde beestes, where
Met but herbes, and water to his
But the naked erthe, for which his
An Ethiopeen for heete, and ny
Id, yet seyde he that the breynynge
Frozen. 345. woned, lived.
naddre, and afterward the delit of the flessh, as sheweth heere by Eve, and after that the consentynge of resoun, as sheweth heere by Adam. For trust wel, though so were that the feend tempted Eve, that is to seyn the flessh, and the flessh hadde delit in the beautee of the fruyt defended, yet certes til that resoun, that is to seyn Adam, consented to the etynge of the fruyt, yet stood he in thestaat of innocence. Of thilke Adam tooke we thilke synne original, for of hym flesshly descended be we alle, and engendred of vile and corrupt mateere; and whan the soule is put in oure body, right anon is contract original synne, and that that was erst but oonly peyne of concupiscence is afterward both peyne and synne; [335] and thercfore be we alle born sones of wratthe and of damncioun perdurable, if it nere baptesme that we receyven, which bynymeth us the culpe. But for sothe the peyne dwelleth with us as to temptacioun, which peyne highte concupiscence. And this concupiscence when it is wrongfully disposed or ordeyned in man it maketh hym coveite by coveitise of flessh, flesshly synne by sighte of his eyen as to erthely thynges, and eek coveitise of hynesse by pride of herte.

Now, as for to spenen of the firste coveitise, that is concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres that weren lawefulliche y-maked and by rightful juggement

331. naddre, serpent. 332. Eve, H\textsuperscript{5} oon. defended, forbidden. 
333. bynymeth (E bynyneth), takes away from. 335. culpe, blame. 336. And this concupiscence, om. E. 
eek, om. E.
of God. I seye, forasmuche as man is nat obeisaunt to God, that is his Lord, therfore is the flessh to hym disobeisaunt thurgh concupiscence, which yet is cleped norrisynge of synne, and occasion of synne. Therfore al the while that a man hath in hym the peyne of concupiscence it is impossible but he be tempted somtime and moeved in his flessh to synne, [340] and this thyng may nat faille as longe as he lyveth. It may wel wexe sieble and faille by vertu of baptesme, and by the grace of God thurgh penitence, but fully ne shal it nevere quenche, that he ne shal som tyme be moeved in hymself, but if he were al refreyded by siknesse, or by malefice of sorcerie, or colde drynkes. For lo, what seith Seint Paul, “The flessh coveiteth agayn the spirit, and the spirit agayn the flessh; they been so contrarie and so stryven that a man may nat alwey doon as he wolde.” The same Seint Paul after his grete penaunce in water and in lond; in water by nyght and by day, in greet peril and in greet peyne, in lond, in famyne, in thurst, in coold, and cloothles, and ones stoned almoost to the deeth, yet seyde he, “Allas! I caytyf man, who shal delivere me fro the prisoun of my caytyf body?” [345] And Seint Jerome, whan he longe tyme hadde woned in desert, where as he hadde no compaignye but of wilde beestes, where as he ne hadde no mete but herbes, and water to his drynke, ne no bed but the naked erthe, for which his flessh was blak as an Ethiopeen for heete, and ny destroyed for coold, yet seyde he that the brennynge

341. refreyded, frozen. 345. woned, lived.
of lecherie boyled in al his body; wherfore, I woot wel sykerly, that they been deceyved that seyn that they ne be nat tempted in hir body. Witnesse on Seint Jame the Apostel, that seith that every wight is tempted in his owene concupiscence, that is to seyn, that everich of us hath mater and occasioun to be tempted of the norissyne of synne that is in his body. And therfore seith Seint John the evangeliist, "If that we seyn that we beth withoute synne, we deceyve us selve, and trouthe is nat in us."

[350] Now shal ye understonde in what manere that synne wexeth and encreeseth in man. The firste thyng is thilke norissyne of synne of which I spak biforn, thilke flesshly concupiscence; and after that comth the subjeccioun of the devel, this is to seyn the develes bely, with which he bloweth in man the fir of flesshly concupiscence; and after that a man bithynketh hym wheither he wol doon, or no, thilke thing to which he is tempted. And thanne, if that a man withstonde and weyve the firste entisyne of his flessh, and of the feend, thanne is it no synne, and if it so be that he do nat so thanne feeleth he anoon a flambe of delit, and thanne is it good to be war and kepyn hym wel, or elles he wol falle anon into consentyne of synne, and thanne wol he do it if he may have tyme and place. [355] And of this mater seith Moyses, by the devel, in this manere: The feend

350. wexeth and, E wexeth or.
353. weyve, forsake.
355. seith Moyses, not in the Bible. by the devel, concerning the devil.
seith, "I wole chace and pursue the man by wikked suggestioun, and I wole hente hym by moevynge and stirynge of synne; I wol deparde my prise, or my praye, by deliberacioun, and my lust shal been accomplised in delit; I wol drawe my swerd in consentynge,"
— for certes, right as a swerd departeth a thynge in two peces, right so consentynge departeth God fro man,— "and thanne wol I sleen hym with myn hand in deede of synne;" thus seith the feend; for certes, thanne is a man al deed in soule. And thus is synne accomplisced by temptacioun, by delit, and by consentynge, and thanne is the synne cleped actueel.

Forsothe synne is in two maneres, outhyr it is venial, or deedly synne. Soothly, whan man loveth any creature moore than Jhesu Cristoure Creatour, thanne is it deedly synne. And venial synne is it, if man love Jhesu Crist lasse than hym oughte. Forsothe the deede of this venial synne is ful perilous, for it amenuseth the love that men sholde han to God moore and moore. [360] And therfore if a man charge hymselfe with manye swiche venial synnes, certes, but if so be that he som tyme descharge hym of hem by shrifte, they mowe ful lighty amenuse in hym al the love that he hath to Jhesu Crist; and in this wise skippeth venial into deedly synne, for certes, the moore that a man chargeth his soule with venial synne, the moore is he enclyned to fallen into deedly synne. And therfore lat us nat be negligent to deschargen us of venial synnes, for the proverbe seith that "manye smale

358.  oughte, om. E.  
358.  amenuseth, diminishes.
maken a greet." And herkne this ensample; a greet wawe of the see comth somtyme with so greet a violence that it drencheth the shipe; and the same harm dooth som tyme the smale droges of water that entren thurgh a litel crevace into the thurrok, and in the botme of the shipe, if men be so negligent that they ne descharge hem nat by tyme. And thercfore, although ther be a difference bitwixe thise two causes of drenchynge, algates the shipe is dreyn. [365] Right so fareth it somtyme of deedly synne, and of anoyouse veniale synnes, whan they multiplie in a man so greetly that thilke worldly thynges that he loveth, thurgh whiche he synneth venyally, is as greet in his herte as the love of God, or moore. And thercfore the love of every thyng that is nat biset in God ne doon principally for Goddes sake, al though that a man love it lasse than God, yet is it venial synne, and deedly synne whan the love of any thyng weyeth in the herte of man as muchel as the love of God or moore. Deedy synne, as seith Seint Augustyn, is "whan a man turneth his herte fro God, which that is verray, sovereyn bountee, that may nat chaunge, and geveth his herte to thyng that may chaunge and flitte;" and certes, that is every thyng, save God of hevene. For sooth is that if a man geve his love, the which that he oweth al to God with al his herte, unto a creature, certes as muche as he geveth of his love to thilke creature, so muche he bireveth fro God, [370]

and therfore dooth he synne, for he that is dethour to
God ne yeldeth nat to God al his dette, that is to
seyyn, al the love of his herte.

Now, sith man understondeth generally which is
venial synne, thanne is it covenable to tellen specially
of synnes whiche that many a man peraventure ne
demeth hem nat synnes, and ne shryveth hem nat of
the same thynges, and yet nathelees they been synnes.
Soothly, as thise clerkes writen, this is to seyn, that at
every tyme that a man eteth or drynketh moore than
suffiseth to the sustenaunce of his body, in certein he
doeth synne; and eek whan he speketh moore than
nedeth it is synne; eke whan he herkneth nat be-
nignely the compleiint of the poure; eke whan he is
in heele of body and wol nat faste whan hym oghte
faste, withouten cause resonable; eke whan he slepeth
moore than nedeth, or whan he comth by thilke
enchesoun to late to chirche, or to othere werkes of
charite; [375] eke whan he useth his wyf withouten
sovereyn desir of engendrure, to the honour of God,
or for the entente to yelde to his wyf the dette of his
body; eke whan he wol nat visite the sike and the
prisoner if he may; eke if he love wyf or child, or
oother worldly thyng, moore than resoun requireth;
eke if he flatere or blandise moore than hym oghte,
for any necessitee; eke if he amenuse or withrawe
the almesse of the poure; eke if he apparailleth his

374. heele, health.
    hym oghte, H6 other folk
    (other men).

374. enchesoun, occasion.

377. amenuse, diminish.

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almesse, alms.

2 B
mete moore deliciously than nede is, or ete to hastily, by likerousnesse; eke if he tale vanytees at chirche, or at Goddes service, or that he be a talker of ydel wordes, or of folye, or of vileynye, for he shal yelden acountes of it at the day of doome; eke whan he biheteth or assureth to do thynges that he may nat perfourne; eke whan that he by lightnesse or folie mysseyeth or scorneth his neighbeore; [380] eke whan he hath any wikked suspecioun of thyng ther he ne woot of it no soothfastnesse; thise thynges and mo withoute nombre been synnes, as seith Seint Augustyn.

Now shal men understonde that al be it so that noon erthely man may eschue alle venial synnes, yet may he refreyne hym by the brennynge love that he hath to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and by preyeres and confessioun and othere goode werkes, so that it shal but litel greve; for, as seith Seint Augustyn, "If a man love God in swich manere that al that evere he dooth is in the love of God, and for the love of God verrailly, for he brennth in the love of God, looke, how mucche that a drope of water that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr anoyeth or greveth, so mucche anoyeth a venial synne unto a man that is perfitt in the love of Jhesu Crist." [385] Men may also refreyne venial synne by receyvyng worthily of the precious body of Jhesu Crist; by receyvyng eek of hooly water, by almesdede, by general confessioun of Confiteor at

378. tale, H tolke of. 382. kym, H² hem.
382. refreyne, E restreyne. 385. worthily, om. H⁴.
masse, and at complyn, and by blessynge of bishhopes 
and of preestes and oothere goode werkes.

_Sequitur de septem peccatis mortalibus et eorum depen-
denciis et speciebus_

Now is it bihovely thyng to telle whiche been the 
deedly synnes, this is to seyn chieftaynes of synnes. 
Alle they renne in o lees, but in diverse manerese. 
Now been they cleped chieftaynes, for-as-muche as 
they been chief, and spryngen of alle othere synnes. 
Of the roote of thise sevene synnes thanne is pride, 
the general roote of alle harms, for of this roote 
spryngen certein braunches, as ire ; envye ; accidie, 
or sleuth ; avarice, or coveitise, to commune under-
stondyngye ; glotonye, and lecherye. And everich of 
this chief synnes hath hise braunches and hise 
twigges as shal be declared in hire chapitres folwynge.

_De Superbia_

[390] And thogh so be that no man kan outrey 
telle the nombre of twigges and of the harms that 
cometh of pride, yet wol I shewe a partie of hem, as 
ye shul understonde. Ther is inobedience, avaunt-

_Sequitur de septem peccatis,_

at this point Chaucer 

teachs begins to follow the 

_Somme de Vices et de 

_Virtus_ of Frère Lorens, 

altering, however, his ar-

rangement, and with less 

close logical coherence.

387. _in o lees_, in one leash.

388. _as ire_, etc., these are 

really treated separately, 

and not as branches of 

Pride.
ynge, ypocrisie, despit, arrogance, inrudence, swellynge of herte, insolence, elacioun, inpacience, strif, contumacie, presumcioun, irreverence, pertinacie, veyne glorie and many another twig that I kan nat declare. Inobedient is he that disobeyeth for despit to the comandementz of God and to hisse sovereigns and to his goostly fader. Avauntour is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bountee that he hath doon. Ypocritye is he that hideth to shewe hym swich as he is, and sheweth hym swich as he noght is. [395] Despitous is he that hath desdeyn of his neighebore, that is to seyn of his even Cristene, or hath despit to doon that hym oghte to do. Arrogant is he that thynketh that he hath thilke bountees in hym that he hath noght, or weneth that he sholde have hem by hisse desertes, or elles he demeth that he be that he nys nat. Inpudent is he that for his pride hath no shame of hisse synnes. Swellynge of herte is whan a man rejoyseth hym of harm that he hath doon. Insolent is he that despiseth in his jugement alle othere folk, as to regard of his value, and of his konnyng, and of his spekyng, and of his beryng. [400] Elacioun is whan he ne may neither suffre to have maister ne felawe. Inpacient is he that wol nat been y-taught ne undernome of his vice, and by strif werreieth trouthe wityngly, and deffendeth his folye. Contumax is he that thurgh his indignacioun is agayns everich auctoritee or power of hem that been hisse sovereigns. Presumpcioun is
whan a man undertaketh an emprise that hym oghte nat do, or elles that he may nat do, and this is called surquidie. Irreverence is whan men do nat honour there as hem oghte to doon, and waiten to be reverence. Pertinacie is whan man defendeth hise folies, and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. [405] Veyneglorie is for to have pomp and delit in his temporeel hynesse, and glorifie hym in this worldly estaat. Janglynge is whan men spoken to muche biforn folk, and clappen as a mille and taken no kepe what they seye.

And yet is ther a privee spece of pride that waiteth first to be salewed er he wole salewe, al be he lasse worth than that oother is, peraventure; and eek he waiteth or desireth to sitte, or elles to goon above hym in the wey, or kisse pax, or been encensed, or goon to offryng biforn his neighebore, and swiche semblable thynges agayns his duette, peraventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir to be magnified and honoured biforn the peple.

Now been thera two maneres of pride. That oon of hem is withinne the herte of man and that oother is withoute, [410] of whiche soothe thise forseyde thynges, and mo than I have seyd, apertenen to pride that is in the herte of man, and that othere species of

403. surquidie, arrogance. 407. salewed, saluted.
   waiten, watch.        pax, the vessel containing
406. men spoken ... they, H³  the sacred host at mass.
a man spekith ... he. 408. semblable, like.
407. privee spece, secret kind. 409. of hem is, H is heighnes.
   This section is Chaucer's 410. apertenen, belong.
   addition.
pride been without; but natheles that oon of thise species of pride is signe of that oother, right as the gaye leefsel atte taverne is signe of the wyn that is in the ceier. And this is in manye thynges, as in speche and contenaunce, and in outrageous array of clothynge; for certes, if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothynge, Crist wolde nat so soone have noted and spoken of the clothynge of thilke riche man in the gospel. And as seith Seint Gregorie, “That precious clothynge is cowpable for the derthe of it, and for his softenesse and for his strangenesse and degisynesse, and for the superfluitee, and for the inordinat scantnesse of it.”

[415] Allas! may men nat seen as in oure dayes the synful costlewe array of clothynge, and namely in to mucche superfluite, or elles in to desordinat scantnesse?

As to the firste synne, in superfluitee of clothynge, which that maketh it so deere to harm of the peple, nat oonly the cost of embrowdynge, the degise, endentynge, barynge, owndynge, palynge, wyndynge or bendynge, and semblable wast of clooth in vanitee, but ther is also costlewe furrynge in hir gownes, so mucche pawnsonyng of chisel to maken holes, so

411. leefsel, bower of leaves.
413. so soone, om. E.
414. On the subject of clothes, Chaucer greatly expands his original.
cowpable, blameable.
415. desordinat, disorderly.
417. degise, disguise.
dendentynge, scalloping.

417. barynge, Heng. or (H of)
barynge, striping.
owndynge (waving), H
swandyng.
palynge or bendynge,
making a perpendicular
or sloping stripe.
wundyne, om. H^3.
418. pawnsonyng or pounsinge
(E pawnsonyng), puncturing.
muche daggyng of sheres, forth with the superfluitee
in lengthe of the forseide gowynes, traulyng in the
dong, and in the mire, on horse and eek on foote, as
wel of men as of wommen, that al thilke traulyng is
verraily as in effect wasted, consumed, thredbare, and
rothen with donge, rather than it is geven to the poure
to greet damage of the forseyde poure folk. \[420\] And
that in sondry wise; this is to seyn, that the moore
that clooth is wasted, the moore it costeth to the peple
for the scantnesse. And forthover if so be that
they wolde geven swich powsoned and dagged clothyng
to the poure folk, it is nat convenient to were for hire
estaat, ne suffisant to beete hire necessitee to kepe
hem fro the distemperance of the firmament.

Upon that oother side to spoken of the horrible
disordinat scantnesse of clothyng as been thise kutted
sloppes, or haynselyns, that thurgh hire shortnesse ne
covere nat the shameful membres of man to wikked
entente. Allas! somme of hem shewen the boce of
hir shape, and the horrible swollen membres, that
semeth lik the maladie of hirnia, in the wrappyng of
hir hoses; and eek the buttokes of hem faren as it
were the hyndre part of a she ape in the fulle of the
moone. \[425\] And mooreover the wrecched swollen
membres that they shewe thurgh the degisynghe, in
departynge of hire hoses in whit and reed, semeth

418. daggyng, slitting.
420. it costeth, H\$ most (mote)
     it coste.
421. beete, help.

422. haynselyns (H anlets),
     smocks.
423. boce of hir shape and, H\$ schap and the boce (boss)
     of.
that half hir shameful privée membres were flayne. And if so be that they departen hire hoses in othere colours, as is whit and blak, or whit and blew, or blak and reed, and so forth, thanne semeth it as by vari- aunce of colour that half the partie of hire prive membres were corrupt by the fir of Seint Antony, or by cancre, or by oother swich meschaunce. Of the hyndre part of hir buttokes it is ful horrible for to see, for certes, in that partie of hir body ther as they purgen hir stynkynge ordure, that soule partie shewe they to the peple proudly in despit of honestitee, the which honestitee that Jhesu Crist and his freendes observevede to shewen in hir lyve.

[430] Now of the outrageous array of wommen, God woot that though the visages of somme of hem seme ful chaast and debonaire, yet notifie they in hire array of atyr likerousnesse and pride. I sey nat that honestitee in clothyng of man or womman is uncoven- able, but certes the superfluitee or disordinat scantitee of clothyng is reprevable. Also the synne of aornement, or of apparaile, is in thynges that apertenen to ridynge,—as in to manye delicat horses that been hoolden for delit, that been so faire, fatte, and cost-lewe, and also to many a vicious knave that is susteneed by cause of hem; in to curious harneys, as in sadeles, in crouperes, peytrels, and bridles covered with precious clothyng, and riche barres, and plates of

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425. flayne, flayed.
428. Of the hyndre, H6 And yet (yet) of the hyndre.
430. atyr, attire.
431. uncovenable, unsuitable.
433. susteneed, H5 mayntened. peytrels, breast-pieces.
gold, and of silver; for which God seith, by Zakarie the prophete, "I wol confounde the ruderis of swiche horses." [435] This folk taken litel reward of the ridynge of Goddes sone of hevene and of his harneys whan he rood upon the asse, and ne hadde noon oother harneys but the poure clothes of hise discipes, ne we ne rede nat that evere he rood on oother beest. I speke this for the synne of superfluitee and nat for resonable honestitee, whan reson it requireth.

And forther, certes, pride is greetly notisied in holdynge of greet meynee whan they be of litel profit, or of right no profit; and namely whan that meynee is felonous and damageous to the peple, by hardynesse of heigh lordshipe, or by wey of offices; for certes, swiche lorde sellen thanne hir lordshipe to the delvel of helle whanne they sustenen the wikkednesse of hir meynee. [440] Or elles whan this folk of lowe degree, as thylke that holden hostelries, sustenyenge the thefte of hire hostilers, and that is in many manere of deceites. Thylke manere of folk been the flyes that folwen the hony, or elles the houndes that solwen the careyne. Swich forseyde folk stranglen spiritually hir lordshipes, for which thus seith David the prophete, "Wikked deeth moote come upon thylke lordshipes, and God geve that they moote descenden into helle al doun, al doun, for in hire houses been iniquites and shrewednesses, and nat God of
hevene." And certes, but if they doon amendement, right as God gaf his benysoun to Pharaoh by the service of Jacob, and to Laban by the service of Joseph, right so God wol geve his malisoun to swiche lordshipes as sustenen the wikkednesse of hir servauntz, but if they come to amendement.

Pride of the table appeereth eek ful ofte, for certes, riche men been cleped to festes and poure folk been put awey and rebuked. [445] Also in excesse of diverse metes and drynkes, and namely swiche manere bake-metes and dissh-metes brennynge ot wilde fir, and peynted and castelled with papir, and semblable wast, so that it is abusioun for to thynke. And eek in to greet preciousnesse of vessel and curiositee of mynstralcie, by whiche a man is stired the moore to delices of luxurie. If so be that he sette his herte the lasse upon oure Lord Jhesu Crist, certeyn it is a synne ; and certeinly the delices myghte been so grete in this caas that man myghte lightly falle by hem into deadly synne.

The especes that sourden of pride, soothe, when they sourden of malice yimagined, avised, and forncast, or elles of usage, been deedly synnes, it is no doute ; and when they sourden by freletee unavysed and sodeynly withrawn ageyn, al been they grevous synnes, I gesse that they ne been nat deedly.

443. Pharaoh . . . Jacob, all the seven MSS. have the names in this order, so it may be Chaucer's mistake. 448. sourden, rise from. avised, deliberate. forncast, planned. usage, habit. 449. freletee, frailty.
[450] Now myghte men axe wher-of that pride sourdeth and spryngeth, and I seye, somtyme it spryngeth of the goodes of nature, and somtyme of the goodes of fortune, and somtyme of the goodes of grace. Certes, the goodes of nature stonden outhere in goodes of body or in goodes of soule. Certes, goodes of body been heele of body, as strengthe, delivernesse, beautee, gentrie, franchise; goodes of nature of the soule been good wit, sharpe understondynge, subtil engyn, vertu natureel, good memorie; goodes of fortune been richesse, hyghe degrees of lordshipes, preisynges of the peple; [455] goodes of grace been science, power to suffre spiritueel travaille, benigneetee, vertuous contemplacioun, withstondynge of temptacioun, and semblable thynges; of whiche forseyde goodes, certes, it is a ful greet folye a man to priden hym in any of hem alle. Now as for to spoken of goodes of nature; God woot that somtyme we han hem in nature as muche to oure damage as to oure profit. As for to spoken of heele of body, certes, it passeth ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte enchesoun of the siknesse of oure soule; for, God woot, the flesshe is a ful greet enemy to the soule, and therfore the moore that the body is hool the moore be we in peril to falle. Eke for to pride hym in his strengthe of body, it is an heigh folye, for certes, the flesshe coveiteth agayn the spirit, and ay the moore strong that the flesshe is, the

451. stonden, consist.
452. delivernesse, agility.
458. engyn, contrivance.
452. gentrie (E gentries), nobility.
458. enchesoun, occasion.
sorier may the soule be, [460] and over al this, strengthe of body and worldly hardynesse causeth ful ofte many a man to peril and meschaunce. Eek for to pride hym of his gentrie is ful greet folie, for ofte tyme the gentrie of the body binymeth the gentrie of the soule, and eek we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and alle we been of o nature, roten and corrupt, bothe riche and poure. Forsothe o manere gentrie is for to preise—that apparaileth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees and maketh hym Cristes child; for truste wel, that over what man that synne hath maistrie he is a verray cherl to synne.

Now been ther generale signes of gentillesse, as eschewynge of vice and ribaudye and servage of synne, in word, in werk, and contenaunce, [465] and usynge vertu, curteisy, and clennesse, and to be liberal, that is to seyn, large by mesure, for thilke that passeth mesure is folie and synne. Another is to remembre hym of bountee that he of oother folk hath recevyyed. Another is to be benigne to hise goode subgetis, wherfore seith Senek, “Ther is no thing moore covenable to a man of heigh estaat, than debonairetee and pitee;” and therfore thise flyes that men clepeth bees, whan they maken hir kyng they chesen oon that hath no prikke wherwith he may stynge.

Another is, a man to have a noble herte, and a

461. binymeth, takes away. 465. large by mesure, generous in moderation. 467. subgetis, subjects. 469. a man, E man.
diligent to attayne to heighe vertuouse thynges. Now certes, a man to pride hym in the goodes of grace is eek an outrageouse folie, for thilke gifte of grace that sholde have turned hym to goodnesse and to medicine, turneth hym to venym and to confusioun, as seith Seint Gregorie. [470] Certes also, whoso prideth hym in the goodes of fortune, he is a ful greet fool, for somtyme is a man a greet lord by the morwe, that is a caytyf and a wrecche er it be nyght; and somtyme the richesse of a man is cause of his deth, somtyme the delices of a man is cause of the grevous maladye thurgh which he dyeth. Certes, the commendacioun of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotel for to triste,—this day they preyse, tomorwe they blame; God woot, desir to have commendacioun of the peple hath caused deeth to many a bisy man.

Remedium contra peccatum Superbie

[475] Now sith that so is that ye han understonde what is pride, and whiche been the especes of it, and whennes pride sourdeth and spryngeth, now shul ye understonde which is the remedie agayns the synne of pride; and that is humylitee or mekenesse, that is a vertu thurgh which a man hath verray knoweleche of hymself, and holdeth of hymself no pris ne deyntee,

473. brotel, brittle.
      triste, trust.
474. Remedium, in the Somme de Vices, etc., the remedies and the sins are kept apart. Chaucer brings each remedy after its sin.
476. the synne of pride, H§ pride.
477. pris ne deyntee, price nor value.
as in regard of hise deserties, considerynge evere his freleete.

Now been ther thre maneres of humylitee, as humylitee in herte, and another humylitee in his mouth, the thridde in hise werkes.

The humilitee in herte is in foure maneres. That oon is whan a man holdeth hymself as noght worth biforn God of hevene. Another is, whan he ne despiseth noon oother man. [480] The thridde is whan he rekketh nat though men holde hym noght worth. The ferthe is whan he nys nat sory of his humiliacioun.

Also the humilitee of mouth is in foure thynges; in attemplee speche, and in humblesse of speche; and whan he biknoweth with his owene mouth that he is swich as hym thynketh that he is in his herte; another is whan he preiseth the bountee of another man and no thyng ther of amenuseth.

Humilitee eek in werkes is in foure maneres; the firste is whan he putteth othe men biforn hym; the seconde is to chese the loweste place over al; the thridde is gladly to assente to good conseil; the ferthe is to stonde gladly to the award of hise sove-reyns, or of hym that is in hyer degree. Certein this is a greet werk of humylitee.

478. *in his mouth... in his werkes;* some MSS. om. *hys;* others read *is in.*
482. *good conseil,* E om. *good.*
    *stonde to,* accept.
Sequitur de Invidia

After pride wol I spoken of the foule synne of envye, which is, as by the word of the philosophre, sorwe of oother mannes prosperitee; and after the word of Seint Augustyn, it is sorwe of oother mannes wele and joye of othere mennes harm. [485] This synne is platly agayns the Hooly Goost. Al be it so that every synne is agayns the Hooly Goost, yet nathelees for-as-muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to the Hooly Goost and envye comth proprely of malice, therfore it is proprely agayn the bountee of the Hooly Goost.

Now hath malice two species, that is to seyn, hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse, or elles the flessh of man is so blynd that he considereth nat that he is in synne, or rekketh nat that he is in synne, which is the hardnesse of the devel.

That oother spece of malice is whan a man werreyeth trouthe whan he woot that it is trouthe, and eek whan he werreyeth the grace that God hath geve to his neighebore; and al this is by envye. Certes thanne is envye the worste synne that is; for soothly alle othere synnes been somtyme oonly agayns o special vertu, but certes, envye is agayns alle vertues, and agayns alle goodnesses, for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighebore; and in this manere it is

485. platly, flatly. 487. spece, E speche.
Goost, om. E. malice, H envye.
Bountee, goodness. Werreyeth, fights against.
divers from alle othere synnes; [490] for wel unnethe is ther any synne that it ne hath som delit in itself save oonly envye, that evere hath in itself angwissh and sorwe.

The species of envye been thise; ther is first, sorwe of oother mannes goodnesse and of his prosperitee; and prosperitee is kyndely matere of joye; thanne is envye a synne agayns kynde. The seconde spece of envye is joye of oother mannes harm; and that is proprely lyk to the devel, that evere rejoyseth hym of mannes harm.

Of thise two speces comth bakbityng, and this synne of bakbityng, or detraccion, hath certeine speces, as thus; som man preiseth his neighebore by a wikke entente, for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte atte laste ende, alwey he maketh a “but” atte laste ende,—that is digno of moore blame than worth is al the preisyng. [495] The seconde spece is that if a man be good, and dooth or seith a thing to good entente, the bakbiter wol turne all thilke goodnesse up-so-doun, to his shrewed entente. The thridde is to amenuse the bountee of his neighebore. The fourthe spece of bakbityng is this, that if men speke goodnesse of a man, thanne wol the bakbiter seyn, “Pardee! swich a man is yet bet than he,” in dis-preisyng of hym that men preise.

The fifte spece is this, for to consente gladly and

490. unnethe, hardly. 495. to his shrewed entente, to his own wicked meaning.
491. kyndely, naturally. 496. amenuse, depreciate.
494. digne, worthy. 497. bet, better.
herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of oother folk; this synne is ful greet and ay encreeseth after the wikked entente of the bakbiter.

After bakbityng cometh grucchyng or murmura-acioun, and somtyyme it spryngeth of inpacience agayns God, and somtyyme agayns man.

[500] Agayns God it is whan a man gruccheth agayn the peynes of helle, or agayns poverté, or los of catel, agayn reyn or tempest, or elles gruccheth that shrewes han prosperitee, or elles for that goode men han adversitee; and alle thise thynges sholde men suffre paciently, for they comen by the rightful juggement and ordinance of God. Somtyyme comth grucching of avarice, as Judas gruccheth agayns the Magdaleyne, whan she enoynte the heved of oure Lord Jhesu Crist with hir precious oynement. This maner murmure is swich as whan man gruccheth of goodnesse that hymself dooth, or that oother folk doon of hir owene catel.

Somtyyme comth murmure of pride, as whan Simon the Pharisee gruccheth agayn the Magdaleyne whan she approched to Jhesu Crist and weepe at his feet for hire synnes. [505] And somtyyme grucchyng sourdeth of envye, whan men discovereth a mannès harm that was pryvee, or bereth hym on hond thyng that is fals.

Murmure eek is ofte amonges servantz, that grucchen whan hir sovereyns bidden hem doon leveful thynges; and, for-as-muche as they dar nat openly

500. shrewes, rascals. 505. bereth on hond, accuse.
502. enoynte the heved, 506. leveful, lawful.
anointed the head.
withseye the comaundementz of hir sovereyns, yet wol
they seyn harm, and grucche and murmure prively, for
verray despit, whiche wordes men clepen "the develes
Pater noster," though so be that the devel ne hadde
nevere Pater noster, but that lewed folk geven it
swich a name. Somtyme grucchying comth of ire, or
prive hate that norisseth rancour in herte, as afterward
I shal declare. [510] Thanne cometh eek bitternesse
of herte, thurgh which bitternesse every good dede
of his neighebor semeth to hym bitter and unsavory.
Thanne cometh discord that unbyndeth alle manere
of freendshipe. Thanne comth scornynge of his
neighebor, al do he never so weel. Thanne comth
accusynge, as whan man seketh occasioun to anoyen his
neighebor, which that is lyk to the craftsm of the devel,
that waiteth bothe nyght and day to accusen us alle.
Thanne comth malignitee, thurgh which a man anoyeth
his neighebor prively, if he may; and if he noght may,
algate his wikked wil ne shal nat wante, as for to
brennen his hous pryvely, or empoyse or sleen hisse
beestes, and semblable thynges.

[515] Remedium contra peccatum Invidie

Now wol I speke of the remedie agayns this foule
synne of envye. First is the loyynge of God principal,
and loyng of his neighebor as hymself; for soothly
that oon ne may nat been withoute that oother. And

507. withseye, contradict; H withstonde.
grucche, grumble.

508. folk . . name, H men calle it so.

515. agayns this, E the for this.
truste wel, that in the name of thy neighebore thou shalt understonde the name of thy brother; for certes alle we have o fader flessly, and o mooder, that is to seyn, Adam and Eve, and eek o Fader espiritueel, and that is God of hevene. · Thy neighebore artow holden for to love and wilne hym alle goodnesse, and therfore seith God, “Love thy neighebore as thyselfe;” that is to seyn, to salvacioun of lyf and of soule. And moore-over thou shalt love hym in word, and in benigne amonestynge and chastisynge, and conforten hym in his anoyes, and preye for hym with al thyn herte. And in dede thou shalt love hym in swich wise that thou shalt doon to hym in charitee as thou woldest that it were doon to thyn owene persone; [520] and therfore thou ne shalt doon hym no damage in wikked word, ne harm in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule by entissyng of wikked ensample; thou shalt nat desiren his wyf, ne none of his thynges. Understood eek, that in the name of neighebor is comprehended his enemy. Certes man shal loven his enemy by the comandement of God, and soothly, thy freend shaltow love in God. I seye, thyn enemy shaltow love for Goddes sake by his comandement; for if it were reson that a man sholde haten his enemy, for-sothe God nolde nat receyven us to his love, that been hisenemys.

Agayns thre manere of wronges that his enemy dooth to hym he shal doon thre thynges, as thus:

517. holden, bound. 518. amonestynge, admonition.
wilne, desire for. 524. wronges, E thynges.
[525] agayns hate and rancour of herte, he skal love hym in herte; agayns chidyng and wikkede wordes, he skal preye for his enemy; and agayn wikked dede of his enemy, he skal doon hym bountee; for Crist seith, "Loveth youre enemys, and preyeth for hem that speke yow harm, and eek for hem that yow chacen and pursewen, and dooth bountee to hem that yow haten." Loo, thus comaundeth us oure Lord Jhesu Crist to do to oure enemys, for soothe nature dryveth us to loven oure freendes, and parsey, oure enemys han moore nede to love than oure freendes, and they that moore nede have, certes, to hem skal men doon goodnesse; and certes, in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jhesu Crist that deyde for his enemys. And, in as much as thilke love is the moore grevous to perfournue, in so much is the moore gretter the merite, and therfore the loyng ofoure enemy hath confounded the venym of the deuel; [530] for, right as the deuel is disinfted by humylitee, right so is he wounded to the deeth by love of oure enemy. Certes thanne is love the medicine that casteth out the venym of envye fro mannes herte. The species of this paas shullen be moore largely in hir chapitres folwynge declared.

**Sequitur de Ira**

After envye wol I discern the synne of ire; for soothe whoso hath envye upon his neihebor anon

he wole comunly fynde hym a materere of wratthe in word, or in dede, agayns hym to whom he hath envye. And as wel comth ire of pride as of envye, for soothly he that is pride or enveous is lightly wrooth.

[535] This synne of ire, after the discryvyng of Seint Augustyn, is wikked wil to been avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the philosophre, is the fervent blood of man y- quyked in his herte, thurgh which he wole harm to hym that he hateth. For certes, the herte of man, by eschawfynge and moevynge of his blood, wexeth so trouble that he is out of alle juggement of resoun.

But ye shal understande that ire is in two maneres; that oon of hem is good and that oother is wikked. The goode ire is by jalousie of goodnesse, thurgh which a man is wrooth with wikkednesse, and agayns wikkednesse; and therfore seith a wys man, that ire is bet than pley. [540] This ire is with debonairetee, and it is wrooth withouten bitternesse, nat wrooth agayns the man, but wrooth with the mysdede of the man, as seith the prophete David, Irascimini, et nolite peccare.

Now understandeth that wikked ire is in two maneres, that is to seyn, sodeyn ire, or hastif ire withouten avisement and consentynge of resoun. The menyng and the sens of this is that the resoun of man ne consente nat to thilke sodeyn ire, and thanne it is

537. eschawfynge, chafing, heat-ing.
540. with debonairetee, accom-pa-nied by gentleness.
542. sens, H sentence.
venial. Another ire is ful wikked, that comth of felonie of herte, avysed and cast biforn with wikked wil to do vengeance, and therto his resoun consenteth, and soothly this is deedly synne. This ire is so displeasent to God that it troubleth his hous and chaceth the Hooly Goost out of mannes soule, and wasteth and destroyeth the liknesse of God, that is to seyn, the vertu that is in mannes soule, [545] and put in hym the liknesse of the deel, and bynameth the man fro God that is his rightful lord. This ire is a ful greet plesaunce to the deel, for it is the devesel fourneys that is eschawfed with the fir of helle. For certes, right so as fir is moore mighty to destroyen erhely thynges than any oother element, right so ire is myghty to destroyen alle spiritueel thynges.

Looke how that fir of smale gleedes, that been almoost dede under ashen, wollen quike agayn whan they been touched with brymstoon. Right so ire wol everemo quyken agayn whan it is touched by the pride that is covered in mannes herte; for certes, fir ne may nat comen out of no thyng, but if it were first in the same thyng natureelly, as fir is drawen out of flyntes with steel. [550] And, right so as pride is ofte tyme matere of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree, as seith Seint Ysidre, that whan men maken fire of thilke tree and covere the coles of it with ashen, soothly the fir of it wol lasten

545. *put*, putteth.  
*bynameth*, takes away.  
548. *gleedes*, sparks.  
548. *quike*, revive.  
551. *Ysidre*, Isidore.
al a yeer or moore, and right so fareth it of rancour; when it is ones conceyved in the hertes of som men, certein it wol lasten peraventure from oon Estre day unto another Estre day and moore; but certes, thilke man is ful fer fro the mercy of God in thilke while.

In this forseyde develes fourneys ther forgen thre shrewes: Pride, that ay bloweth and encreeseth the fir by chidyng and wikked wordes; [555] thanne stant Envye, and holdeth the hoote iren upon the herte of man with a peire of longe toonges of long rancour; and thanne stant the synne of Contumelie or strif and cheeste, and batereth and forgeth by vileyns reprevynges. Certes, this cursed synne anoyeth bothe to the man hymself and eek to his neighebore. For soothe almoost al the harm that any man dooth to his neighebore comth of wratthe; for certes outrageous wratthe dooth al that evere the devel hym comaundeth: for he ne spareth neither Crist, ne his sweete mooer. And in his outrageous anger and ire, allas! allas! ful many oon at that tyme feeleth in his herte ful wikkedly both of Crist and of alle hise halwes.

[560] Is nat this a cursed vice? Yis, certes. Allas! it bynmeth from man his wit and his resoun and al his debonaire lif espirituel, that sholde kepen his soule.

Certes it bynmeth eek Goddes due lordshiphe, and

that is mannes soule and the love of hise neighebores. It stryveth eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth hym the quiete of his herte and subverteth his soule.

Of ire comen thise stynkynge engendrures; first, hate, that is oold wratthe; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde freend that he hath lovede ful longe; and thanne cometh werre, and every manere of wrong that man dooth to his neighebore in body, or in catel. Of this cursed synne of ire cometh eek manslaughter, and understonde wel that homycide, that is manslaughter, is in diverse wise. Som manere of homycide is spiritueel, and som is bodily.

[565] Spiritueel manslaughter is in sixe thynges. First, by hate, as Seint John seith, “He that hateth his brother is homycide.” Homycide is eek by bakbitynge; of whiche bakbiteres seith Salomon, that they han two swerdes with whiche they sleen hire neighebores; for soothly as wikke is to bynymhe his good name, as his lyf. Homycide is eek in gevynge of wikked conseil by fraude, as for to geven conseil to areysen wrongful custumes and taillages, of whiche seith Salomon: “Leoun rorynge and bere hongry been like to the cruel lordshipes in withholdynge or abreggynge of the shepe, or the hyre, or of the wages of servauntz, or elles in usures or in withdrawynge of the almesse of poure folk.” For which the wise man

562. that he hath lovede, om. E³. 567. taillages, tallages, taxes on the demesne lands of the crown.

567. areysen, raise.
seith, "Fedeth hym that almoost dyeth for honger;" for soothly, but if thow heedde hym, thou sleest hym. And alle thise been deedly synnes. [570] Bodily manslaughtre is whan thow sleest him with thy tonge in oother manere, as whan thou comandest to sleen a man, or elles gevest hym conseil to sleen a man.

Manslaughtre in dede is in foure maneres. That oon is by lawe, right as a justice dampneth hym that is coupable to the deeth; but lat the justice be war that he do it rightfully, and that he do it nat for delit to spille blood, but for kepynge of rightwisenesse. Another homycide is that is doon for necessitee, as whan o man sleeth another in his defendaunt, and that he ne may noon oother wise escape from his owene deeth; but certeiny, if he may escape without manslaughtre of his adversarie and sleeth hym, he dooth synne, and he shal bere penance as for deedly synne. Eek if a man by caas or aventure shete an arwe, or caste a stoon, with which he sleeth a man, he is homycide. [575] Eek if a womman by necligence overlyeth hire child in hir slepyng, it is homycide and deedly synne. Eek whan man destourbeth concepcioun of a child, and maketh a womman oother bareyne by drynkyenge venemouse herbes thurgh which she may nat conceyve, or sleeth a child by drynkes, or elles putteth certeine material thynges in hire secrey places to slee the child, or elles dooth unkyndely synne by which man or womman shedeth hire nature, in manere or in place ther as a child may

572. is that is, H6 is. 576. by drynkes, E adds wilfully.
nat be conceived, or elles if a woman have conceyved and hurt hirselfe, and sleeth the child, yet it is homycide. What seye we eek of wommen that mordren hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, an horrible homicide! Homycide is eek if a man approcheth to a womman by desir of lecherie, thurgh which the child is perissed, or elles smyteth a womman wityngly, thurgh which she leseth hir child. Alle thise been homycides and horrible deedly synnes.

[580] Yet komen ther of ire manye mo synnes, as wel in word, as in thoht and in dede, as he that arretteth upon God, or blameth God of thyng of which he is hym self gilty, or despiseth God, and alle hise halwes, as doon thise cursede hasardours in diverse contrees. This cursed synne doon they whan they feelen in hir hertes ful wikkedely of God and of hise halwes; also whan they treten unreverently the sacrament of the auter,—thilke synne is so greet that unnethe may it been releessd but that the mercy of God passeth alle hise werkes, it is so greet, and he so benigne.

Thanne comth of ire attre angre, whan a man is sharply amonested in his shirfte to forleten his synne, thanne wol he be angry and anweren hokerly and angrily, and deffenden or excusen his synne by unstedefastnesse of his flessh, or elles he dide it for to

577. hirsefE, E hir child.
579. perissed, destroyed.
    leseth, H3 sleeth.
580. arretteth, imputes.
582. auter, altar.
583. attre, venomous.
    forleten, abandon.
584. hokerly, scornfully.
holde compaignye with hise felawes, or elles he seith, the fend enticed hym, [s85] or elles he dide it for his youthe, or elles his compleccioun is so corageous that he may nat forbere, or elles it is his destinee, as he seith, unto a certein age, or elles, he seith, it cometh hym of gentillesse of hise auncestres, and semblable thynges. Alle this manere of folk so wrappen hem in hir synnes that they ne wol nat delivere hemself; for soothly no wight that excuseth hym wilfully of his synne may nat been delivered of his synne, til that he mekely biknoweth his synne.

After this thanne cometh sweryng, that is expres agayn the comandement of God; and this bifalleth ofte of anger and of ire. God seith, "Thow shalt nat take the name of thy Lord God in veyn," or in ydel. Also oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith, by the word of Seint Mathew, "Ne wol ye nat swere in alle manere; neither by hevene, for it is Goddes trone; ne by erthe, for it is the bench of his feet; ne by Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a greet kyng; ne by thyn heed, for thou mayst nat make an heer whit ne blak; [s90] but seyeth by youre word, 'ye, ye,' and 'nay, nay;' and what that is moore it is of yvel," seith Crist. For Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so synfully, in dismembrynge of Crist by soule, herte, bones, and body; for certes it semeth that ye thynke that

584. fend, fiend.
585. compleccioun, temperament.
corageous, ardent.
586. biknoweth confesses.
591. dismembrynge, i.e. the swearing by Christ's different members; cp. Pardoner's Tale, ll. 474, 475.
the cursed Jewes ne dismembred nat ynough the precious persone of Crist, but ye dismembre hym moore. And if so be that the lawe compelle yow to swere, thanne rule yow after the lawe of God in youre sweryng, as seith Jeremye, 4° c°, Thou shalt kepe thre condicions; "thou shalt swere in truthe, in doom, and in rightwisnesse;" this is to seyn, thou shalt swere sooth; for every lesynge is agayns Crist, for Crist is verray truthe. And thynk wel this, that every greet swerere nat compelled lawefully to swere, the wounde shal nat departe from his hous whil he useth swich unleveful sweryng. Thou shalt sweren eek in doom than thou art constreynd by thy domesman to witenessen the truthe. [595] Eek thow shalt nat swere for envye, ne for favour, ne for meede, but for rightwisnesse, and for declaracioun of it, to the worship of God, and helpyng of thyne evene Cristene. And therfore, every man that taketh Goddes name in ydel, or falsly swereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on hym the name of Crist, to be called a Cristene man, and lyveth agayns Cristes lyvynge and his techynge, alle they taken Goddes name in ydel.

Looke eek, what Seint Peter seith, *Actuum 4°, Non est aliud nomen sub celo*, etc.: "Ther nys noon oother name," seith Seint Peter, "under hevne geven to men, in which they mowe be saved;" that is to seyn, but the name of Jhesu Crist. Take kepe eek how that the name of Crist so precious is, as seith

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Seint Paul _ad Philipenses 2_, _In nomine Jhesu_, etc.: that "in the name of Jhesu every knee of hevenely creatures, or erthely, or of helle, sholden bowe;" for it is so heigh and so worshipful that the cursede feend in helle sholde tremblen to heeren it y-nempned. Thanne semeth it that men that sweren so horriblely by his blessed name, that they despise hym moore booldely than dide the cursede Jewes, or elles the devel, that trembleth whan he heereth his name.

[6oo] Now certes, sith that sweryng, but if it be lawefully doon, is so heighly defsended, muche worse is forsweyng falsly, and yet nedelees.

What seye we eek of hem that deliten hem in sweryng and holden it a gentrie or a manly dede to swere grete othes? And what of hem that of verray usage ne cesse nat to swere grete othes, al be the cause nat worth a straw? Certes, it is horrible synne. Swerynge sodeynly, withoute aysement, is eek a synne. But lat us go now to thilke horrible sweryng of adjuracioun and conjuracioun, as doon thise false enchauntours or nigromanciens, in bacyns ful of water, or in a bright swerd, in a cercle, or in a fir, or in a shulder-boon of a sheepe! I kan nat seye but that they doon cursedly and damnablely agayns Crist, and al the feith of hooly Chirche.

[605] What seye we of hem that bileeven in divynailes, as by flight or by nøyse of briddles, or of

600. defsended, forbidden. 603. bacyns, basins. 605. divynailes, divinations.
beestes, or by sort, by geomancie, by dremes, by chirkyng of dores, or crakyng of houses, by gnawyng of rattes, and swich manere wrecchednesse? Certes, al this thyng is defensed by God, and by al hooly Chirche, for which they been acursed til they come to amendement that on swich filthe setten hire bileve. Charmes for woundes or maladie of men, or of beestes, if they taken any effect, it be peraventure that God suffreth it, for folk sholden geve the moore feith and reverence to his name.

Now wol I spoken of lesynges, which generally is fals signyficacioun of word in entente to deceyven his evene Cristene. Some lesyne is, of which ther comth noon avantage to no wight; and som lesyne turneth to the ese and profitt of o man, and to disese and damage of another man. [610] Another lesynge for to saven his lyf or his catel. Another lesynge comth of delit for to lye, in which delit they wol forge a long tale and peynten it with alle circumstaunces, where al the ground of the tale is fals. Som lesynge comth for he woole sustene his word; and som lesynge comth of reccheleesnesse withouten avisement, and semblable thynges.

Lat us now touche the vice of flaterynge, which ne comth nat gladly, but for drede, or for coveitise. Flaterye is generally wrongful preisyng. Flatereres been the develes norices, that norissen hise children

605. sort, lot. 605. chirkyng, creaking.
geomancie, divination by 609. disese and, om. H✉.
figures made on the 611. reccheleesnesse, recklessness.
earth.
with milk of losengerie. Forsothe Salomon seith that flaterie is wors than detraccioun, for somtyme detraccion maketh an hauteyn man be the moore humble, for he dredeth detraccion; but certes, flaterye, that maketh a man to enhauncen his herte and his contenaunce. [615] Flatereres been the devesles enchauntours, for they make a man to wene of hymself be lyk that he nys nat lyk; they been lyk to Judas, that bitrayes God, and thise flatereres bitraysen a man to sellen hym to his enemy, that is to the devel. Flatereres been the devesles chapelleyns that syngen evere Placebo. I rekene flaterie in the vices of ire, for ofte tyme if o man be wrooth with another, thanne wole he flaterre som wight to sustene hym in his querele.

Speke we now of swich cursynge as comth of irous herte. Malisoun generally may be seyd every maner power or harm. Swich cursynge bireveth man fro the regne of God, as seith Seint Paul. [620] And ofte tyme swich cursynge wrongfully retorneth agayn to hym that curseth, as a bryd that retorneth agayn to his owene nest. And over alle thyng men oghten eschewe to cursen hire children, and geven to the devel hire engendrure, as ferforth as in hem is; certes it is greet peril and greet synne.

Lat us thanne speken of chidyng and reproche, whiche been ful grete woundes in mannes herte, for
they unsowen the semes of freendsheipe in mannes herte. For certes, unnethes may a man pleynly been accorded with hym that hath hym openly revyled and reprieved in disclaudre. This is a ful grisly synne, as Crist seith in the gospel. And taak kepe now, that he that repreveth his neighebor, outher he repreveth hym by som harm of peyne that he hath on his body, as, “mesel!” “croked harlot!” or by som synne that he dooth. [625] Now if he reprevh by harm of peyne, thanne turneth the reprieve to Jhesu Crist, for peyne is sent by the rightwys sonde of God, and by his suffrance, be it meselrie, or mayme, or maladie. And if he reprieve hym uncharitably of synne, as “thou dronkelewe harlot!” and so forth, thanne aperteneth that to the rejoysynge of the devel, that evere hath joye that men doon synne.

And certes chidyngye may nat come but out of a vileyns herte, for after the habundance of the herte speketh the mouth ful ofte. And ye shul understande that. Looke by any wey whan any man shal chastise another, that he be war from chidyngye and reprevynge; for trewely but he be war he may ful lightly quyken the fir of angre, and of wratthe, which that he sholde quenche, and peraventure sleeth hym which that he myght chastise with benignitee. For as seith Salomon, “The amyable tonge is the tree of lyf;” that is to seyn, of lyf espiritueel, and soothe, a

623. disclaudre, slander. 625. sonde, message.
624. mesel, leper. mayme (E maheym), maiming.
deslavee tongue sleeth the spirites of hym that repreveth and eek of hym that is reproved. [630] Loo, what seith Seint Augustyn, "Ther is no thyng so lyk the develes child as he that ofte chideth." Seint Paul seith eek, "A servant of God bihoweth nat to chide." And how that chidyng be a vileyns thyng bitwixe alle manere folk, yet is it, certes, moost uncovenable bitwixe a man and his wyf, for there is nevere reste, and therfore seith Salomon, "An hous that is uncovered in reyn and droppyngge and a chidyng wyf been lyke." A man that is in a droppyngge hous in manye places, though he eschewe the droppyngge in o place, it droppeth on hym in another place; so fareth it by a chydynge wyf, but she chide hym in o place she wol chide hym in another; and therfore, "Bettre is a morsel of breed with joye than an hous ful of delices with chidyngge," seith Salomon. Seint Paul seith, "O ye wommen, be ye subgetes to youre housbondes, as bihoweth in God, and ye men loveth youre wyves." *Ad Colossenses 3°.*

[635] Afterward speke we of scornynge, which is a wikked synne, and namely whan he scorneth a man for hise goode werkes; for certes, swiche scorneres faren lyk the foule tode that may nat endure to smelle the soote savour of the vyne whanne it florissheth. Thise scorneres been partyng-felawes with the devel,

629. deslavee, unbridled.
631. And how that, H though for how.
    uncovenable, out of place.
    droppyngge, dripping.
634. as bihoweth in God, om. E.
636. tode, toad.
    soote, sweet.
637. partyng-felawes, partners.
for they han joye whan the develwynneth, and sorwe
whan he leseth; they been adversaries of Jhesu Crist,
for they haten that he loveth, that is to seyn, salva-
cioun of soule.

Speke we now of wikked conseil, for he that wikked
conseil geveth is a traytour; he deceyveth hym that
trusteth in hym; Ut Achitofel ad Absolonem. But
nathelees yet is his wikked conseil first agayn hym-
self, [640] for, as seith the wise man, “Every fals
lyvynge hath his propertee in hymself, that he that
wole anoye another man, he anoyeth first hymself.”
And men shul understonde that man shal nat taken
his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous
folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit;
ne to muche worldly folk; namely in conseilynge of
soules.

Now comth the synne of hem that sowen and
maken discord amonges folk; which is a synne that
Crist hateth outrely, and no wonder is for he deyde
for to make concord. And moore shame do they to
Crist, than dide they that hym crucifiede, for God
loveth bettre that frendshipe be amonges folk than
he dide his owene body, the which that he gaf for
unitee. Therfore been they likned to the devel, that
ever been aboute to maken discord.

Now comth the synne of double tonge swiche as
spoken faire byforn folk and wikkedly bihynde, or
elles they maken semblant as though they speeke of
good entencioun or elles in game and pley, and yet
they speke of wikked entente.
[645] Now comth biwreying of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed; certes, unnethe may he restore the damage.

Now comth manace, that is an open folye, for he that ofte manaceth, he threteth moore than he may perfourne ful ofte tyme.

Now cometh ydel wordes that is withouten profit of hym that speketh tho wordes, and eek of hym that herkneth tho wordes. Or elles ydel wordes been tho that been nedelees, or withouten entente of natureel profit. And al be it that ydel wordes been somtyme venial synne, yet sholde men douten hem, for we shul geve rekenynge of hem before God.

Now comth janglynge, that may nat been withoute synne. And as seith Salomon, it is a synne of apert folye, [650] and therfore a philosophre seyde, whan men axed hym how that men sholde plese the peple, and he answerd, "Do manye goode werkes and spek fewe jangles."

After this comth the synne of japeres, that been the develes apes, for they maken folk to laughe at hire japerie as folk doon at the gawdes of an ape. Swich japes deffendeth Seint Paul. Looke, how that vertuouse wordes and hooly woordes conforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist, right so conforten the vileyns wordes and knakkes of japeris hem that travaillen in the service of the devel. Thise been the

649. janglynge (chattering)  651. gawdes, toys, fineries.
   Chaucer's addition.                                  japes, E. japeres.
   apert, open.                                      deffendeth, forbids.
651. japeres, jesters.
synnes that comen of the tonge, that comen of ire, and of uther synnes mo.

*Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Ire*

The remedie agayns ire is a vertu that men clepen mansuetude, that is debonairetee, and eek another vertu that men callen pacience, or suffranc.

[655] Debonnairetee withdraweth and refreyneth the stirynges and the moeynges of mannes corage in his herte, in swich manere that they ne skippe nat out by angre ne by ire.

Suffranc suffreth sweetly alle the anoyaunces and the wronges that men doon to man outward. Seint Jerome seith thus of debonnairetee, that it dooth noon harm to no wight, ne seith, ne for noon harm that men doon or seyn he ne eschawfeth nat agayns his resoun. This vertu som tyme comth of nature, for, as seith the philosophre, “A man is a quyk thyng by nature, debonnaire and tretable to goodnesse;” but whan debonnairetee is enformed of grace thanne is it the moore worth.

Pacience, that is another remedie agayns ire, is a vertu that suffreth sweetely every mannes goodnesse, and is nat wrooth for noon harm that is doon to hym. [660] The philosophre seith that pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonnairely alle the outrages of adversitee and every wikked word. This vertu maketh a man lyk to God, and maketh hym Goddes owene

657. *eschawfeth*, chafes. 658. *tretable*, tractable. 659. *is a vertu*, Es it is, etc.
deere child, as seith Crist; this vertu disconfiteth thyn enemy, and therfore seith the wise man, "If thow wolt venquysse thyn enemy, lerne to suffre." And thou shalt understande that man suffreth fouru manere of gревances in outward thynges; agayns the whiche foure he moot have foure manere of paciences.

The firste gревance is of wikkede wordes; thilke suffrede Jhesu Crist withouten grucchyng, ful paciently, whan the Jewes despised and repreved hym ful ofte. Suffre thou therfore paciently, for the wise man seith, "If thou stryve with a fool though the fool be wrooth or though he laughe, algate thou shalt have no reste."

[665] That oother gревance outward is to have damage of thy catel. Ther-agayns suffred Crist ful paciently, when he was despoyled of al that he hadde in this lyf, and that nas but hise clothes.

The thridde gревance is a man to have harm in his body. That suffred Crist ful paciently in al his passioun.

The fourthe gревance is in outrageous labour in werkes. Wherfore I seye that folk that maken hir servantz to travaillen to gревously, or out of tyme, as on haly dayes, soothly they do greet synne. Heer-agayns suffred Crist ful paciently and taughte us pacience, whan he baar upon his blissed shulder the croys upon which he sholde suffren despitous deeth. Heere may men lerne to be pacient, for certes noght oonly Cristen men been pacient for love of Jhesu Crist and for gerdoun of the blisful lyf that is perdur-

667. haly, holy.
able, but certes the olde payens that nevere were Cristene, commendeden and useden the vertu of pacience.

[670] A philosophre upon a tyme that wolde have beten his disciple for his grete trespas for which he was greetly amooved, and broghte a yerde to scoure the child; and whan this child saugh the yerde, he seyde to his maister, “What thenke ye do?” “I wol bete thee,” quod the maister, “for thy correc-cioun.” “Forsote,” quod the child; “ye oghten first correcte yourself, that han lost al youre pacience for the gilt of a child.” “Forsote,” quod the maister, al wepyne, “thow seyst sooth; have thou the yerde, my deere sone, and correcte me for myn inpacience.” Of pacience comth obedience, thurgh which a man is obedient to Crist and to alle hem to whiche he oghte to been obedient in Crist. [675] And understand wel that obedience is perfit whan that a man dooth gladly and hastily, with good herte, entierly, al that he sholde do. Obedience generally is to perfourne the doctrine of God and of his sove-reyns, to whiche hym oghte to ben obeisaunt in alle rightwisnesse.

*Sequitur de Accidia*

After the synne of envye and of ire, now wol I spoken of the synne of accidie; for envye blyndeth the herte of man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie

670. *amooved*, moved, disturbed.  
675. *perfit*, perfect.  
677. *accidie*, moral sluggishness.
maketh hym hevy, thoghtful and wrawful. Envye and ire maken bitternesse in herte, which bitternesse is mooder of accidie and bynymeth hym the love of alle goodnesse. Thanne is accidie the angwissh of troubled herte, and Seint Augustyn seith, it is anoy of goodnesse and joye of harm. Certes this is a dampnable synne, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist, in as muche as it bynymeth the service that men oghte doon to Crist with alle diligence, as seith Salomon; [680] but accidie dooth no swich diligence. He dooth alle thyng with anoy, and with wrawnesse, slaknesse, and excusacioun, and with ydelenesse, and unlust; for which the book seith, "Acursed be he that dooth the service of God necligently."

Thanne is accidie enemy to everich estaat of man, for certes the estaat of man is in thre maneres. Outher it is thestaat of innocence, as was thestaat of Adam biforn that he fil into synne, in which estaat he was holden to wirche as in heriynge and adowrynge of God. Another estaat is estaat of synful men, in which estaat men been holden to laboure in preiynge to God for amendement of hire synnes, and that he wole graunte hem to arys en out of hir synnes. Another estaat is thestaat of grace, in which estaat he is holden to werkes of penitence; and certes to alle thysynge is accidie enemy and contrarie, for he loveth no bisynesse at al. [685] Now certes this soule swyn,
accidie, is eek a ful greet enemy to the lislede of the body, for it ne hath no purveaunce agayn temporeel necessitee, for it forslweeth and forsluggeth, and destroyeth alle goodes temporeles by reccheleesnesse.

The fourthe thyng is, that accidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle, by-cause of hir slouthe and of hire hevynesse; for they that been dammed been so bounde that they ne may neither wel do, ne wel thinke. Of accidie comth first, that a man is anoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse, and maketh that God hath abhomynacion of swich accidie, as seith Seint John.

Now cometh slouthe, that wol nat sufre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce, for soothly, slouthe is so tendre and so delicat, as seith Salomon, that he wol nat sufre noon hardnesse, ne penaunce, and therfore he shendeth al that he dooth. Agayns this rotenherted synne of accidie and slouthe sholde men exercise hemself to doon goode werkes, and manly and vertuously cacchen corage wel to doon, thynkynge that oure Lord Jhesu Crist quiteth every good dede, be it never so lite. [690] Usage of labour is a greet thyng, for it maketh, as seith Seint Bernard, the laborer to have stronge armes, and harde synwes, and slouthe maketh hem feble and tendre. Thanne comth drede to bigynne to werke anye goode werkes; for certes he that is enclyned to synne hym thynketh.
it is so gret an emprise for to undertake to doon werkes of goodnesse, and casteth in his herte that the circumstaunces of goodnesse been so grevous and so chargeaunt for to suffre, that he dar nat undertake to do werkes of goodnesse, as seith Seint Gregorie.

Now comth wanhope, that is despier of the mercy of God, that comth somtyme of to muche outrageous sorwe, and somtyme of to muche drede, ymaginynge that he hath doon so muche synne that it wol nat availlen hym, though he wolde repenten hym and forsake synne; thurgh which despier or drede he abausndoneth al his herte to every maner synne, as seith Seint Augustin. [695] Which damnable synne, if that it continue unto his ende, it is cleped synnyng in the Hooly Goost. This horrible synne is so perilous, that he that is despeired, ther nys no felonye ne no synne that he doubteth for to do, as sheweth wel by Judas.

Certes, aboven alle synnes thanne is this synne moost displesant to Crist and moost aduersarie.

Soothly, he that despeireth hym is lyke the coward champioun recreant that seith “recreaunt” withoute nede. Alas! alas! nedeles is he recreaunt and nedelees despeired. Certes, the mercy of God is evere reedy to the penitent, and is aboven alle hise werkes. [700] Alas! kan a man nat bithynke hym on the gospel of Seint Luc xv., where as Crist seith, that as

692. chargeaunt, burden- some.
696. doubteth, hesitates.

698. that seith . . . is he recreaunt, om. E.
699. the penitent, E every penitent.
wel shal ther be joye in hevene upon a synful man that dooth penitence, than upon nynety and nyne rightful men that nevere ne dede synne, ne neden no penitence.

Looke forthor in the same gospel, the joye and the feeste of the goode man that hadde lost his sone, whan his sone with repentaunce was retourned to his fader. Kan they nat remembren hem eek, that as seith Seint Luc xxiii., how that the theef that was hanged bisyde Jhesu Crist seyde, “Lord, remembre of me, whan thou comest into thy regne.” “Forsothe,” seyde Crist, “I seye to thee, to day shaltow been with me in paradyss.” Certes, ther is noon so horrible synne of man that it ne may in his lyf be destroyed by penitence, thurgh vertu of the passion and of the deeth of Crist. [705] Allas! what nedeth man thanne to been despeired, sith that his mercy so redy is and large? Axe and have.

Thanne cometh somnolence, that is sloggy slom-brynge, which maketh a man be hevy and dul in body and in soule. And this synne comth of slouthe. And certes, the tyme that by wey of resoun men sholde nat slepe, that is by the morwe, but if ther were cause resonable, for soothly the morwe tyde is moost covenable a man to seye hise prayeres, and for to thynken on God, and for to honoure God, and to geven almesse to the poure, that first cometh in the name of Crist. Lo, what seith Salomon? “Whoso

700. nynety and nyne, E5 90 and 89. 703. I seye to thee, om. H4. 705. Axe, ask.
wolde by the morwe awaken and seke me, he shal fynde.” [710] Thanne cometh negociance or reccheleesnesse, that reketh of no thyng; and how that ignoraunce be moofer of alle harm, certes negotiace is the noreice. Necligence ne dooth no forss, whan he shal doon a thyng, wheither he do it weel or baddely.

Of the remedie of thise two synnes, as seith the wise man, that he that dредeth God he spareth nat to doon that him oghte doon, and he that loveth God he wol doon diligence to plese God by his werkes and abaundone hymself with al his myght wel for to doon. Thanne cometh ydelsnesse that is the gate of alle harmes. An ydel man is lyk to a place that hath no walles; the develes may entre on everey syde and sheten at hym at dicovert, by temptacion on every syde. [715] This ydelsnesse is the thurrook of alle wikked and vileyns thoghtes and of alle jangles, trules, and of alle ordure. Certes, the hevene is geven to hem that wol labouren, and nat to ydel folk. Eek David seith, that they ne been nat in the labour of men, ne they shul nat been whipped with men, that is to seyn in purgatorie; certes thanne semeth it they shul be tormented with the devel in helle, but if they doon penitence.

Thanne cometh the synne that men clepen tarditas, as whan a man is to laterede or tariynge er he wole turne to God, and certes that is a greet folie. He is

715. thurrok, sink.  
jangles, etc., chatter, trufles and filth.  
718. tarditas, slowness.  
laterede, slow.
lyk to hym that falleth in the dych, and wol nat arise. And this vice comth of a fals hope, that he thynketh that he shal lyve longe; but that hope faileth ful ofte.

[720] Thanne comth lachesse, that is he that whan he biginneth any good werk, anon he shal forleiten it, and stynten, as doon they that han any wight to governe and ne taken of hym namoore kepe anon as they fynden any contrarie or any anoy. Thise been the newe shepherdes that leten hir sheepe wityngly go renne to the wolf, that is in the breres, or do no fors of hir owene governaunce. Of this comth poverte and destruccioun, bothe of spiritueel and temporeel thynge. Thanne comth a manere cooldnesse, that freseth al the herte of a man. Thanne comth undevocioun, thurgh which a man is blent, as seith Seint Bernard, and hath swich langour in soule, that he may neither rede ne singe in hooly chirche, ne heere, ne thynke of no devocioun, ne travaille with his handes in no good werk, that it nys hym unsavory and al apalled. Thanne wexeth he slough and slombry, and soone wol be wrooth, and soone is enclyned to hate and to envye. [725] Thanne comth the synne of worldly sorwe, which as is cleped tristicia, that sleeth man, as Seint Paul seith. For certes, swich sorwe werketh to the deeth of the soule and of the body also, for ther-of comth that a man is anoyed of his owene lif; wherfore swich sorwe shorteth ful

718. dych, ditch.
720. lachesse, slackness, negligeance.
    forleiten, give over.
720. stynten, stop.
721. leten, leave.
723. blent, blinded.
    apalled, enfeebled.
ofte the lif of man, er that his tyme be come by wey of kynde.

*Remedium contra peccatum Accidie*

Agayns this horrible synne of accidie, and the branches of the same, ther is a vertu that is called *fortitudo*, or strengthe; that is, an affeccioun thurgh which a man despiseth anoyouse thinges. This vertu is so myghty and so vigerous that it dar withstonde myghtily, and wisely kepeth hym sef fro perils that been wikked, and wrastle agayn the assautes of the devel; [730] for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth it, and maketh it fieble; for this *fortitudo* may endure by long suffraunce the travailles that been covenable.

This vertu hath manye species, and the firste is cleped magnanimitée, that is to seyn greet corage; for certes ther bihoweth greet corage agains accidie lest that it ne swolwe the soule by the synne of sorwe, or destoye it by wanhope. This vertu maketh folk to undertake harde thyngees and grevous thyngees by hir owene wil, wisely and resonably. And for as muchel as the devel fighteth agayns a man moore by queyntise and by sleighthe than by strengthe, therfore men shal withstonden hym by wit and by resoun and by discrecioun.

Thanne arn ther the vertues of feith and hope in

728. *anoyouse, H⁴ alle noyous.*
729. *assautes,* assaults.
731. *magnanimitée, E magnificence.*
733. *queyntise,* contrivance
734. *arn,* are.
God, and in his seintes, to acheve and accomplice the goode werkes, in the whiche he purposeth fermely to continue. [735] Thanne comth seuretee, or sikernesse, and that is whan a man ne douteth no travaille in tyme comynge of the goode werkes that a man hath bigonne. Thanne comth magnificence, that is to seyn whan a man dooth and perfourneth grete werkes of goodnesse; and that is the ende why that men sholde do goode werkes; for in the acomplissynge of grete goode werkes lith the grete gerdoun. Thanne is ther constaunce, that is stablenesse of corage; and this sholde been in herte by stedefast feith, and in mouth, and in berynge, and in chiere, and in dede. Eke ther been mo speciale remedies agains accidie in diverse werkes, and in consideracioun of the peynes of helle, and of the joyes of hevene, and in trust of the grace of the Holy Goost, that wolde geve hym myght to perfourne his goode entente.

Sequitur de Avaricia

After accidie wol I speke of avarice and of coveitise, of which synne seith Seint Paule that the roote of alle harmes is coveitise. Ad Thimotheum vi. [740] For soothly, whan the herte of a man is confounded in it self, and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of God, thanne seketh he an ydel solas of worldly thynge.

Avarice, after the descripcion of Seint Augustyn, is

736. līth, lies. 740. solas, solace.
lierousnesse in herte to have erthely thynges. Som oother folk seyn that avarice is for to purchacen manye erthely thynges, and no thyng geve to hem that han nede. And understoond that avarice ne stant nat oonly in lond ne catel, but somtyme in science and in glorie, and in every manere of outrageous thyng is avarice and coveitise.

And the difference bitwixe avarice and coveitise is this; coveitise is for to coveite swiche thynges as thou hast nat, and avarice is for to withholde and kepe swiche thynges as thou hast withoute rightful nede. [745] Soothly this avarice is a synne that is ful damnable, for al hooly writ curseth it, and speketh agayns that vice, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist; for it bireveth hym the love that men to hym owen, and turneth it bakward agayns alle resoun, and maketh that the avaricious man hath moore hope in his catel than in Jhesu Crist, and dooth moore observance in kepynge of his tresor than he dooth to service of Jhesu Crist. And therfore seith Seint Paul, ad Ephesos v., that an avaricious man is the thraldom of ydolatrie.

What difference is betwixe an ydolastre and an avaricious man? but that any ydolastre peraventure ne hath but o mawmet or two and the avaricious man hath manye; for certes, every floryn in his cofre is his mawmet. [750] And certes, the synne of mawmet-

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741. likerousnesse, craving. 749. ydolastre, idolater.
748. is the thraldom, Pet.² is thral. 749. mawmet, Mahomet, idol.
tried is the first thyng that God deffended in the ten commaundments, as bereth witnesse *Exodi* capitolo xx.

"Thou shalt have no false goddes before me, ne thou shalt make to thee no grave thyng." Thus is an avaricious man that loveth his tresor biforn God an ydolastre, thurgh this cursed synne of avarice.

Of coveitise comen thise harde lordshipes thurgh whiche men been distreynd by taylages, custumes, and cariages, moore than hire dueetee or resoun is; and eek they taken of hire bonde-men amercimentz, whiche myghten moore resonably ben cleped extortiones than amercimentz. Of whiche amercimentz and raunsonynge of bondemen somme lordes stywardes seyn that it is rightful, for as muche as a cherl hath no temporeel thyng that it ne is his lorde, as they seyn; but certes thise lordshipes doon wrong that bireven hire bonde folk thynges that they nevere gave hem. *Augustinus de Civitate Dei*, libro ix. [755]

Sooth is that the condiocioun of thraldom and the firste cause of thraldom is for synne. *Genesis* ix.

Thus may ye seyn that the gilt disserveth thraldom, but nat nature; wherfore thise lordes ne sholde nat muche glorisien hem in hir lordshipes, sith that by natureel condiocioun they been nat lordes of thralles, but that thraldom comth first by the desert of synne. And forther-over ther as the lawe seith that temporeel

750. *the firste thyng, the 1st and 2nd commandments were reckoned by the Roman Church as one, the 10th being divided.* 752. *distreynd, etc., vexed by taxes, dues, and "corvées."*

goodes of boonde folk been the goodes of hir lordshipes, ye, that is for to understande, the goodes of the emperour, to defenden hem in hir right, but nat for to robben hem ne reven hem. And therfore seith Seneca, "Thy prudence sholde lyve benignely with thy thralles; [760] thilke that thou clepest thy thralles been Goddes peple, for humble folk been Cristes freendes, they been contubernyal with the Lord."

Thynk eek that of swich seed as cherles spryngeth, of swich seed spryngen lordes. As wel may the cherl be saved as the lord; the same deeth that take the cherl, swich deeth taketh the lord; wherfore I rede, do right so with thy cherl as thou woldest that thy Lord dye with thee if thou were in his plit. Every synful man is a cherl to synne. I rede thee, certes, that thou, lord, werke in swiche wise with thy cherles that they rather love thee than drede. I woot wel ther is degree above degree, as reson is, and skile it is that men do hir devoir ther as it is due; but certes, extorcions and despit of youre underlynges is damnable.

[765] And forther-over understoond wel that thise conquerours, or tirauntz, maken ful ofte thralles of hem that been born of as roial blood as been they that hem conqueren. This name of thraldom was nevere erst kowth, til that Noe seyde that his sone

760. contubernyal, dwellers in the same tent, fellow-soldiers.
762. plit, plight.
764. skile, reason.
764. devoir, duty.
766. kowth, known.
Canaan sholde be thral to hise bretheren for his synne. What seye we thanne of hem that pilen and doon extorcions in hooly chirche? Certes, the swerd that men geven first to a knyght whan he is newe dubbed signifieth that he sholde defenden hooly chirche, and nat robben it ne pilen it, and who so dooth is traitour to Crist. And, as seith Seint Augus-tyn, they been the develes wolves that stranglen the sheepe of Jhesu Crist, and doon worse than wolves, for, soothly, whan the wolf hath ful his wombe he stynteth to strangle sheepe, but soothly, the pilours and destroyours of Goddes hooly chirche ne do nat so, for they ne stynte nevere to pile.

[770] Now, as I have seyd, sith so is that synne was first cause of thraldom, thanne is it thus, that thilke tyme that al this world was in synne, thanne was al this world in thraldom and subjeccioun; but certes, sith the time of grace cam, God ordeyned that som folk sholde be moore heigh in estaat and in degree, and som folk moore lough, and that everich sholde be served in his estaat and his degree, and therfore in somme contrees ther they byen thralles, whan they han turned hem to the feith, they maken hire thralles free out of thraldom. And therfore certes the lord oweth to his man that the man oweth to his lord. The pope calleth hymself servaunt of the servauntz of God; but for-as-muche as the estaat of hooly chirche

\[767. \text{pilen, rob.}\] \[769. \text{wombe, belly.}\] \[\text{H of the goodes, etc.}; \text{the other MSS. of goodes, of good, of holy chirches godes.}\]
ne myghte nat han be, ne the commune profit myghte
nat han be kept, ne pees and reste in erthe, but if God
hadde ordeyned that som men hadde hyer degree and
som men lower, therfore was sovereyntee ordeyned to
kepe and mayntene and defenden hire underlynges
or hire subgetz in resoun as ferforth as it lith in hire
power, and nat to destroyen hem ne confounde.

[775] Wherfore I seye, that thilke lordes that been
lyk wolves that devouren the possessiouuns or the
catel of poure folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or
mesure, they shul receyven, by the same mesure that
they han mesured to poure folk, the mercy of Jhesu
Crist, but if it be amended.

Now comth deceite bitwixe marchaunt and mar-
chaunt. And thow shalt understonde that marchan-
dise is in manye maneres; that oon is bodily, and
that oother is goostly, that oon is honeste and leveful,
and that oother is deshoneste and unleveful. Of
thilke bodily marchandise that is leveful and honeste
is this, that there as God hath ordeyned that a regne
or a contree is suffisaunt to hym-self, thanne is it
honeste and leveful that of habundaunce of this contree
that men helpe another contree that is moore nedy;
and therfore ther moote been marchantz to bryngen
fro that o contree to that oother hire marchandises.

[780] That oother marchandise, that men haunten
with fraude and trecherie and deceite, with lesynges
and false othes, is cursed and damnable.

Espiritueel marchandise is proprely symonye, that

777. leveful, lawful. 78o. haunten, practise.
is, ententif desir to byen thyng espiritueel, that is
thyng that aperteneth to the seintuarie of God, and to
cure of the soule. This desir, if so be that a man do
his diligence to parfournen it, al be it that his desir ne
take noon effect, yet is it to hym a deedly synne, and
if he be ordred he is irreguleer. Certes symonye is
cleped of Simon Magus, that wolde han boght for
temporeel catel the gifte that God hadde geven by the
Hooly Goost to Seint Peter and to the Apostles.
And therfore understoond that bothe he that selleth
and he that beyeth thynges espirituels been cleped
symonyals, be it by catel, be it by procurynge, or by
flessly preyere of his freendes, flessly freendes, or
espiritueel freendes. \[785\] Flessly in two maneres;
as by kynrede, or othere freendes; soothly, if they
praye for hym that is nat worthy and able, it is
symonye, if he take the benefice; and if he be worthy
and able ther nys noon.

That oother manere is whan a man or womman
preyen for folk to avauncen hem oonly for wikked
flessly affeccioun that they have unto the persone,
and that is foul symonye. But certes in service for
which men geven thynges espirituels unto hir servantz
it moot be understonde that the service moot been
honeste, and elles nat; and eek that it be with-
outen bargaynynge, and that the persone be able;
for, as seith Seint Damasie, "Alle the synnes of the
world at regard of this synne arn as thyng of noght,
for it is the gretteste synne that may be, after the

781. seintuarie, sanctuary.  782. ordred, ordained.
synne of Lucifer and Antecrist;" for by this synne
God forleseth the chirche and the soule that he boghte
with his precious blood by hem that geven chirches
to hem that been nat digné, [790] for they putten in
theves that stelen the soules of Jhesu Crist and de-
stroyen his patrimoyne. By swiche undigne preestes
and curates han lewed men the lasse reverence of the
sacramentz of hooly chirche, and swiche geveres of
chirches putten out the children of Crist, and putten
into the chirche the develes owene sone. They sellen
the soules that lambes sholde kepen, to the wolf that
strangleth hem; and thersore, shul they nevere han
part of the pasture of lambes, that is the blisse of
hevene.

Now comth hasardrie, with his apurtenaunces,
as tables and rafles, of which comth deceite, false
othes, chidynges, and alle ravynes, blasphemyng and
reneyng of God, and hate of his neighebores,
wast of goodes, mysspendyng of tyme, and som-
tyme manslaughtre. Certes, hasardours ne mowe nat
been withouten greet synne whil thay haunte that
crafte. [795] Of avarice comen eek lesynges, thefte,
fals witnesse, and false othes; and ye shul under-
stone that thise been grete synnes, and expres
agayn the comaundementz of God, as I have seyd.
Fals witnesse is in word and eek in dede. In word,
as for to bireve thy neighebores goode name by thy
fals witnessyng, or bireven hym his catel or his heri-

793. ravynes, rapines. 794. whil thay haunte that crafte, reneyng, denying. om. E3.
tage by thy fals witnessyng, whan thou for ire, or for meede, or for envye, berest fals witnesse, or accusest hym, or excusest hym, by thy fals witnesse, or elles excusest thyself falsly. Ware yow questemongeres and notaries. Certes, for fals witnessyng was Susanna in ful gret sorwe and peyne, and many another mo. The synne of thefte is eek expres agayns Goddes heeste, and in two maneres, corporeel or espiritueel. Corporel, as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wyl, be it by force or by sleighte, be it by met or by mesure, [800] by stelyng eek of false enditements upon hym, and in borwyng of thy neighebores catel, in entente nevere to payen it agayn, and semblable thynges.

Espiritueel thefte is sacrilege, that is to seyn, hurtynge of hooly thynges, or of thynges sacred to Crist, in two maneres; by reson of the hooly place, as chirches or chirche-hawes, for which every vileyns synne that men doon in swiche places may be cleped sacrilege, or every violence in the semblable places.

Also they that withdrawen falsly the rightes that longen to hooly chirche. And pleynly and generally, sacrilege is to reyen hooly thyng fro hooly place, or unhooly thyng out of hooly place, or hooly thyng out of unhooly place.

797. questemongeres, holders of inquests; Fr. “avocat.”
met or mesure, both words mean measure.
800. it agayn, om. H⁸⁵.
semblable, similar.
801. chirche-hawes, church-yards.
Relevacio contra peccatum Avarice

Now shul ye understonde that the releevynge of avarice is misericorde and pitee largely taken. And men myghten axe why that misericorde and pitee is releevynge of avarice. \[805\] Certes, the avaricious man sheweth no pitee ne misericorde to the nedeful man, for he delith hym in the kepynge of his tresor and nat in the rescowyynge ne releevynge of his evene Cristene; and therfore speke I first of misericorde.

Thanne is misericorde, as seith the philosophre, a vertu by which the corage of man is stired by the mysese of hym that is myseseed; upon which misericorde folweth pitee in parfourynge of charitable werkes of misericorde. And certes, thise thynges moeven a man to misericorde, of Jhesu Crist, that he gaf hymself for oure gilt, and suffred deeth for misericorde, and forgaf us oure originale synnes, and therby reessed us fro the Peynes of helle, and amenused the peynes of purgatorie by penitence, and geveth grace wel to do, and atte laste the blisse of hevene. \[810\] The speces of misericorde been, as for to lene and for to geve, and to forgeven and relesse, and for to han pitee in herte, and compassioun of the meschief of his even Cristene, and eek to chastise there as neede is.

Another manere of remedie agayns avarice is resonable largesse, but soothly heere bihoveth the

805. rescowyynge, rescuing. 809. blisse, H\(^5\) joye.
809. amenused, lessened. 810. lene, lend.
consideracioun of the grace of Jhesu Crist and of hise temporeel goodes, and eek of the goodes perdurables that Crist gaf to us, and to han remembrance of the deeth that he shal receyve, he noot whanne, where, ne how; and eek that he shal forgon al that he hath, save oonly that he hath despended in goode werkes.

But, for as muche as som folk been unmesurable, men oughten eschue fool largesse that men clepen wast. Certes, he that is fool large ne geveth nat his catel, but he leseth his catel. Soothly what thyng that he geveth for veyne glorie, as to mynstrals and to folk, for to beren his renoun in the world, he hath synne ther-of, and noon almesse. [815] Certes he leseth foule his good that ne seketh with the gifte of his good no thyng but synne. He is lyk to an hors that seketh rather to dryken drovy or trouble water, than for to dryken water of the clere welle. And for as muchel as they geven ther as they sholde nat geven, to hem aperteneth thilke malisoun that Crist shal geven at the day of doome to hem that shullen been dampned.

Sequitur de Guld

After avarice comth glotonye, which is expres eek agayn the comandement of God. Glotonye is unmesurable appetit to ete or to drynke, or elles to doon ynogh to the unmesurable appetit and desordeyne

coveitise to eten or to drynke. This synne corrumped al this world, as is wel shewed in the synne of Adam and of Eve. Looke, eek, what seith Seint Paul of glotonye. [820] "Manye," seith Seint Paul, "goon of whiche I have ofte seyd to yow, and now I seye it wepynge, that been the enemys of the croys of Crist, of whiche the ende is deeth, and of whiche hire wombe is hire God, and hire glorie in confusioun of hem that so devouren erthely thynges." He that is usaunt to this synne of glotonye he ne may no synne withstonde; he moot been in servage of alle vices, for it is the develes hoord ther he hideth hym and resteth.

This synne hath manye species. The firste is dronkenesse, that is the horrible seputure of mannes resoun, and therfore whan a man is dronken he hath lost his resoun, and this is deedly synne. But soothly, whan that a man is nat wont to strong drynke, and peraventure ne knoweth nat the strengthe of the drynke, or hath feblesse in his heed, or hath travailed, thurgh which he drynketh the moore, al be he sodeynly caught with drynke, it is no deedly synne, but venyal. The seconde spece of glotonye is, that the spirit of a man wexeth al trouble, for dronkenesse bireveth hym the discrcioun of his wit. [825] The thridde spece of glotonye is whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath no rightful manere of etynge. The fourth is, whan thurgh the grete habundaunce of his mete, the humours in his body been destempred. The fifthe

819. corrumped, corrupted.  820. devouren, H3 saveren.
is forgetenesse by to muchel drynkyng, for which somtyme a man forgeteth er the morwe what he dide at even, or on the nyght biforn.

In oother manere been distinct the speces of glotonye, after Seint Gregorie. The firste is for to ete biforn tyme to ete; the seconde is whan a man get hym to delicaat mete or drynke; the thridde is whan men taken to muche over mesure; the fourthe is curiositee with greet entente to maken and apparaillen his mete; the fiftthe is for to eten to gredily. [830] Thise been the fyve syngres of the devels hand, by whiche he draweth folk to synne.

Remedium contra peccatum Gule

Agayns glotonye is the remedie abstinence, as seith Galien; but that holde I nat meritorie, if he do it oonly for the heele of his body. Seint Augustyn wole that abstinence be doon for vertu and with pacience. “Abstinence,” he seith, “is litel worth, but if a man have good wil ther-to, and but it be enforced by pacience and by charitee, and that men doon it for Godes sake, and in hope to have the blisse of hevene.”

The felawes of abstinence been attemperaunce, that holdeth the meene in alle thynges; eek shame, that eschueh alle deshonste; suffisance, that seketh no riche metes ne drynkes, ne dooth no fors of to

827. forgetenesse, forgetfulness. 828. get, getteth. 829. curiositee, fastidiousness. apparaillen, prepare. 831. heele, health.
outrageous apparrailynge of mete; mesure also, that restreyneth by resoun the deslavee appetit of etynge; sobrenesse also, that restreyneth the outrage of drynke; sparynge also, that restreyneth [835] the delicaat ese to sitte longe at his mete and softely, wherfore som folk stonden, of hir owene wyl, to eten at the lasse leyser.

_Sequitur de Luxuria_

After glotonye thanne comth lecherie, for thise two synnes been so ny cosyns, that ofte tyme they wol nat departe. God woot this synne is ful displesaunt thynge to God, for he seyde hymself, “Do no lecherie;” and therfore he putte grete peynes agayns this synne in the olde lawe. If womman thrall were taken in this synne, she sholde be beten with staves to the deeth; and if she were a gentil womman, she sholde be slayn with stones; and if she were a bisshoppes dogther, she sholde been brent by Goddes comandement. Fortherover, by the synne of lecherie God dreynye al the world at the diluge, and after that he brente five citees with thonder leyt and sank hem into helle.

[840] Now lat us speke thanne of thilke stynkyng synne of lecherie that men clepe avowtrie of wedded folk; that is to seyn, if that oon of hem be wedded, or elles bothe. Seint John seith that avôtiers shullen been in helle in a stank brennynge of fyr and

834. deslavee, unbridled. 839. dreynye, drowned. 836. departhe, separate. leyt, lightning, flame. 839. by the synne, i.e. on account of. 840. avowtrie, adultery. 841. stank (stench), H water.
of brymston. In fyr for lecherie, in brymston for the stykn of hire ordure. Certes, the brekyng of this sacrament is an horrible thyng; it was maked of God hymself in paradys, and confermed by Jhesu Crist, as witnesseth Seint Mathew in the gospel: "A man shalle fader and moooder and taken hym to his wif, and they shullen be two in o flessh." This sacrament bitokneth the knyttyng eogidre of Crist and of hooły chirche. And nat oonly that God forbad avowtrieg in dede, but eek he comanded that thou sholdest nat coveite thy neighebores wyf. [845] In this heeste, seith Seint Augustyn, is forboden alle manere coveitise to doon lecherie. Lo, what seith Seint Mathew in the gospel; that who so seeth a womman to coveitise of his lust, he hath doon lecherie with hire in his herte. Heere may ye seen that nat oonly the dede of this synne is forboden, but eek the desir to doon that synne.

This cursed synne anoyeth grevousliche hem that it haunten. And first to hire soule, for he obligeth it to synne and to peyne of deeth that is perdurable. Unto the body anoyeth it grevously also, for it dreyeth hym, and wasteth, and shenteth hym, and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the feend of helle; it wasteth his catel and his substaunce. And certes if it be a foul thyng a man to waste his catel on wommen, yet is it a fouler thyng whan that for swich ordure wommen dispenden upon men hir catel and sub-

841. In fyr for lecherie, in brymston, om. E3.
847. haunten, practise.
staunce. [850] This synne, as seith the prophete, bireveth man and womman hir goode fame, and al hire honour, and it is ful plesaunt to the devel; for ther-by wynneth he the mooste partie of this world; and, right as a marchant deliteth hym moost in chaffare that he hath moost avantage of right, so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

This is that oother hand of the devel with five fyngres to cacche the peple to his vileynye. The firste fynger is the fool lookynge of the fool womman, and of the fool man, that sleeth right as the basilicok sleeth folk by the venym of his sighte; for the coveitise of eyen folweth the coveitise of the herte. The seconde fynger is the vileyns touchyng in wikkede manere; and therfore, seith Salomon that whoso toucheth and handleth a womman he fareth lyk hym that handleth the scorioun that styngeth and sodeynly sleeth thurgh his envenymynge; as whoso toucheth warm pych, it shent hise fyngres. [855] The thridde is foule wordes, that fareth lyk fyr, that right anon brenneth the herte. The fourthe fynger is the kisynge; and trewely he were a greet fool that wolde kisse the mouth of a brennynge oven, or ʃ a four-neys. And moore fooles been they that kissen in vileynye, for that mouth is the moth of helle; and namely thise olde dotardes holars, yet wol they kisse though they may nat do, and smatre hem. Certes, they been lyk to hɔ̃des, for an hound whan he

851. chaffare, barieds.
853. basilicok, b7ask.
854. skent, diseles.
857. holours, lechers.
comth by the roser, or by othere beautees, though he may nat pisse, yet wole he heve up his leg and make a contenaunce to pisse. And for that many man weneth that he may nat synne, for no likerousnesse that he dooth with his wyf, certes, that opiinioun is fals; God woot a man may sleen hymself with his owene knyf and make hymselven drownken of his owene tonne. [860] Certes, be it wyf, be it child, or any worldly thynge that he loveth biforn God, it is his mawmet, and he is an ydolastre. Man sholde loven his wyf by discrecioun, paciently and atemprely, and thanne is she as though it were his suster.

The fift the fynger of the develes hand is the stynt-ynge dede of leccherie. Certes, the five fyngres of glotonie the feend put in the wombe of a man, and with hisse five fyngres of lecherie he gripeth hym by the reynes for to throwen hym into the fourneys of helle, ther as they shul han the fyr and the wormes that evere shul lasten, and wepynge and wailynge, sharpe hunger and thirst, and grymnesse of develes that shullen al to-trede hem withouten respit and wittynende.

[865] I leccherie, as I seyde, sourden diverse speces, as 'nicacioun that is bitwixe man and womman that bin nat maried, and this is deedly synne and agayns nature. Al that is enemy and destruccioun to nature is agayns nature. Parfay, the
resoun of a man telleth eek hym wel that it is deedsly synne, for as muche as God forbad leccherie. And Seint Paul geveth hem the regne that nys dewe to no wight but to hem that doon deedsly synne. Another synne of leccherie is to bireve a mayden of hir maydenhede, for he that so dooth, certes, he casteth a mayden out of the hyeste degree that is in this present lif, and bireveth hire thilke precious fruyt that the book clepeth the “hundred fruyt.” I ne kan seye it noon oother weyes in Englissh, but in Latyn it highte Centesimus fructus. [870] Certes, he that so dooth is cause of manye damages and vileynyes, mo than any man kan rekene, right as he somtyme is cause of alle damages that beestes don in the feeld that breketh the hegge or the closure, thurgh which he destroyeth that may nat been restoored. For certes, namoore may maydenhede be restoored than an arm that is smyten fro the body may retourne agayn to wexe. She may have mercy; this woot I wel, if she do penitence, but nevere shal it be that she nas corrupt.

And, al be it so that I have spoken somwhat of avowtrie, it is good to shewen mo perils that longen to avowtrie, for to eschue that foule synne. Avowtrie in Latyn is for to seyn, approchynge of oother mannes bed, thurgh which tho that whilom weren o flessh abawndone hir bodyes to othre persones. [875] Of this synne, as seith the wise man, folwen manye harmes. First, brekyng of feith; and certes, in

869. fructus, H adds secundum Jeronimum contra Jovinianum.
871. to wexe, to grow.
feith is the keye of Cristendom, and whan that feith is broken and lorn, soothe, Cristendom stant veyn and withouten fruyt. This synne is eek a thefte, for thefte generally is for to reve a wight his thyng agayns his wille. Certes this is the fouleste thefte that may be, whan a womman steleth hir body from hir houbonde and geveth it to hire holour to defoulen hire, and steleth hir soule fro Crist, and geveth it to the deuel. This is a fouler thefte than for to breke a chirche and stele the chalice, for thise avowtiers breken the temple of God, spiritually, and stelen the vessel of grace, that is the body and the soule, for which Crist shal destroyen hem, as seint Seint Paul.

[88o] Soothly of this thefte douted gretly Joseph, whan that his lorde wyf preyed hym of vileynye, whan he seyde, "Lo, my lady, how my lord hath take to me under my warde al that he hath in this world, ne no thyng of hise thynges is out of my power, but oonly ye, that been his wyf, and how sholde I thanne do this wikkednesse and synne so horrible agayns God, and agayns my lord? God it forbeede!" Alas! al to litel is swich trouthe now y-founde.

The thridde harm is the filthe thurgh which they breken the comandement of God and defoulen the auctour of matrimoyne, that is, Crist. For certes, in so muche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it gretter synne for to breken it; for God made mariage in paradys, in the estaat of innocence, to multiplye mankynde to the service of

88o. take, entrusted.
God; and thersfore is the brekyng moore grevous; of which brekyng come false heires ofte tyme, that wrongfully ocupien folkes heritages. And thersfore wol Crist putte hem out of the regne of hevne that is heritage to goode folk. [885] Of this brekyng comth eek ofte tyme that folk unwar wedden or synnen with hire owene kynrede, and namely thilke harlottes that haunten bordels of thise fool wommen, that mowe be likned to a commune gonge, where as men purgen hire ordure.

What seye we eek of putours that lyven by the horrible synne of putrie and constreyne wommen to yelden to hem a certeyn rente of hire bodily puterie, —ye, somtyme of his owene wyf or his child, as doon this bawdes. Certes, thise been cursede synnes. Understoond eek, that avowtrie is set gladly in the ten comandementz bitwixe thefte and manslaughtre, for it is the gretteste thefte that may be, for it is thefte of body and of soule; and it is lyk to homycle, for it kerveth atwo and breketh atwo hem that first were maked of flesh, and thersfore by the olde lawe of God they sholde be slayn. But nathelees, by the lawe of Jhesu Crist, that is lawe of pitee, whan he seyde to the womman that was founden in avowtrie, and sholde han been slayn with stones after the wyl of the Jewes, as was hir lawe, “Go,” quod Jhesu Crist, “and have namoore wyl to synne,” or wille namoore to do synne.

884. folkes, H4 mennes, other mennes.
885. bordels, brothels.
886. putours, whoremongers.

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Soothly, the vengeaunce of avowtrie is awarded to the peynes of helle, but if so be that it be destourbed by penitence.

Yet been ther mo especes of this cursed synne, as whan that oon of hem is religious, or elles bothe, or of folk that been entred into ordre, as subdeke, or preest, or hospitaliers, and evere the hyer that he is in ordre the gretter is the synne. The thynges that gretly agreggen hire synne is the brekyng of hire avow of chastitee whan they receyved the ordre. And forther-over, sooth is, that hooly ordre is chief of al the tresorie of God, and his especial signe and mark of chastitee, to shewe that they been joyned to chastitee which that is moost precious lyf that is. And thise ordred folk been specially titled to God, and of the special meignee of God, for which, whan they doon deedly synne, they been the special traytours of God and of his peple, for they lyven of the peple to preye for the peple, and while they been suche traytours her preyers availle nat to the peple.

Preestes been aungeles as by the dignitee of hir mysterye, but forsothe Seint Paul seith, that Sathanas transformeth hym in an aungel of light. Soothly, the preest that haunteth deedly synne, he may be likned to the aungel of derknesse transformed in the aungel of light; he semeth aungel of light, but forsothe he is aungel of derknesse. Swiche preestes

891. religious, i.e. a member of a religious order.

892. agreggen, aggravate.

893. titled, devoted.

894. meignee, household.

895. to preye for . . . to the peple, om. E.
been the sones of Helie, as sheweth in the book of
Kynges, that they weren the sones of Belial, that is the
devel. "Belial" is to seyn withouten juge, and so
faren they; hem thynketh they been free and han no
juge, namore than hath a free bole, that taketh
which cow that hym liketh in the town. So faren
they by wommen, for right as a free bole is ynoough
for al a toun, right so is a wikked preest corrupcion
ynough for al a parisshe, or for al a contree.

[900] Thise preestes, as seith the book, ne konne
nat the mysterie of preesthode to the peple, ne God
ne knowe they nat; they ne holde hem nat apayd, as
seith the book, of soden flessh that was to hem offred,
but they tooke by force the flessh that is rawe. Certes,
so thise shrewes ne holden hem nat apayed of roosted
flessh and sode flessh with which the peple fedden
hem in greet reverence, but they wole have raw flessh
of folkes wyves and hir doghtres. And certes, thise
wommen that consenten to hire harlotrie doon greet
wrong to Crist and to hooly chirche and alle halwes,
and to alle soules; for they bireven alle thise hym
that sholde worship Crist and hooly chirche, and
preye for cristene soules. And therfore han swiche
preestes, and hire lemmannes eek that consenten to hir
leccherie, the malisoun of al the court cristiene, til
they come to amendement.

The thridd spece of avowtrie is som tyme bitwixe
a man and his wyf; and that is whan they take no

897. Helie (Eli), Hë Belie, Belial. 898. bole, bull.
902. halwes, saints.
reward in hire assemblynge but oonly to hire flesshly delit, as seith Seint Jerome; [905] and ne rekken of no thyng but that they been assembled. By-cause that they been maried al is good ynough, as thynketh to hem. But in swich folk hath the devel power, as seyde the aungel Raphael to Thobie, for in hire assemblynge they putten Jhesu Crist out of hire herte, and geven hem-self to alle ordure.

The fourthe spece is the assemblee of hem that been of hire kynrede, or of hem that been of oon affynytee, or elles with hem with whiche hir faders or hir kynrede han deled in the synne of lecherie. This synne maketh hem lyk to houndes that taken no kepe to kynrede. And certes, parentele is in two manerers, outhere goostly or flesshly: goostly, as for to deelen with hise godsibbes; for, right so as he that engendreth a child is his flesshly fader, right so is his godfader his fader espiritueel; for which a woman may in no lasse synne assemble with hire godsib than with hire owene flesshly brother.

[910] The fifthe spece is thilke abhomynable synne of which that no man unnethe oghte speke ne write, natheelees it is openly reherced in holy writ. This cursednesse doon men and wommen in diverse entente, and in diverse manere, but though that hooly writ speke of horrible synne, certes hooly writ may nat been defouled, namoore than the sonne that shyneth on the mixne.

904. reward, regard. 907. kepe to, H heede of. 908. godsibbes, god-parents. 908. parentele, relationship. 911. mixne, H² donge-hille.
Another synne aperteneth to leccherie that comth in slepynge; and this synne cometh ofte to hem that been maydenes, and eek to hem that been corrupt. And this synne men clepen polucioun, that comth in thre maneres. Somtyme of langwissyng of body, for the humours been to ranke and habundaunt in the body of man; somtyme of infermetee, for the fieblesse of the vertu retentif, as phisik maketh mencion; somtyme for surfeet of mete and drynke; and somtyme of vileyns thoghtes that been enclosed in mans mynde when he gooth to slepe, which may nat been withoute synne, for which men moste kepen hem wisely, or elles may men synnen ful grevously.

*Remedium contra peccatum Luxurie*

[915] Now comth the reme die agayns leccherie, and that is generally chastitee and continence, that restreyneth alle the desordeynee moevynges that comen of flessshly talentes. And evere the gretter merite shal he han that moost restreyneth the wikkede eschawfynges of the ordure of this synne; and this is in two maneres; that is to seyn, chastitee in mariadge, and chastitee of widwehode. Now shaltow understonde that matrimoyne is leefful assemblynge of man and of womman, that receyven, by vertu of the sacrement, the boond thurgh which they may nat be departed in

915. desordeynee, etc., disorderly emotions of fleshly desires.
916. eschawfynges, chafings.
917. leefful, lawful.
al hir lyf, that is to seyn, whil that they lyven bothe. This, as seith the book, is a ful greet sacrament; God maked it, as I have seyd, in paradys, and wolde hymself be born in mariage; and, for to halwen mariage, he was at a weddynge, where as he turned water in to wyn, which was the firste miracle that he wroghte in erthe biforn his disciples.

[920] Trewe effect of mariage clenseth fornicacioun and replenysseth hooly chirche of good lynage, for that is the ende of mariage; and it chaungeth deedly synne into venial synne bitwixe hem that been y-wedded, and maketh the hertes al oon of hem that been y-wedded, as wel as the bodies. This is verray mariage that was establisshed by God, er that synne began, whan natureel lawe was in his right poynt in paradys, and it was oderneyd that o man sholde have but o womman, and o womman but o man, as seith Seint Augustyn, by manye resouns.

First, for mariage is figured bitwixe Crist and holy chirche, and that oother is, for a man is heved of a womman,—algate by ordinaunce it sholde be so. For, if a womman hadde mo men than oon, thanne sholde she have moo hevedes than oon, and that were an horrible thyng biforn God; and eek a womman ne myghte nat plese to manye folk at oones. And also ther ne sholde nevere be pees ne reste amonges hem, for everich wolde axen his owene thyng; and fortherover no man ne sholde knowe his owene engendrure, ne who sholde have his heritage, and the womman

921. This is, om. E². 922. heved, head.
sholde been the lasse biloved fro the tyme that she were conjoynt to many men.

[925] Now comth how that a man sholde bere hym with his wif; and namely in two thynges, that is to seyn, in suffraunce and reverence, as shewed Crist whan he made first womman. For he ne made hire nat of the heved of Adam, for she sholde nat clayme to greet lordshipe; for ther as the womman hath the maistrie she maketh to muche desray. Ther neden none ensamples of this, the experience of day by day oghte suffise. Also certes, God ne made nat womman of the foot of Adam, for she ne sholde nat been holden to lowe, for she kan nat paciently suffre. But God made womman of the ryb of Adam for womman sholde be felawe unto man. Man sholde bere hym to his wyf in feith, in trouthe, and in love, as seith Seint Paul, that a man sholde loven his wyf as Crist loved hooly chirche, that loved it so wel that he deyde for it; so sholde a man for his wyf if it were nede.

[930] Now how that a womman sholde be subget to hire housbonde, that telleth Seint Peter. First, in obedience. And eek, as seith the decre, a womman that is wyf, as longe as she is a wyf, she hath noon auctoritee to swere, ne bere witnesse, withoute leve of hir housbonde, that is hire lord,—algate he sholde be so by resoun. She sholde eek serven hym in alle honestee, and been attempree of hire array. I woot wel that they sholde sett hen entente to plesen hir housbondes, but nat by hire queyntise of array.

927. desray, spelt disparay in H⁴. 932. queyntise, elegance.
Seint Jerome seith that wyves that been apparailld in silk and in precious purpre ne mowe nat clothen hem in Jhesu Crist. What seith Seint John eek in thys materere? Seint Gregorie eek seith that no wight seketh precious array, but oonly for veyne glorie to been honoured the moore biforn the peple. [935] It is a greet folye, a womman to have a fair array outward and in hir-self soul inward.

A wyf sholde eek be mesurable in lookynge, and in berynge, and in lawghynge, and discreet in alle hire wordes and hire dedes and aboven alle worldly thyng she sholde loven hire housbonde with al hire herte, and to hym be trewe of hir body. So sholde an housbonde eek be to his wyf, for, sith that al the body is the housbondes, so sholde hire herte been, or elles ther is bitwixe hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage.

Thanne shal men understonde that for thre thynges a man and his wyf flesshly mowen assemble. The firste is in entente of engendrure of children, to the service of God, for certes that is the cause final of matrimoyne. [940] Another cause is to yelden everich of hem to oother the dette of hire bodies, for neither of hem hath power over his owene body. The thridde is for to eschewe leccherye and vileynyre. The ferdhe is forsothe deedly synne. As to the firste, it is meritorie; the seconde also, for, as seith the decree, that she hath merite of chastitee that yeldeth to hire housbonde the dette of hir body, ye, though it be

933. *purpre*, purple.
agayn hir likynge and the lust of hire herte. The thridde manere is venyal synne, and trewely scarsly may ther any of thise be withoute venial synne, for the corrupcioun and for the delit. The fourthe manere is for to understonde if they assemble oonly for amor- ous love, and for noon of the foreseyde causes, but for to accomplice thilke brennynge delit, they rekke nevere how ofte, soothly it is deedly synne, and yet with sorwe somme folk wol peynen hem moore to doon than to hire appetit suffiseth.

The seconde manere of chastitee is for to been a clene wydewe and eschue the embracynges of man and desiren the embracynge of Jhesu Crist. [945] Thise been tho that han been wyves and han forgoon hire housbondes, and eek wommen that han doon leccherie and been releved by penitence. And certes, if that a wyf koude kepyn hire al chaast by licence of hir housbonde so that she geve nevere noon occasion that he agilte, it were to hire a greet merite. Thise manere wommen that observen chastitee moste be clene in herte, as wele as in body and in thoughte, and mesurable in clothyng and in contenaunce, abstinent in etynge and drynkynge, in spekynge and in dede. They been the vessel, or the boyste of the blissed Magdelene that fulfilleth hooly chirche of good odour.

The thridde manere of chastitee is virginitie, and
it bihoveth that she be hooily in herte, and clene of body; thanne is she spouse to Jhesu Crist, and she is the lyf of angeles. She is the preisyng of this world, and she is as thise martirs in egalitee. She hath in hire that tongue may nat telle, ne herte thynke. [950] Virginitie baar our Lord Jhesu Crist, and virgine was hymselfe.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is specially to withdrawn swiche thynges as geve occasion to thilke vileynye, as ese, etynge and drynkynge; for certes, whan the pot boyleth strongly the beste remedie is to withdrawe the fyr. Slepynge longe in greet quiete is eek a greet norice to leccherie.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is that a man or a womman eschue the compaignye of hem by whiche he doubteth to be tempted, for al be it so that the dede is withstonden, yet is ther greet temptacioun. Soothly, a whit wal, although it ne brenne noght fully by stikynge of a candele, yet is the wal blak of the leyt. Ful ofte tyme [955] I rede, that no man truste in his owene perfeccioun, but he be stronger than Sampsoun, and hoolier than Danyel, and wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I have declared yow as I kan the sevne deadly synnes, and somme of hire braunches and hire remedies, soothly, if I koude, I wolde telle yow the ten comandementz; but so heigh a doctrine I lete to divines; natheelees I hope to God they been touched in this tretice everich of hem alle.

949. egalitee, evenness of mind. 949. ne herte thynke, om. H5. 954. leyt, flame.
Sequitur secunda pars Penitencie

Now, for as much as the seconde partie of penitence stant in confessioun of mouth, as I bigan in the firste chapitre, I seye, Seint Augustyn seith, "Synne is every word and every dede, and al that men coveiten agayn the lawe of Jhesu Crist; and this is for to synne in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by thy five wittes, that been sighte, herynge, smellynge, tastynge or savourynge, and feelynge."

[960] Now is it good to understonde the circumstauces that agreggeth muchel every synne. Thow shalt considere what thow art that doost the synne; wheither thou be male or femele, yong or oold, gentil or thral, free or servant, hool or syk, wedded or sengle, ordred or unordred, wys or fool, clerk or seculeer; if she be of thy kynrede bodily or goostly, or noon; if any of thy kynrede have synned with hire or noon, and manye mo thinges.

Another circumstaunce is this, wheither it be doon in fornicacioun or in avowtrie or noon, incest or noon, mayden or noon, in manere of homicide or noon, horrible grete synnes or smale, and how longe thou hast continued in synne. The thridde circumstaunce is the place ther thou hast do synne, wheither in oother mennes hous or in thyn owene, in feeld or in chirche or in chirchehawe, in chirche dedicaat or noon; [965] for if the chirche be halwed and man or

960. the circumstauces that, E² that that. agreggeth, aggravate.
961. ordred, in holy orders.
964. chirchehawe, churchyard.
womman spille his kynde in-with that place, by wey of synne or by wikked temptacioun, the chirche is entredited til it be reconciled by the bysshope; and the preest that dide swich a vileynye, to terme of al his lif he sholde namoore synge masse, and if he dide he sholde doon deedly synne at every time that he so songe masse. The fourthe circumstaunce is, by whiche mediatours or by whiche messagers, as for enticement or for consentement to bere compaignye with felaweshipe,—for many a wrecche for to bere compaignye shal go to the devel of helle,—wher-fore they that eggen or consenten to the synne been parteners of the synne and of the dampnacioun of the synnere.

The fiftie circumstance is, how manye tymes that he hath synned, if it be in his mynde, and how ofte that he hath falle; [970] for he that ofte falleth in synne he despiseth the mercy of God and encresseth hys synne, and is unkynde to Crist, and he wexeth the moore fieble to withstonde synne and synneth the moore lightly. And the latter ariseth, and is the moore eschew for to shryven hym, namely to hym that is his confessour; for which that folk whan they falle agayn in hir olde folies, outhere they forleten hir olde confessours al outrely, or elles they departen hir shrift in diverse places, but soothly swich departed shrift deserveth no mercy of God of his synnes. The sixte circumstaunce is, why that a man synneth,

as by temptacioun, and if hymself procure thilke temptacioun, or by the excitynge of oother folke; or if he synne with a womman by force, or by hire owene assent, or if the womman maugree hir hed hath been afforced or noon, this shal she telle; for coveitise, or for povert, and if it was hire procurynge or noon, and swiche manere harneys.

[975] The seventhe circumstaunce is, in what manere he hath doon his synne, or how that she hath suffred that folk han doon to hire, and the same shal the man telle pleynly with alle circumstaunces, and wheither he hath synned with comune bordel wommen or noon, or doon his synne in hooły tymes or noon, in fastynge tymes or noon, or bisorn his shrifte, or after his latter shrifte, and hath peraventure broken therfore his penance enjoyned; by whos helpe and whos conseil, by sorcerie or craft,—al moste be toold. Alle thise thynges, after that they been grete or smale, engreggen the conscience of man. And eek the preest, that is thy juge, may the bettre been avysed of his juggement in gevynge of thy penaunce, and that is after thy contricioun. [980] For understand wel that after tyme that a man hath defouled his baptesme by synne, if he wole come to salvacioun, ther is noon other wey but by penitence, and shrifte, and satisfaccioun; and namely by the two, if ther be a confessour to which he may shriven hym, and the thridde, if he have lyf to parfournen it.

976. bordel, brothel.  979. engreggen, weigh upon.
981. parfournen, accomplish.
Thanne shal man looke and considere that if he wole maken a trewe and a profitable confessioun ther moste be fourre condiciouns. First, it moot been in sorweful bitternesse of herte, as seyde the kyng Ezechiel to God, "I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lif in bitternesse of myn herte." This condicioun of bitternesse hath fyve signes. The firste is, that confessioun moste be shamefast, nat for to covere ne hyden his synne, for he hath agilt his God and defouled his soule; [985] and ther-of seith Seint Augustyn, "The herte travaileth for shame of his synne, and for he hath greet shamefastnesse he is digne to have greet mercy of God." Swich was the confessioun of the puplican that wolde nat heven up his eyen to hevene for he hadde offended God of hevene; for which shamefastnesse he hadde anon the mercy of God. And ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that swich shamefast folk been next forgiveynesse and remissioun.

Another signe is humylitee in confessioun of which seith Seint Peter, "Humbleth yow under the myght of God." The hond of God is myghty in confessioun, for ther-by God forveveth thee thy synnes, for he allone hath the power. And this humylitee shal been in herte and in signe outward; for right as he hath humylitee to God in his herte; right so sholde he humble his body outward to the preest that sit in Goddes place. [990] For which in no manere, sith that Crist is sovereyn and the preest meene and

983. Ezechiel, Hezekiah. 989. sit, sitteth.
mediatour bitwixe Crist and the synnere, and the synnere is the laste by wey of resoun, thanne sholde nat the synnere sitte as heighe as his confessour, but knele biforn hym or at his feet, but if maladie destourbe it; for he shal nat taken kepe, who sit there, but in whos place that he sitteth. A man that hath trespassed to a lord and comth for axe mercy and maken his accord and set him doun anon by the lord, men wolde holde hym outrageous and nat worthy so soone for to have remissioun ne mercy.

The thridde signe is, how that thy sh rift sholde be ful of teeris, if man may; and if man may nat wepe with hise bodily eyen, lat hym wepe in herte. Swich was the confessioun of Seint Peter, for after that he hadde forsake Jhesu Crist he wente out and wepe ful bitterly. [995] The fourthe signe is, that he ne lette nat for shame to shewen his confessioun; swich was the confessioun of the Magdelene, that ne spared for no shame of hem that weren atte feeste for to go to oure Lord Jhesu Crist and biknowe to hym hire synnes. The fifthe signe is, that a man or a womman be obeisant to receyven the penaunce that hym is enjoyned for hise synnes, for certes Jhesu Crist for the giltes of a man was obedient to the deeth.

The seconde condicion of verray confession is that it be hastily doon; for certes, if a man hadde a deedly wounde, evere the lenger that he taried to warisshe hymself the moore wolde it corrupte and haste hym to his deeth, and eek the wounde wolde be the wors

996. biknowe, confess. 998. warisshe, heal.
for to heele; and right so fareth synne that longe
tyme is in a man unshewed.

[1000] Certes a man oghte hastily shewen hise
synnes for manye causes; as for drede of deeth that
cometh ofte sodenly, and no certeyn what tyme it
shal be, ne in what place; and eek the drecchynge of
o synne draweth in another; and eek the lenger that
he tarieth the ferther he is fro Crist. And if he abide
to his laste day scarsly may he shryven hym, or re-
membre hym of hise synnes, or repenten hym for the
grevous maladie of hise deeth. And for as mucche as
he ne hath nat in his lyf herkned Jhesu Crist whanne
he hath spoken, he shal crie to Jhesu Crist at his laste
day and scarsly wol he herkne hym.

And understand that this condicioun moste han
foure thynges. Thi shrift moste be purveyed bfore
and avysed, for wikked hate dooth no profit; and
that a man konne shryve hym of hise synnes, be
it of pride, or of enyve, and so forth, of the speces
and circumstances; and that he have comprehended
in hys mynde the nombre and the greetnesse of hise
synnes, and how longe that he hath leyn in synne;
[1005] and eek that he be contrit of hise synnes, and
in stidefast purpos, by the grace of God, nevver eft to
salle in synne; and eek that he drede and countrewaite
hymself that he fle the occasiouns of synne to
whiche he is enclyned.

Also thou shalt shryve thee of alle thy synnes to o
man, and nat a parcel to o man and a parcel to another; that is to understande in entente to departe thy confessioun as for shame or drede, for it nys but stranglynge of thy soule. For certes Jhesu Crist is entierly al good; in hym nys noon imperfeccioun, and ther-fore outher he forgeveth al partitly, or never a deel. I seye nat that if thou be assigned to the penitauncer for certein synne that thou art bounde to shewen hym al the remenaunt of thy synnes of whiche thou hast be shryven to thy curaat, but if it like to thee of thyn humylitee; this is no departynge of shrifte. Ne I seye nat, ther as I speke of divisioun of confessioun, that if thou have licence for to shryve thee to a discreet and an honeste preest, where thee liketh, and by licence of thy curaat, that thou ne mayst wel shryve thee to him of alle thy synnes; [1010] but lat no blotte be biynde, lat no synne been untoold, as fer as thou hast remembraunce. And whan thou shalt be shryven to thy curaat telle hym eek alle the synnes that thou hast doon syn thou were last y-shryven; this is no wikked entente of divisioun of shrifte.

Also, the verray shrifte axeth certeine condiciouns. First, that thow shryve thee by thy free wil, noght constreynd, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, ne swiche thynges, for it is resoun that he that trespass-eth by his free wyl, that by his free wyl he confesse his trespass; and that noon oother man telle his synne but he hymself; ne he shal nat nayte ne denye

1008. shryven to, H8 shriven of. 1012. verray, genuine.
1013. nayte, say no to.
his synne, ne wratthe hym agayn the preest for his amonestynge to leve synne.

The seconde condicioun is, that thy shrift be laweful, that is to seyn that thow that shryvest thee, and eek the preest that hereth thy confessioun, been verraily in the feith of hooly chirche, [1015] and that a man ne be nat despeired of the mercy of Jhesu Crist as Caym or Judas. And eek a man moot accusen hymself of his owene trespas, and nat another, but he shal blame and wyten hymself and his owene malice of his synne and noon oother; but natheles if that another man be occasioun or enticere of his synne, or the estaat of a persone be swich thurgh which his synne is agregged, or elles that he may nat pleynly shryven hym but he telle the persone with which he hath synned, thanne may he telle; so that his entente ne be nat to bakbite the persone, but oonly to declaren his confessioun.

Thou ne shalt nat eek make no lesynges in thy confessioun for humylitee, peraventure for seyn that thou hast doon synnes of whiche that thou were nevere gilty. [1020] For Seint Augustyn seith, "If thou by cause of thyn humylitee makest lesynges on thyself, though thow ne were nat in synne biforn, yet artow thanne in synne thurgh thy lesynges." Thou most eek shewe thy synne by thyn owene propre mouth, but thow be woxe dowmb, and nat by no

1013. amonestynge, admonishing.
1015. Caym, Cain.
1016. wyten, charge.
1017. agregged, aggravated.
1019. lesynges, lies.
lettre, for thou that hast doon the synne thou shalt have the shame thersore. Thow shalt nat eek peynte thy confessioun by faire subtile wordes, to covere the moore thy synne, for thanne bigilestow thyself and nat the preest; thow most tellen it pleynly, be it nevere so foul ne so horrible.

Thow shalt eek shryve thee to a preest that is discreet to conseille, and eek thou shalt nat shryve thee for veyne glorie, ne for ypocrisy, ne for no cause, but oonly for the doute of Jhesu Crist and the heele of thy soule. Thow shalt nat eek renne to the preest sodeynly to tellen hym lightly thy synne, as who so telleth a jape or a tale, but avysely, and with greet devocioun.

[1025] And, generally, shryve thee ofte. If thou ofte falle, ofte thou arise by confessioun, and though thou shryve thee ofter than ones of synne of which thou hast be shryven, it is the moore merite. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, thow shalt have the moore lightly relesyng and grace of God bothe of synne and of peyne. And certes, oones a yeere atte leeste wey is it laweful for to been housled, for certes, oones a yeere alle thynges renovellen.

Now have I toolede you of verray confessioun, that is the seconde partie of penitence.

1027. *been housled,* receive the Eucharist.

*renovellen,* renew.
Explicit secunda pars penitencie et sequitur tercia pars eiusdem

The thridde partie of penitence is satisfaccioun and that stant moost generally in almesse, and in bodily payne. [1030] Now been ther thre manere of almesses: contricioun of herte, where a man ofreth hymself to God; another is to han pitee of defaute of hise neighebores; and the thridde is in gevynge of good conseil and comfort, goostly and bodily, where men han nede, and namely in sustenaunce of mannes foode. And tak kepe that a man hath nede of thise thinges generally, he hath nede of foode, he hath nede of clothynge and herberwe, he hath nede of charitable conseil and visitynge in prisone and in maladie, and sepulture of his dede body. And if thow mayst nat visite the nedeful with thy persone, visite hym by thy message and by thy giftes. Thise been generally almesses or werkes of charitee of hem that han temporeel richesses or discrecioun in conseilynge. Of thise werkes shaltow heren at the day of doome.

Thise almesses shaltow doon of thyne owene propre thynges, and hastily and prively if thow mayst; [1035] but nathelees if thow mayst nat doon it prively, thow shalt nat forbere to doon almesse though men seen it, so that it be nat doon for thank of the world, but oonly for thank of Jhesu Crist; for, as witnesseth Seint Mathew, capitulo v., "A citee may nat been hyd that is set on a montayne, ne men lighte nat a lanterne

1030. and comfort, om. E². 1031. herberwe, lodging.
and put it under a bushel, but men sette it on a candlestickke to give light to the men in the hous; right so shal youre light lighten before men, that they may seen youre goode werkes and glorifie youre Fader that is in hevene."

Now as to spoken of bodily peyne; it stant in preyeres, in wakynge, in fastynge, in vertuouse techinges of orisouns.

And ye shul understonde that orisouns or preyeres is for to seyn a pitous wyl of herte that redresseth it in God, and expresseth it by word outward to remeovyn harmes, and to han thynges espiritueel and durable, and somtyme temporele thynges, of whiche orisouns, certes, in the orison of the Pater noster hath Jhesu Crist enclosed moost thynges. [1040] Certes, it is privyleged of thre thynges in his dignytee, for which it is moore dign in than any oother preyer: for that Jhesu Crist hymself maked it; and it is short, for it sholde be koud the moore lightly, and for to withholden it the moore esily in herte, and helpen hym self the ofter with the orisoun, and for a man sholde be the lasse wery to seyen it, and for a man may nat excusen hym to lerne it, it is so short and so esy; and for it comprehendeth in itself alle goode preyeres.

The exposicioun of this hooly preyere that is so excellent and digne, I bitake to thise maistres of theologie, save thus muchel wol I seyn, that whan thow prayest that God sholde forgeve thee thy giltes

1038. wakynge, watchings. 1041. koud, known. 1040. his dignytee, its worthiness. 1043. bitake, entrust.
as thou forgevest hem that agilten to thee, be ful wel
war that thou be nat out of charitee. This hooly
orisoun amenuseth eek venyal synne, and therfore it
aperteneth specially to penitence.

[1045] This preyere moste be trewely seyd, and in
yerray feith, and that men preye to God ordinatly and
discreetly and devoutly, and alwey a man shal putten
his wyl to be subget to the wille of God. This
orisoun moste eek been seyd with greet humblesse
and ful pure honesty, and nat to the anoyaunce of any
man or womman. It moste eek been continued with
the werkes of charitee. It avayleth eek agayn the
vices of the soule, for, as seith Seint Jerome, “By
fastynge been saved the vices of the flessh, and by
preyere the vices of the soule.”

After this thou shalt understonde that bodily peyne
stant in wakynge; for Jhesu Crist seith, “Waketh and
preyeth that ye ne entre in wikked temptacioun.”
[1050] Ye shul understanden also, that fastynge stant
in thre thynges: in forberyng of bodily mete and
drynke, and in forberyng of worldly jolitee, and in
forberyng of deedly synne, this is to seyn, that a
man shal kepen hym fro deedly synne with al his
myght.

And thou shalt understanden eek that God
ordeyned fastynge; and to fastynge apperteneth foure
thinges: largenesse to poure folk, gladnesse of herte
espiritueel, nat to been angry ne anoyed ne grucche

1044. amenuseth, lessens.  1051. largenesse, liberality.
1047. vices (2), E² vertues.  grucche, grumble.
for he fasteth, and also resonable houre for to ete by mesure, that is for to seyn, a man shal nat ete in untyme, ne sitte the lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth.

Thanne shaltow understonde that bodily peyne stant in disciplyne or techynge by word and by writynge or in ensample; also in werynge of heyres, or of stamyn, or of haubergeons on hire naked flessh, for Cristes sake, and swiche manere penances. But war thee wel that swiche manere penances on thy flessh ne make thee nat or angry or anoyed of thy self; for bettre is to caste away thyn heyre, than for to caste away the sweetnesse of Jhesu Crist. And therfore seith Seint Paul, "Clothe yow, as they that been chosen of God, in herte, of misericorde, debo-naireteee, suffraunce," and swiche manere of clothynge, of whiche Jhesu Crist is moore apayed than of heyres or haubergeons or hauberkes.

Thanne is discipline eek in knokkynge of thy brest, in scourgynge with yerdes, in knelynges, in tribulacions, in suffrynge paciently wronges that been doon to thee, and eek in pacient suffraunce of maladies, or lesynge of worldly catel, or of wyf, or of child, or othere freendes.

Thanne shaltow understonde whiche thynge de-stourben penaunce; and this is in foure maneres; that is, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, des-

1052. heyres, hair-shirts.
  stamyn, linsey-woolsey.
  haubergeons, coat of mail.
1053. make thee nat, H make  nought thine herte bitter.
  sweutnesse, E5 sikernesse.
  apayed, pleased.
1054. yerdes, sticks.
peracioun. And for to speke first of drede, for which he weneth that he may suffre no penaunce. Ther-agayns is remedie for to thynke that bodily penaunce is but short and litel, at regard of the peynes of helle, that is so cruuel and so long that it lasteth withouten ende.

[1060] Now again, the shame that a man hath to shryven hym, and namely thise ypocrites that wolden been holden so parfite that they han no nede to shryven hem. Agayns that shame sholde a man thynke that by wey of resoun that he that hath nat been shamed to doon foule thinges, certes hym oghte nat been ashamed to do faire thynges, and that is confessiouns. A man sholde eek thynke that God seeth and woot alle his thoughtes and alle his werkes; to hym may no thyng been hyd ne covered. Man sholden eek remembren hem of the shame that is to come at the day of doome to hem that been nat penitent and shryven in this present lyf; for alle the creatures in erthe and in helle shullen seen apertly al that they hyden in this world.

[1065] Now for to spokens of hope of hem that been necligent and slowe to shryven hem; that stant in two maneresh. That oon is that he hopeth for to lyve longe and for to purchacen muche richesse for his delit, and thanne he wol shryven hym, and as he seith, hym semeth thanne tymely ynough to come to shrifte. Another is surquidrie, that he hath in Cristes

1058. weth, E demeth. 1067. surquidrie, over-confidence.
1059. at regard of, compared to.
mercy. Agayns the firste vice, he shal thynke that oure lif is in no sikernes, and eek that alle the richesses in this world ben in aventure and passen as a shadwe on the wal; and, as seith Seint Gregorie, that it aperteneth to the grete rightwisnesse of God, that nevere shal the peyne stynte, of hem that nevere wolde withdrawen hem fro synne hir thankes, but ay continue in synne, for thilke perpetueel wil to do synne shul they han perpetueel payne.

[1070] Wanhope is in two maneres: the firste wanhope is in the mercy of Crist; that oother is that they thynken that they ne myghte nat longe persevere in goodnesse. The firste wanhope comth of that he demeth that he hath synned so gretyly, and so ofte, and so longe leyn in synne, that he shal nat be saved. Certes, agayns that cursed wanhope sholde he thynke that the passion of Jhesu Crist is moore strong for to unbynde than synne is strong for to bynde. Agayns the seconde wanhope he shal thynke that as ofte as he falleth he may arise agayn by penitence; and though he never so longe have leyn in synne, the mercy of Crist is alwey redy to receiven hym to mercy. Agayns the wanhope that he demeth that he sholde nat longe persevere in goodnesse, he shal thynke that the feblesse of the devel may no thyng doon but if men wol suffren hym, [1075] and eek he shal han strengthe of the helpe of God, and of al hooly chirche, and of the proteccioun of aungels, if hym list.

Thanne shal men understonde what is the fruyt of

1069. hir thankes, willingly.
penance; and, after the word of Jhesu Crist, it is
the endeles blisse of hevene. Ther joye hath no
contrarioustee of wo, ne grevaunce; ther alle harmes
been passed of this present lyf; ther as is the siker-
nesse fro the payne of helle; ther as is the blisful
compaignye that rejoysen hem everemo everich of
otheres joye; ther as the body of man, that whilom
was foul and derk, is moore cleer than the sonne;
ther as the body, that whilom was syk, freele, and
fieble, and mortal, is inmortal and so strong and so
hool that ther may no thyng apeyren it; ther as ne
is neither hunger, thurst, ne coold, but every soule
replenysshed with the sighte of the parfit knowynge
of God.

[1080] This blisful regne may men purchase by
poverte espiritueel, and the glorie by lowenesse, the
plente of joye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by
travaille, and the lyf by mortificacioun of synne.

_Here taketh the Makere of this Book his Leve_

Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel
tretys or rede, that if ther be any thyng in it that
liketh hem, that ther-of they thanken oure Lord Jhesu
Crist, of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse;
and if ther be any thyng that displese hem, I preye
hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn

1077. sikernesse, security. 1082. arrette, impute.
1078. apeyren, waste.          defaute, etc., default of

*Here taketh, etc., H
"Preces de Chauceres."

*my ignorance.
unkonnynge, and nat to my wyl, that wolde ful fayn have seyd bettre if I hadde had konnynge; for oure boke seith, "Al that is writen is writen for oure doctrine," and that is myn entente.

Wherfore I biseke yow mekely, for the mercy of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercy on me and foreve me my giltes, \[1085\] and namely of my translaciouns and enditynges of worldly vanitees the whiche I revoke in my Retracciouns; as is the book of Troylus; the book also of Fame; the book of the five and twynty Ladies; the book of the Duchesse; the book of Seint Valentynes day, of the Parlement of Briddes; the Tales of Caunterbury,—thilke that sownen in to synne; the book of the Leoun; and many another book, if they were in my remembrance; and many a song and many a leccherous lay, that Crist, for his grete mercy, foreve me the synne.

But of the translacioun of Boece De Consolacione and othere booke of Legendes of Seintes, and omelies and moralitee, and devocioun, that thanke I oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and his blisful mooder and alle the Seintes of hevene, \[1090\] bisekyng hem that they from hennes forth unto my lyves ende sende me

\[1085\] *my Retracciouns*, apparently a formal document.

\[1086\] *the book of the fve and twynty Ladies*, the "Legend of Good Women."

\[1087\] *sowwen in to*, tend to.

\[1087\] *the book of the Leoun*, lost

\[1087\] another book, H\(^{3}\) other bokes.

\[1087\] remembrance, H mynde or remembrunce.

\[1088\] of Legendes of, H of consolacioun and of Legendes of lyves of.
grace to biwayle my giltes and to studie to the salva-
cioun of my soule; and graunte me grace of verray
penitence, confessioun and satisfaccioun, to doon in
this present lyf, thurgh the benigne grace of hym that
is Kyng of Kynges, and Preest over alle Preestes, that
boghte us with the precious blood of his herte, so
that I may been oon of hem at the day of doome
that shulle be saved. *Qui cum Patre et Spiritu
Sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula.* Amen.

Heere is ended the book of the Tales of Caunterbury,
compiled by Geoffrey Chaucer, of whos soule Jhesu Crist
have mercy. Amen.

1090. *grace (2)*, H grace and
space. 1092. *et Spiritu*, etc., curtailed
to an "etc." in most MSS.
GLOSSARY OF COMMON WORDS

Obsolete words which are not in frequent use in the Canterbury Tales will be found explained at the foot of the pages on which they occur. The present brief glossary contains for the most part only words too common or too easy to be explained every time they occur, but which may conceivably present some difficulty. Y in the middle of a word has been arranged with i.

A, card. num., one.
A, prep. or adv., on, in.
Abaisit, abashed.
Abiden, wait, abide.
Able, fit, apt.
Aboght, paid for, atoned for.
Abode, delay.
Abregge, abridge.
Abreyden, awake, start.
Abye, pay for, atone for.
Accidie, moral sloth.
Accorden, agree.
Acred, afraid.
Aferd, afraid.
Affirmed, confirmed.
Affile, file, polish.
Agayn, toward, against.
Aglit, in fault.
Agon, past, departed.
Agrisen, be horrified at.
Al, adj. all; at and som, the whole.
Al, adv. all, wholly, although.
Alderfirst, first of all.

Ale-stake, a sign before an ale-house.
Alegggen, allege.
Aleye, alley.
Aignite, always.
Allen, all (pl.).
Aller, of all (pl.).
Allowe, approve.
Al-so, as.
Amenden, improve.
Amenuse, diminish.
Ameved, moved, excited.
Amiddles, in the midst of.
Amonesten, admonish.
An, in, on.
And, if.
Andswer, answer.
Anoint, anointed.
Anonright, forthwith.
Aornement, ornament.
Apaid, satisfied.
Ape, metaphorically, a fool.
Apeyrren, impair, detract from.
Appallen, make pale or feeble.
Apparailen, prepare.
Appearance, appearance.
Apperceyvyns, perceptions.
Appertayuent, appertaining to.
Appetyt, appetite, desire.
Aquitien, pay for.
Aracon, tear up.
Aretien, impute to.
Argoyle, potters' clay.
Armipotent, mighty in arms.
Arve, in a row.
Arraye, order, situation, clothing, equipage.
Arrayen, dress, dispose.
Arsmetrik, arithmetic.
Artow, art thou.
Arwe, arrow.
As (as fast, as swithe, etc.), very.
Ascance, as it were, as though.
Ashen, ashes.
Aslake, abate.
Assault, assault.
Assayen, try.
Assegen, besiege.
Assyse, assize.
Assoylen, absolve.
Assuren, confirm.
Astat, estate.
Asterle, start away, escape.
Astoned, astonished.
Astored, stored.
Aswagen, assuage.
Aswoun, in a swoon.
Atake, take.
Atones, at once.
Attamen, broach.
Atte, at the.
Attempre, temperate.
Atwynne, apart.
Auctorite, a text of Scripture, or of some writer of weight.
Auter, altar.
Avauncen, profit.
Avaunten, boast.
Aventure, chance.
Avision, vision.
Avys, advice.
Avys, observe, look to.
Avysement, deliberation.
Avoutrie, adultery.
Axe, ask.
Awayt, watch.
Awreke, avenge.

BA, kiss.
Bachelrie, the body of bachelors.
Baiten, feed.
Bale, harm.
Balkes, beams.
Balled, bald.
Barel, barrel.
Bareyne, barren.
Basin, lap.
Bataille, battle.
Bauderie, gaitety.
Bayard, a standard name for a horse.
Beautee, beauty.
Bechen, made of beech.
Bed-rede, bed-ridden.
Bede, bad.
Been, to be, are, been.
Been, bees.
Bekeste, promise.
Beme, trumpet.
Bene, bean.
Benedicite (pronounced Ben'-cipe), bless.
Beningnite, benignity, kindness.
Berd, hill-side.
Berde, beard (To make any one's beard, to cheat).
Bere, a bear.
Bere, a bier.
Bere, to bear, carry, comport; bere in hand, accuse falsely; bere through, pierce.
Beringe, behaviour.
Berme, yeast.
Berne, barn.
GLOSSARY OF COMMON WORDS

Best, beast.
Bet, better; go bet, go quickly.
Bete, mend, prepare, esp. of kindling fires.
Beyen, buy.
Bibbed, drunk.
Bibbed, covered with blood.
Biched, cursed.
Bidaffed, made a fool of.
Bifallen, befall.
Biginnen, begin.
Bigyle, beguile.
Bikesie, a promise.
Bihighte, promised.
Bihoten, promised.
Bihoveful, advantageous.
Bijaped, tricked.
Biknowen, confess.
Byle, bill, beak.
Bileven, believe.
Biloven, stay behind.
Bill, letter.
Bischrew, beshrew, corrupt.
Biseke, beseech.
Biset, employed.
Biseye, besee and yvele (richely)
  biseye, of an ill (rich) appearance.
Bismotred, soiled.
Bistad, placed.
Bisy, busy.
Bit, biddeth, bids.
Bitake, give, commend to.
Bitauht, commended to.
Bitrid, happened.
Bitrayed, betrayed.
Bivyreyn, betray.
Blak, black.
Blaked, blackened.
Blee, colour, complexion.
Blent, blinded.
Blent, blenchd.
Blere, blind, befoul.
Blow, blue.
Blod, blood.
Bloome, blossom.

Bobauce, boast.
Bocher, butcher.
Boideyn, bodkin, dagger.
Boiste, box.
Boystous, rough.
Bokeler, buckler.
Boket, bucket.
Bone, bone.

Bore, born.
Borel, coarse, plain.
Borwe, pledge.
Bost, boast.
Bote, (1) remedy, (2) boot, (3) boat.
Botel, bottle.
Boterfye, butterfly.
Botm, bottom.
Bouk, body.
Boullen, silt.
Boun, ready.
Bountee, goodness.
Bounteous, bountiful.
Bourde, jest.
Bourden, to jest.
Boure, chamber.
Bowes, boughs.
Brak, broke.
Brast, burst.
Brede, bread.
Brede, breadth.
Brek, break.
Bren, bran.
Brennen, burn.
Brenningly, hotly.
Brent, burnt.
Breres, briars.
Bresten, burst.
Brewden, wake suddenly.
Bribe, plunder.
Bribour, thief.
Brid, bird.
Brust, breast.
Broage, jobbery.
Broche, brooch.
Brode, broad.
Broyled, embroidered.
Brond, brand, torch.
Brood, broad.
Brotel, brittle.
Brouded, embroidered.
Brouken, enjoy.
Brustle, bristle.
Bukke, buck.
Burned, burnished.
Buxom, obedient.

CAAS, case, occasion, hap.
Caitiff, wretch.
Calculated, calculated.
Cam, came.
Camaille, camel.
Camuse, flat.
Can, know.
Cananee, Cananean.
Cane, Cana in Galilee.
Canoves, canvas.
Cantel, piece.
Capitayn, captain.
Carf, carved.
Carl, churl.
Carpe, talk.
Cas, case, occasion.
Casten, plan.
Cateil, chattels.
Celle, (1) a religious house, (2) the brain.
Ceptre, sceptre.
Certeyn, (1) certainly, (2) a certain quantity.
Cesse, cease.
Chaffare, merchandise.
Chapman, merchant.
Charge, business of weight.
Chees, chose.
Chepe, purchase, bargain.

Chepen, buy.
Chere, countenance, demeanour.
Cherice, cherish.
Ches, chose.
Chesen, choose.
Cheste, coffin.
Chevisaunce, bargain.
Chierlee, tenderness.
Chikme, chicken.
Chirche, church.
Chirk, chirp, twitter.
Chit, chideth.
Chyos, choice.
Cite, city.
Clamb, climbed.
Clapen, clatter, babble.
Clepen, call, cry.
Cloisetre, cloister.
Clos, enclosure.
Cloutes, small pieces.
Cock, God.
Cod, bag.
Cofre, box.
Coillons, testicles.
Cokewold, cuckold.
Colde, grow cold.
Coler, collar.
Colered, collared.
Combust, burnt up.
Commune, (1) common, (2) the commons.
Compassyng, contrivance.
Compeer, gossip.
Complin, the last religious office of the day.
Composicioun, agreement.
Condescende, come down to.
Confus, confounded.
Conne, learn, know, be able; conn thank, be grateful.
Conning, skill.
Conseil, counsel.
Contenance, countenance, appearance.
Contrarie, contradict.
GLOSSARY OF COMMON WORDS

Contrary, adversary.
Contrafete, counterfeit.
Cost, coast.
Cop, top, head.
Coppe, cup.
Corage, heart, inclination, courage.
Cornes, corn-fields.
Corny, strong of the corn, or malt.
Coroun, crown.
Corruptible, corruptible.
Cory, body.
Corshed, cursed.
Corven, cut.
Costage, cost.
Coste, coast.
Couchen, (1) lay, (2) embroider, (3) cower.
Coude, knew.
Cour, course.
Couthe, knew.
Covenable, convenient.
Covent, convent.
Creaunce, credit.
Creauncen, borrow money.
Crays, cross.
Crosselet, crucible.
Cure, care.
Curteys, courteous.
Cut, lot.

DAF, fool.
Daliaunce, playfulness.
Dampe, condemn.
Dasuen, grow dizzy.
Daun, dominus, sir.
Dauncer, dance, game.
Daunger, danger.
Daungers, hard to please.
Dawen, to dawn.
Dayerye, dairy.
Dayeye, daisy.
Debate, strife.
Debaten, fight.
Debonaire, gentle.

Dede, deed, dead.
Deef, deaf.
Deiz, part, whit.
Deer, wild animals.
Dees, dice.
Deeth, death.
Defaute, defect.
Defende, forbid.
Degree, step, rank in life.
Deyned, deigned.
Deynte, value, pleasure.
Deyntous, choice.
Deys, dais.
Dei, part, whit.
Delyses, delights.
Detit, pleasure.
Demen, judge.
Depeynt, depicted.
Depper, deeper.
Dere, dear.
Dereling, darling.
Deren, harm.
Derk, dark.
Descryve, describe.
Detteles, free from debt.
Devye, speak of.
Deyen, die.
Diffame, ill name.
Digne, worthy, proud.
Discryve, describe.
Dispence, expenditure.
Dispitous, cruel.
Disputation, dispute.
Distourben, disturb.
Distreyynen, constrain, vex.
Diversely, variously.
Divinistre, divine.
Divisioun, distinction.
Do, cause to.
Doghtiren, daughters.
Doke, duck.
Dominacioun, supremacy.
Don, done, caused.
Dong, dung.
Doom, judgment.
Doon, done, caused.
Doseyn, dozen.
Douteles, without doubt.
Dradde, feared.
Drecched, harassed.
Drede, fear, doubt.
Dredeles, without doubt.
Dreful, (1) terrible, (3) timorous.
Drenchen, drown.
Dressen, prepare, set in order.
Drynt, drowned.
Droges, drugs.
Droghte, drought.
Dronketele, drunken.
Drow, drew.
Duc, duke, captain.
Dullen, make dull.
Dure, endure.
Dwellen, dwell, delay.

ECHON, each one.
Eft, again.
Eftsoone, presently.
Eylen, all.
Eir, air.
Elles, else, otherwise.
Eluyssh, elf-like, abstracted, mischievous.
Embroided, embroidered.
Emeraud, emerald.
Empyre, enterprise.
Encres, increase.
Endelong, throughout the length of.

Endyte, relate.
Enisumyned, illuminated.
Enoynit, anointed.
Entenden, attend.
Entente, intention.
Er, ere, before.
Ere, ear.

Ernestful, serious.
Esen, entertain.
Est, east.
Estaat, condition, rank.
Everich, every.

FADER, father.
Faire, fairly.
Falle, happen.
Falsen, falsify.
Famulier, familiar.
Fare, proceedings.
Faren, go, speed, behave.
Faucon, falcon.
Fay, faith.
Feet, deed, work.
Fel, fierce.
Felaue, fellow.
Feld, field.
Fele, many.
Felony, criminality.
Femininite, womanhood.
Fend, fend.
Fer, far.
Ferde, fared, behaved.
Fere, companion; in fere, together.
Ferforth, far forward; so ferforth, to such an extent.
Ferther, further.
Fest, fist.
Feste, feast.
Festne, fasten.
Fet, fetched.
Fey, faith.
Ful, fell.
Fyn, end.
Fnit, finds.
Fir, fire.
Fithel, fiddle.
Flambes, flames.
Flet, float.
Floytinge, fluting.
Flour, flower.
Foinen, thrust.
Fouke, follow.
Fond, found.
Fonde, try.

For-, an intensive prefix; for-dronk, for-dry, for-old, very drunk, dry, old.

Forbede, forbid.
<p>| Forneys, furnace.                | Harwed, harrowed.                        |
| Fors, force; no fors, no matter. | Hasardour, gamester.                     |
| Forthy, therefore.              | Hastif, hasty.                           |
| Forward, agreement.             | Haunt, custom.                           |
| Forwhin, wherefore.             | Heed, head.                              |
| Foryelede, requite.             | Heeng, hung.                             |
| Fother, cartload.               | Heer, hair.                              |
| Fraunchise, frankness, generosity. | Hegge, hedge.                           |
| Freletee, frailty.              | Hele, health.                            |
| Frere, friar.                   | Helen, (1) heal, (2) hide.               |
| Froth, rubs.                    | Hem, them.                               |
| GABBE, talk idly.               | Hende, courteous, adroit.                |
| Gadred, gathered.               | Heng, hung.                              |
| Gaf, gave.                      | Hente, seize.                             |
| Galues, gallows.                | Hepe, heap.                              |
| Gan, began.                     | Her, Hir, their.                         |
| Gayler, gaoler.                 | Heraud, herald.                          |
| Gayne, avail.                   | Herberwe, lodging.                       |
| Geaunt, giant.                  | Here, their, theirs.                     |
| Gerdoun, guerdon, reward.       | Here, hair.                              |
| Gere, (1) gear, clothing, (2) fashion. | Herkne, hearken.                      |
| Gesse, guess.                   | Herte, heart.                             |
| Gide, Gye, guide.               | Hereye, praise.                          |
| Gilt, guilt.                    | Hethenesse, heathendom.                  |
| Gyn, engine, contrivance.       | Hevede, head.                            |
| Ginne, begin.                   | Hewe, hue.                               |
| Gise, manner, fashion.          | Hye, (1) high, (2) haste.                |
| Glade, gladden.                 | Highte, was called.                      |
| Glede, burning coal.            | Hir, their.                              |
| Glode, comment, flatter.        | Hire, plur., her.                        |
| Gobet, morsel.                  | Hit, hides.                              |
| Goost, Gost, ghost, spirit.     | Holly, wholly.                           |
| Gouernaille, government.        | Hond, hand.                              |
| Grave, graven, buried.          | Hool, whole.                             |
| Gre, pleasure.                  | Hoom, home.                              |
| Greete, greeted.                | Humblesse, humility.                     |
| Gret, great.                    | Ich, I.                                  |
| Gurweche, grumble.              | Ilke, same.                              |
| HABOUNDE, abound.               | In, inne, inn.                           |
| Halt, holds.                    | Infortunat, unfortunate.                 |
| Han, to have.                   | Irous, passionate.                       |
| Harneys, harness, armour.       | JANGLE, chatter.                          |
|                                | Jape, jest.                              |
|                                | Jogelour, juggler.                       |
| <strong>Kembde</strong>, combed.     | <strong>Lyf</strong>, life.       |
| <strong>Kepe</strong>, care, attention. | <strong>Liggen</strong>, lie.     |
| <strong>Kervé</strong>, carve.     | <strong>Lyghte</strong>, lighten. |
| <strong>Kesse</strong>, kiss.      | <strong>Lyghte</strong>, alighted.|
| <strong>Kymelyn</strong>, brewing-tub. | <strong>Liken</strong>, please. |
| <strong>Kynde</strong>, nature.    | <strong>Likërois</strong>, playful, lustful. |
| <strong>Kithe</strong>, show.      | <strong>Liklihede</strong>, likelihood. |
| <strong>Knaue</strong>, boy.       | <strong>Lym</strong>, limb.       |
| <strong>Knowes</strong>, knees.    | <strong>Lisse</strong>, relief.   |
| <strong>Kouthè</strong>, known.    | <strong>Lite</strong>, little.    |
| <strong>Labbyng</strong>, blabbing. | <strong>Lith</strong>, a limb.    |
| <strong>Lad</strong>, led.         | <strong>Lith</strong>, lieth.     |
| <strong>Lafte</strong>, left, ceased. | <strong>Lyves</strong>, living.  |
| <strong>Lasse</strong>, less.      | <strong>Loft</strong>, on loft, on high. |
| <strong>Lawes</strong>, loose.     | <strong>Loke</strong>, look.      |
| <strong>Lay</strong>, (1) creed, (2) song. | <strong>Loken</strong>, locked. |
| <strong>Lasar</strong>, leper.     | <strong>Lond</strong>, land.      |
| <strong>Leef</strong>, dear.       | <strong>Lone</strong>, loan.      |
| <strong>Leet</strong>, caused to be done. | <strong>Longen</strong>, belong to. |
| <strong>Leewe</strong>, believe.   | <strong>Loos</strong>, praise.    |
| <strong>Leful</strong>, lawful.    | <strong>Lorn</strong>, lost.      |
| <strong>Lemes</strong>, limbs.     | <strong>Los</strong>, loss.       |
| <strong>Lemman</strong>, lover.    | <strong>Loth</strong>, (1) loathsome, (2) unwilling. |
| <strong>Lene</strong>, lend, grant. | <strong>Lough</strong>, laughed. |
| <strong>Lenger</strong>, longer.   | <strong>Lust</strong>, pleasure, desire. |
| <strong>Lere</strong>, learn.      | <strong>Lustyhede</strong>, pleasure, mirth. |
| <strong>Lese</strong>, lose.       | <strong>Luxurie</strong>, lustfulness. |
| <strong>Lesyngeth</strong>, lies.  | <strong>Maaed</strong>, made.     |
| <strong>Lest</strong>, pleasure.   | <strong>Maaet</strong>, dejected. |
| <strong>Leste</strong>, please.    | <strong>Maddé</strong>, be mad.   |
| <strong>Leste</strong>, least.     | <strong>Maister</strong>, master. |
| <strong>Lete</strong>, leave.      | <strong>Maislow</strong>, mayst thou. |
| <strong>Lete</strong>, caused to be done. | <strong>Make</strong>, fellow, mate. |
| <strong>Lette</strong>, hindrance. | <strong>Maked</strong>, made.     |
| <strong>Leve</strong>, believe.    | <strong>Manace</strong>, menace.  |
| <strong>Leve</strong>, dear.       | <strong>Manere</strong>, manner.  |
| <strong>Leve</strong>, permission. | <strong>Markis</strong>, marquis. |
| <strong>Leved</strong>, ignorant.  | <strong>Mase</strong>, be perplexed. |
| <strong>Leysere</strong>, leisure. | <strong>Mathynkeith</strong>, seems good to me. |
| <strong>Liche</strong>, like.      | <strong>Maugre</strong>, in spite of. |
|                      | <strong>May</strong>, virgin.     |
|                      | <strong>Maydenhede</strong>, virginity. |
|                      | <strong>Mede</strong>, (1) meed, (2) mead, (3) meadow. |
|                      | <strong>Meest</strong>, most.     |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
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<td>GLOSSARY OF COMMON WORDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorie, remembrance.</td>
<td>Nyce, foolish.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mencious, mention.</td>
<td>Nil, ne will, will not.</td>
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<td>Mene, mean, intend.</td>
<td>Nin, ne in, nor in.</td>
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<td>Mene, middle.</td>
<td>Nis, ne is, is not.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merciable, merciful.</td>
<td>Niste, ne wiste, knew not.</td>
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<td>Mervaille, marvel.</td>
<td>Nobley, nobleness.</td>
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<td>Message, messenger.</td>
<td>Nolde, ne wolde, would not.</td>
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<td>Messe, mass.</td>
<td>Non, none.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mesurable, moderate.</td>
<td>Nones, for the nones, for the time, on occasion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mesure, moderation.</td>
<td>Noon, none.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mette, (1) dreamt, (2) met.</td>
<td>Noot, ne woot, knew not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meve, move.</td>
<td>Norice, nurse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meyne, company, household.</td>
<td>Nosethurles, nostrils.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Myisbodyn, injured.</td>
<td>Not, ne wot, knew not.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mo, more.</td>
<td>Note, need.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moche, mochel, much, great.</td>
<td>Nother, ne other, nor other.</td>
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<td>Moder, mother.</td>
<td>Nowel, Noel, Christmas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mone, moon.</td>
<td>Nowth, now.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moo, more.</td>
<td>Noyen, annoy.</td>
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<td>Moote, must, may.</td>
<td>O, one.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mordre, murder.</td>
<td>Obeysaunt, obedient.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morwe, morrow.</td>
<td>Observaunce, respect, ceremony.</td>
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<td>Moste, must.</td>
<td>Of, off.</td>
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<td>Mote, must, may.</td>
<td>Offended, hurt.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mowe, may.</td>
<td>Oynement, ointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muchel, much.</td>
<td>Oynouns, onions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NA, no.</td>
<td>Oyster, oyster.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nadde, ne hadde, had not.</td>
<td>On, on, in, at.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nam, ne am, am not.</td>
<td>On, one.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Namely, especially.</td>
<td>Ones, once.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narwe, narrow.</td>
<td>Onloft, aloft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nas, ne was, was not.</td>
<td>Oo, one.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nat, not.</td>
<td>Ook, oak.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nath, ne hath, hath not.</td>
<td>Oon, one.</td>
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<td>Nathing, nevertheless.</td>
<td>Ones, once.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ne, not, nor.</td>
<td>Opie, opium.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nede, need.</td>
<td>Other, either, or.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nedely, of necessity.</td>
<td>Out-taken, except.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veigh, near.</td>
<td>Outher, either, or.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nempne, name.</td>
<td>Outrely, utterly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ner, nearer.</td>
<td>Over, above, besides.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nere, ne were, were not.</td>
<td>Overal, everywhere, in every way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neven, name.</td>
<td>Overest, uppermost.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newe, newly.</td>
<td>Newe, nearest.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Owen, ought.
Owene, own.
Ower, anywhere.

PAAS, pace.
Pass, pass on, pass away, surpass.
Payde, pleased.
Payen, pagan.
Pan, skull.
Papecay, parrot.
Parage, high birth.
Paraunter, peradventure.
Pardee, par Dieu.
Parfay, par foi.
Parfit, perfect.
Parfourne, perform.
Parishiens, parishioners.
Pas, pace.
Pecunial, pecuniary.
Pees, peace.
Peyne, pain.
Peynen, take pains.
Peynt, painted.
Penaunt, penitent.
Penible, painful, painstaking.
Penoun, pennant.
Pens, pence.
Peple, people.
Peraventure, perchance.
Persee, person, person.
Perstourben, disturb.
Piled, bald.
Piler, pillar.
Pille, plunder.
Pyne, pain.
Pynen, torture.
Pitou, pitiful.
Plat, flat.
Pley, play.
Plyen, plain.
Pleyen, complain.
Plesaunc, pleasure.
Plye, bend.
Plighte, plucked, pulled.
Plit, plight.

Popet, puppet.
Poraille, poor folk.
Portrey, depict.
Pourte, poor.
Predicacyon, preaching.
Presse, press, crowd.
Preise, praise.
Pres, priest.
Prest, ready.
Preve, proof.
Proven, prove, try.
Preye, pray.
Prime, the time between 6 and 9 A.M.
Pryse, price, estimation, praise.
Pryve, secret, familiar.
Pryvely, secretly.
Prow, profit.
Pure, mere, very.
Pured, purified, refined.
Puruyance, provision, providence.
Purveye, provide.

QUAD, evil.
Qualme, sickness.
Queynye, quaint, strange, elegant.
Queynye, pudenda muliebra.
Queynye, quenched.
Queynyste, trimness, cunning.
Quelien, kill.
Quene, queen, quean.
Quik, alive.
Quiken, bring to life, kindle.
Quit, acquitted, free.
Quite, requite, acquit.
Quod, said.
Quok, quaked.

Rae, roe.
Rad, read.
Rafe, reft.
Rage, play wantonly.
Rakel, hasty.
Rather, sooner, earlier.
GLOSSARY OF COMMON WORDS

Roughte, reached.
Real, royal.
Reame, realm.
Recche, reck.
Reccheles, careless.
Rede, advise.
Redoutynge, reverence.
Reed, red.
Reed, advice.
Refut, refuge.
Regne, kingdom.
Reken, reckon.
Release, release.
Remenauent, remnant.
Remove, renewe, remove.
Reneye, deny.
Renne, run.
Renouele, renew.
Repreve, reproof.
Resoun, reason.
Rethour, orator.
Revers, reverse.
Rewe, row.
Reven, rue.
Reuthe, ruth, pity.
Richesse, riches.
Rist, riseth.
Rit, rides.
Rode, rood, cross.
Roghte, recked.
Rokkes, rocks.
Rombel, rumble, rumour.
Rome, walk about.
Romynge, walking.
Ronne, ran.
Rood, rode.
Roser, rose-bush.
Roughte, recked.
Route, company.
Rowne, whisper.
Rowtyng, snorting.
Rumbel, rumble, rumour.

SAD, constant, grave.
Sadly, steadily.
Salue, salewe, salute.

Sangwyn, blood red.
Sauf, (1) safe, (2) save, except.
Saugh, saw.
Saule, soul.
Savacioun, salvation.
Savoure, taste, relish.
Sawe, word, saying.
Sawtrie, psalterie.
Say, saw.
Scarsly, scarcely, hardly.
Scathe, harm.
Schaltow, shalt thou.
Slaundre, slander.
Sclendre, slender.
Scole, school.
Scoleye, study.
Sechen, seek.
Secree, secret.
See, seat.
Seel, seal.
Seen, see.
Seigh, saw.
Seyl, sail.
Seint, saint.
Seistow, sayest thou.
Seke, sick.
Selde, seldom.
Selve, self, very, same.
Sely, simple, innocent.
Sembable, like.
Sembalunce, semblault, appearance.
Semely, seemly, comely.
Sentence, meaning, opinion.
Septemtrion, north.
Servage, servitude.
Sesoun, season.
Seethe, seeth, boil.
Seurement, security.
Seurete, certainly, security.
Sewe, follow.
Sey, saw.
Seye, say.
Seystow, sayest thou.
Shaltow, shalt thou.
Shamfast, modest.
Shape, plan.
Shende, harm, disgrace.
Shene, bright.
Shette, shut.
Shilde, shield, avert.
Sholde, should.
Shonde, harm.
Shoop, shaped.
Shoures, showers.
Shrewse, rascal, scold.
Shrewednesse, rascality.
Shriift, confession.
Shriotte, shrieked.
Shulde, should.
Shulders, shoulders.
Sib, related to.
Sike, sigh.
Sike, sick.
Siker, sure, safe.
Sikernesse, security.
Sin, since.
Sis, six.
Sit, sitteth.
Sithen, since.
Skile, reason.
Skiffl, reasonable.
Slake, slacken, abate.
Slawe, slain.
Slee, seen, slay.
Sleep, slept.
Sleagh, sly, crafty.
Slider, slippery.
Slew, slew.
Slye, sly, crafty.
Smeret, smart.
Smyt, smiteh.
Snybbe, rebuke.
Sobre, sober, thoughtful.
Socoure, succour.
Sodeyn, sudden.
Solas, solace, sport.
Solemne, solemn.
Somdel, somewhat.
Somene, sompne, summon.
Sond, sand.
Sonde, message, messenger.
Sone, son.
Sonne, sun.
Soore, sore.
Soote, sweet.
Soper, supper.
Sophyme, sophism.
Sor, chance, lot.
Sorwe, sorrow.
Sorwulf, sorrowful.
Sory, sad, luckless.
Sothe, sooth, truth.
Sotil, subtle, cunning.
Souked, sucked.
Soun, sound.
Soune, sound, tend to.
Soupken, sup.
Sourden, rise from.
Sours, source.
Sours, rising.
Sowdan, soldan, sultan.
Soune, sound, tend to.
Spak, spake.
Sparwe, sparrow.
Species, kinds.
Spede, speed, despatch.
Spere, (x) sphere, (a) spear.
Spysed, 'doctored,' artificial.
Spille, perish.
Spores, spurs.
Spredde, spread.
Spraynd, sprinkled.
Springen, sprinkle.
Stal, stole.
Stant, stands.
Starf, died.
Stark, stiff.
Stente, stop.
Sterre, star.
Sterte, start, escape.
Sterve, die.
Steven, voice.
Styborne, stubborn.
Stiked, stuck, pierced.
Stynte, stop.
Stirte, started.
Styves, stews, brothels.
GLOSSARY OF COMMON WORDS

Steward, steward.
Stonde, stand.
Sloon, stone.
Stoor, store, estimation.
Stoor, strong, headstrong.
Stope, advanced.
Storial, historical.
Stounde, time, moment.
Sree, straw.
Streen, race, lineage.
Stremes, beams.
Strook, stroke.
Subget, subject.
Subtilitee, subtlety, trick.
Suffisaunce, sufficiency.
Suffraunce, endurance.
Suspect, suspicious.
Suster, sister.
Swal, swelled.
Swappe, strike.
Swatte, sweated.
Swerd, sword.
Sweven, dream.
Swich, such.
Swynke, work.
Swithe, quickly.
Swyve, have sexual intercourse with.
Swough, swoon.

Taffraye, to affray, frighten.
Tallege, to allege.
Talghte, to alight.
Tamende, to amend.
Tassaile, to assail.
Techo, teach.
Teen, sorrow.
Tembrace, to embrace.
Tendyte, to endite.
Tendure, to endure.
Tenqueren, to enquire.
Tenify, attentively.
Testye, to espy.
Textpounden, to expound.
Texted, supplied with texts or aphorisms.

Textuel, verbally accurate.
Thanne, then.
Thar, need.
Tharray, the array.
The, thee.
Thee, thrive.
Theche, thee ich, thrive I.
Theeffect, the effect.
Thennes, thence.
Ther, where.
Therthe, the earth.
Thestat, the estate, rank.
Thider, thither.
Thilke, the same, that.
Thise, these.
Tho, then.
Tho, these.
Thoght, thought.
Thorpe, village.
Thretiene, thirteen.
Thridde, third.
Thries, thrice.
Thrope, thorpe, village.
Throwe, time, while.
Thurgh, through.
Til, to.
To, too.
To, an intensive prefix, to-braste,
to-breke, to-hewe, = burst,
break, hew, in pieces.
To-forn, before.
Togider, together.
Tonge, tongue.
Tonne, cask.
Toord, excrement.
Towte, backside.
Tredefowel, treader of fowls, cock.
Tresoun, treason.
Treet, treaty.
Trewe, true.
Triste, trust.
Trone, throne.
Tuwel, hole.
Twoye, two.
Twynne, depart.
UNCOUTHE, strange, rare.
Uncovenable, inconvenient.
Undergrone, undergrown.
Undertake, assert.
Undigne, unworthy.
Unfustliche, un-feast-like.
Unkonnyng, ignorant.
Unkouthe, strange, rare.
Unnethes, hardly.
Unsad, unsteady, inconstant.
Unset, not appointed.
Unwar, unawares.
Unweld, unwieldy.
Unwammed, unspotted.
Unwittyng, not knowing.
Unyolden, unyielded.
Up, up, upon.
Up-so-down, upside down.
Upright, full length, whether
standing or lying.
Upriste, up-rising.
Upsterte, started up.
Upswaal, swelled up.
Usage, habit.

VENERYE, hunting.
Venym, poison.
Verament, truly.
Verry, true.
Veyn, vain.
Viage, voyage.
Vilanye, anything unbecoming
a gentleman.
Vitaille, victuals.
Voyde, empty, expel.

WAAR, aware.
Wayke, weak.
Wayte, watch.
Waityng, watching.
Wake, watch.
Wan, won, gained.
Wankope, despair.
War, aware, wary.
Warisse, heal.
Wedde, pledge.

Weder, weather.
Welde, wield, govern.
Welte, wealth.
Wem, spot.
Wende, to go.
Wende, thought.
Wene, ween, think.
Werre, war.
Werreye, war against.
Wery, weary.
Wesh, washed.
Wex, wax.
Wex, waxed, grew.
Weyle, wail.
Where, (1) where, (2) whether.
Whyl, whilst.
Wyke, week.
Wikke, wicked, bad.
Willow, wilt thou.
 Wyn, wine.
Wirche, work.
Wys, wise.
Wisly, certainly.
Wite, (1) know, (2) blame.
Withsye, contradict.
Wode, mad.
Wol, will.
Wolde, would.
Wollow, wilt thou.
Wonder, wonderful.
Wone, custom.
Wonen, to dwell, be accus-
tomed.
Wood, mad.
Wook, awoke.
Woost, knowest.
Woot, knows.
Worthy, brave.
Wost, knowest.
Wraue, angry.
Wreke, avenge.
Wreye, betray.

Y-, O.E. ge-. For participles
with this prefix see the simple
verbs.
GLOSSARY OF COMMON WORDS

Ydel, idle; in ydel, in vain.
Ydolastre, idolater.
Yelpe, boast.
Yerd, (1) stick, (2) yard.
Yerne, briskly, eagerly.
Yet, moreover.

Y-liche, like.
Yolle, yell.
Yond, yonder.
Yow, you.
Yvel, evil.
Y-wis, certainly.

THE END

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