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ii.

THE THIRD VOLUME
OF THIS LIBRARY,
THE EARLIER LIFE AND WORKS
OF
DANIEL DEFOE,
Will be Published on the 25th of May 1889.

THE
CARISBROOKE LIBRARY.

THE UNIVERSAL LIBRARY, now completed in sixty-three cheap shilling volumes, has included English versions of the "Iliad," of all extant plays of the Greek tragedians, and of some plays of Aristophanes, of Sanskrit fables, and of Virgil's "Æneid." It has followed the course of time with English versions of the most famous works of Dante, Boccaccio, Machiavelli, Rabelais, Cervantes, Moliere, as recast by English dramatists, of Goethe's "Faust" and of Schiller's Poems. It has given currency also to a series of the works of English writers, representative, as far as limits would allow, of our own literature, from Richard of Bury's "Philobiblon" to Sheridan's Plays and Emerson's Essays. In the sequence of publication variety was aimed at, but in the choice of books to be republished there was always the unity of purpose that now allows the volumes to be arranged in historical order, illustrating some of the chief epochs of European literature, and especially of English literature, in the long course of time.

THE CARISBROOKE LIBRARY, now begun, will continue the work of its predecessor, with some changes of form and method. It will include books for which the volumes of the former series did not allow sufficient room. Sometimes in the "Universal Library" a large book—Hobbes's "Leviathan," for example—was packed into small type.

In the "Carisbrooke Library" there will be no small type. The volumes will be larger; each of about four hundred and fifty pages. They will be handsome library volumes, printed with clear type upon good paper, at the price of half-a-crown, and they will be published in alternate months. In the "Universal Library" the editor's introduction to each volume was restricted to four pages, and there was no annotation. In the "Carisbrooke Library," with larger leisure and a two months' interval between the volumes, it will be possible for the editor to give more help towards the enjoyment of each book. There will be fuller introductions, and there will be notes.

Since changes of method and form in the old Library mean the beginning of a new Library with change of name, a simple change is made from the universal to the particular; from the purpose to the one who purposes; from the wide world that yields fruitage for the mind, to the small spot of earth where, if God please, in shades of evening one fruit-gatherer will find new leisure to unburthen himself of his little store.

In the "Carisbrooke Library," as in the predecessor of which it is an extension, there will be order in disorder. Variety will still be aimed at in sequence of the volumes, while the choice of books to be issued will be still guided by the desire to bring home to Englishmen, without unfair exclusion of any form of earnest thought, as far as may be, some living knowledge of their literature along its whole extent, and of its relations with the wisdom and the wit of the surrounding world.

HENRY MORLEY.

CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

A, F. BLAISDELL'S
Library,
Cales of the Seven Deadly Sins

BEING THE

CONFESSIO AMANTIS

OF

JOHN GOWER
1325-1408

EDITED BY

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LONDON

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INTRODUCTION.



JOHN GOWER'S book of old stories is here at last made current among Englishmen of every degree. The first way of its wider diffusion was by recitation of the story-tellers. It was their business to give pleasures of imagination to the people through their ears, when even the few who could read would also listen with enjoyment to a tale recited with dramatic energy. When the play of "Pericles" brought one of Gower's tales upon our stage in Shakespeare's time, John Gower himself was supposed to speak its Prologue in his chosen measure of eight-syllabled verse. His words then recalled to mind the old way of reciting as well as reading. The actor who, dressed as Gower, came before the people, said to them :—

" To sing a song that old was sung,
From ashes ancient Gower is come ;
Assuming man's infirmities
To glad your ear and please your eyes.
It hath been sung at festivals,
On ember eves and holy ales ;
And lords and ladies in their lives
Have read it for restoratives."

To all of us Gower may now go on to repeat other lines of the same Prologue:—

" If you, born in these latter times,
When wit's more ripe, accept my rhymes ;
And that to hear an old man sing
May to your wishes pleasure bring,
I life would wish, and that I might
Waste it for you, like taper light."

For my own part, I have long wished to make it possible that

in these times his countrymen might again be pleased to hear John Gower's song.

In the few editions of these tales hitherto published, Gower's taper has burnt dimly, because they have been so presented as to blur his light. The first edition was Caxton's, printed at Westminster, and dated 1493 [by mistake for 1483]. The second edition was "Imprinted at London in Flete strete by Thomas Berthelette, Printer to the King's grace," in the year 1532. Berthelette published another edition in 1544. These were the editions of Gower's English poem read—and it was read—in the good time of Queen Elizabeth. A copy of one of Berthelette's editions was priced in a recent catalogue at £14. There was not another edition until 1810, when the "*Confessio Amantis*," printed from Berthelette's edition, was included, with other works, in the second of the twenty-one volumes of Chalmers's English Poets. Next came in 1857, and last of all, three handsome volumes of large print, the "*Confessio Amantis* of John Gower, edited and collated with the best Manuscripts by Dr. Reinhold Pauli." Dr. Pauli's edition of the text was based upon Berthelette. But there were some corrections made by reference to MSS. for supply of omissions and revision of the metre.

Here let me interpolate a word or two in hearty recognition of Dr. Reinhold Pauli's services to English Literature. He was born on the 25th of May 1823, and died on the 3rd of June 1882. He was born in Berlin, studied at Berlin and Bonn, and came to England in 1847. For several years Pauli was private secretary to Bunsen, and he did not return to Germany until 1855, after publishing here, in 1851, a study of King Alfred and his place in English History. After returning to Germany he went on with a continuation to Lappenberg's History, of which he published the first volume in 1853, the third and last in 1858. In 1857, the year in which his edition of this poem appeared, Pauli obtained a Professorship in Rostock. In 1859 he was transferred to the University of Tubingen, from which he was degraded for the independent spirit shown by him in an article on the condition of Wiirtemberg, and sent down to teach in the Schonthal Seminary. In 1864 he had begun a History of England since Waterloo, of

which the third and last volume appeared in 1875. In 1867 he became a Professor at Marburg, and in 1870 he went to the University of Gottingen. Pauli was essentially historian, with right qualification for his work in breadth of culture and a clear sense of the debts of the present to the past, which made him the more ready to understand our duty to the future.

Old texts of the "*Confessio Amantis*" often destroy the music of the verse. There are careless transpositions of words, droppings or additions of words, substitutions of later for earlier forms, and frequent omissions of the final *e* where English of Gower's time required it. There are also in all the texts destructions of sense by errors of punctuation. Dr. Pauli's edition was an improvement upon those that went before. It is not a fault, but a merit, that he was unwilling to make any change without MS. authority. Yet this fidelity obliged him to leave many broken lines. For example, recognition of the fact that in Gower's English an adjective used definitely took a final *e* at once restores to music many scores of lines that want a syllable in Caxton's, Berthelette's, and Dr. Pauli's texts. Dr. Pauli's text has also, like Caxton's and Berthelette's, now and then a full stop in what should be the middle of a sentence.

But in all these texts, and especially in Dr. Pauli's, most of the lines are right for those whose previous training has enabled them to read Old English. There is really nothing wanted but a little help to right accentuation to enable any reader, with or without previous training in Old English, to enjoy the "*Confessio Amantis*." Of course a fallible and mortal editor cannot avoid some slips in the line for line accentuation of a poem of 30,000 lines. I believe, however, that the reader here has Gower's song more nearly than in any former edition given as he sang it himself, nothing modernised, but rather with a few words carried back to their original form for the recovery of the right rhythm of a line. Gower's poem in this edition is so far from being jagged and unmusical that, I hope, there is not a broken line in it from first to last.

Many lines of the "*Confessio Amantis*" that, in the modern way of reading them, would seem to halt, run easily when read

with their own old accentuation. In the present volume this accentuation has been marked throughout, wherever it varied from that of the present day. Gower's verse, as we may now see, was, in fact, noticeable for its easy flow. His octosyllabics have some of the freedom that long afterwards gave grace and power to blank verse, by the interlacing of sentences and making frequent pauses and breaks of sense within the lines and not at their close only. Gower's frequent rhyming of words differing in sense but spelt alike we must regard now as a blemish. He found, indeed, difference enough for a rhyme between identical words of which one was used as a verb, one as a noun. But we may feel also that he does this because he is at ease, and not because he is hard pressed. He pours out his ready rhymes with animation by the thousand. He runs them into shrewd and homely couplets. He varies their dramatic effect by interlacing sentences with what Milton calls "the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another."

If this text, meant to be popular and yet not modernised, adds, as of course it must, some errors of its own, it has removed so many current errors that to the student as well as to the general reader it should bring Gower's *Story Book* much nearer home than it has been able to come hitherto. I have avoided, except in the case of manifest deviations from the first sense, all interference with the spelling of those old words which are most likely to be mangled by transcribers and printers. Names of persons were very often broken on the rack. In all the editions of the "*Confessio Amantis*," from Caxton to Pauli, the Phrygian Dares appears as *Frigidilles*; and Epicurus, obviously paired in a line with his friend Menander, is called *Epyloquorus*. In all the editions from Caxton to Pauli we read also of the plant under the star 'Cor Scorpionis,' that "His herbe is Astrology," where Astrology is a misprint for *Aristolochy*, *Aristolochia*. I have corrected one or two such errors, but have not meddled with forms of names which are as Gower may possibly himself have written them. But who was Gower?

John Gower, Chaucer's friend and fellow poet, may have been born about the year 1327. He died in the year 1408, and was

blind during the last eight years of his life. His work as a writer for the outside world was ended by his blindness in the year 1400, the year of Chaucer's death.

John Gower was a country gentleman, of the kindred of a Sir Robert Gower who lies buried in Brabourne Church, about five miles from Ashford in Kent. A manor of Kentwell in Suffolk, which had belonged to Sir Robert Gower, found its way through a series of family arrangements into the possession of John Gower the poet. John Gower acquired also a manor of Feltwell in Norfolk; a manor of Moulton in Suffolk; and lands in Kent in the parishes of Throwley and Stalesfield. He was a feoffee of the Kentish manor of Aldington; he had a rental of ten pounds out of the manor of Wigborough in Essex; and he signed a will in the year 1373 at his own house in Kent, which was at Otford by the river Darent. From 1390 until 1397, John Gower, described not as priest but as clerk, held the rectory of Great Braxted in Essex. This was within a mile of that manor of Wigborough from which he drew ten pounds a year rental.

Gower's social position gave him access to the Court. He was known personally to the King, and he held his rectory of Great Braxted as a grant from Richard the Second. He wrote *Balades* in French, which were designed chiefly for the pleasure of the Court. But he was in his own way very much of a philosopher, and liked life best in his own home with his own thoughts and friends of his own choosing. He wrote three large poems, which agreed in having Latin titles. One of them—"Speculum Meditantis"—was in French; one—"Vox Clamantis"—was in Latin; one—this our "Confessio Amantis"—was in English: these being the three languages then used by English writers.

Of Gower's French poem—"Speculum Meditantis," the Mirror of one Meditating—no copy can now be found. Some day, perhaps, a MS. of it will be discovered abroad in some quiet old monastic library. A description of it was given in a MS. of the English poem as "divided into twelve parts, and treating of the Vices and the Virtues, and of the various degrees of this age." It is added that the poem sought "to teach, by a right path, the way whereby a transgressed sinner ought to return to the knowledge of his Creator."

It may have been especially this book which caused Chaucer to attach to his friend's name the epithet which has represented during many years for many a reader almost his whole stock of knowledge about John Gower ;—that he was called " moral " by Geoffrey Chaucer. John Locke four or five times in an essay on Civil Government, written just after the English Revolution, with a half playful seriousness delivered shots from Richard Hooker out of a book which Locke's opponents looked upon as one of their own great fortress guns. When doing so he took pleasure in citing his author again and again as "the judicious Hooker." Since that time " the judicious Hooker " has kept company with " the moral Gower."

Chaucer's adjective was very naturally used in the dedication of his *Troilus and Cressida* to two of his own intimate friends, a poet and a philosopher, John Gower and Ralph Strode.

" O morall Gower, this book I direct
To thee and the philosophicall Strode,
To vouchen safe there need is to correct,
Of your benignites and zeles good."

That the friendship between Chaucer and Gower was intimate is proved by the fact that, in 1378, when Chaucer was sent with Sir Edward Berkeley to Lombardy on a political mission, he left John Gower as one of two representatives who were to act for him in his absence, appearing for him in the courts if any legal proceedings should chance to be instituted.

Gower's "*Confessio Amantis*" was not written when Chaucer in the close of *Troilus and Cressida* dedicated that poem to him; and *Troilus and Cressida* seems also to have been written earlier than Gower's Latin poem, "*Vox Clamantis*," the Voice of One Crying. This poem was suggested by the Jack Straw Rebellion of May 1381, which began at Gower's own doors, including people who lived on estates of his own in Kent and Essex.

Now John Gower was a country gentleman averse to all violent change. His bias was conservative. He looked with no favour on the Lollards, as passages in the "*Confessio Amantis*" show, and he felt keenly the danger of a triumph of mob law. But he said in his "*Vox Clamantis*" that no blind Fortune governs the

affairs of men; our world is as we make it; whatever happens to us, "nos sumus in causa." The disorder in his time, however dangerous, must have its exciting causes in the life of the community, and he resolved to look through the whole framework of our social system. This he would do in a poem that should speak through Latin to the educated, boldly pointing out wrongs to be righted without shaping war-cries for the ignorant. All England would have echoed to that bold crying out on the condition of the clergy and the people if it had been heard in English, free as the Latin verses poured out with as much facility as if Gower were writing in his mother-tongue. In those verses Gower—a good orthodox Churchman—was outspoken in condemning all corruption, even that by which the Papacy was tainted. He was vigorous with calm invective of a righteous man who had wit and humour at command for use in homeliest plain speaking. "I do not," he said, "affect to touch the stars, or write the wonders of the poles; but rather, with the common human voice that is lamenting in this land, I write the ills I see. God knows, my wish is to be useful; that is the prayer that directs my labour. No hatred urges me. In the Voice of my Crying there will be nothing doubtful, for every man's knowledge will be its best interpreter." He prays that his verse may not be turgid; that there may be in it no word of untruth; that each word may answer to the thing it speaks of pleasantly and fitly; that he may flatter in it no one, and seek in it no praise above the praise of God. "Give me that there shall be less vice and more virtue for my speaking." That is the true homeliness of the best English literature, and in that spirit he wrote the "*Confessio Amantis*."

Gower's English poem, the "*Confessio Amantis*," was, like Chaucer's "*Canterbury Tales*," a device for the stringing of a large number of stories upon some slender thread of narrative that should run through them all, in the way that had been made popular by the great recent success of Boccaccio's "*Decameron*." Gower probably had written much of the "*Confessio Amantis*" before Chaucer planned his "*Canterbury Tales*." Both poets worked sometimes on the same material; while, now and then, Gower seems to have inspired Chaucer with a desire to tell again one of

his friend's good stones. It is difficult to know precisely when Gower's "*Confessio Amantis*" was first written. In its earliest form, as set forth in the Harleian MS., 3490, (lower said—without then naming as a date "the yere sixtente of King Richard"—that he wrote it at the request of Richard the Second. He had met the King's barge when rowing on the Thames, and Richard, having invited him on board, asked—

" That to his highe worthyncesse
Some nevvd thing I shulde boke,
That he himself it mighte loke
After the forme of my writing."

Gower adds that although he had long been out of health, he did his best for the king—

" To make a boke after his heste,
And write in such a manner wise
Which may be wisdom to the wise,
And play to hem that list to play."

Professor John W. Hales has reasoned that the work could only have been thus undertaken, and completed—as it is in that first form—with a loyal dedication to Richard II., at a time when Gower had yet hope in the young King. Such hope was possible only before the year 1386. In 1386 the great barons of England were active under the lead of the King's uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, whom Gower in the Latin verse of a "*Tripartite Chronicle*" has honoured as the Swan. Richard was then compelled to establish a Regency for twelve months. Professor Hales, looking for a date before 1386, finds several allusions that suggest to him the end of 1383 and the year 1384 as the time when the poem may have been first written. Afterwards in "the yere sixtente of King Richard," homage to the King was struck out of the beginning and end of the poem. Bolingbroke—Henry of Lancaster—was addressed in his place, and Gower, like Langland, had turned his back upon an evil King whose deposition was the best hope of the country.

The sixteenth year of King Richard, in which Gower changed the dedication of his poem, was the year 1393. In 1393-4

Henry of Lancaster presented a collar to Gower, possibly in recognition of the dedication thus transferred to him. Gower is represented on his tomb as wearing the collar of SS with a small Swan chained; but Henry of Lancaster did not assume the Swan as his badge until after the murder of Gloucester in 1397. The collar of SS must, therefore, have been a later gift.

In 1397, the year of Gloucester's murder, for which Richard was responsible, Gower resigned his Essex rectory, and resigned the world. Being then about seventy years old, he married Agnes Groundolf in a chapel of his own, under rooms to which he retired with her for the rest of his life within the Priory of St. Mary Overies, now known as St. Saviour's, on the Southwark side of London Bridge. The old Priory was then being for the second time rebuilt, and Gower contributed so liberally to the building works that upon his death in 1408, after eleven years of residence among them—during eight of the years blind—the brethren built for him a handsome tomb, on which they carved his figure in effigy. They represented him with his head resting on the three books he had written, in French, Latin, and English. They also paid him pious honour on a painted window which another kind of piety has since destroyed. The tomb remains. The effigy upon it helps us to recall him in his habit as he lived. But in this volume his mind lives again for friendly and familiar speech among all classes of his countrymen.

In the "*Confessio Amantis*" Gower, of course, so chose his connecting matter that he might bring his tales into distinct groups, with each group armed for battle against one of the Seven Deadly Sins. He added one book more, based on a work popular in the Middle Ages, the "*Secretum Secretorum*," ascribed to Aristotle. It set forth the Duties of a King, and Gower inserted it because he was writing the poem for King Richard the Second, who was in much need of such instruction. Gower contrived also to mix with his stories much knowledge upon matters of philosophy and science. Indeed if we add all the record of what Aristotle taught Alexander to the other good doctrine of the Confessor, we have the substance of a fair education for any modern reader who does not mind being five

hundred years behind the day. The book will have for many readers an interest, apart from its tales, in its pleasant record of the kind of knowledge that a well-trained man thought worth diffusing in the latter half of the fourteenth century.

The reader to whom old English is new English will after experience of a few pages slip into Gower's music, and find his lines easier reading than some even of the good verse published in our time.

In reading aloud these differences between old and new English should be remembered:

(1) The old pronunciation of the vowels was nearer than it now is to the practice abroad, as its survival in our country dialects will help to show.

(2) Words added to our vocabulary from the Norman French were nearer to their source, and usually had their accents near the close, as they are placed in French.

(3) As a general rule a vowel at the end of a word was sounded if the next word began with a consonant, and had no separate sound if the next word began with a vowel.

(4) Verbs in 'eth,' like 'cometh,' were pronounced often, but not necessarily, without regarding the 'eth' as more of a syllable than the 'es' in comes.

(5) Where 'th' or 'v' came between two short syllables, as in whether, other, ever, there was usually an elision. In the text here given 'whether' was generally written 'where' (whe'er); in other such words the reader makes the contraction for himself. The metre tells him when to do so.

(6) The conjunction 'and' was not necessarily placed at the beginning of a clause connected by it with preceding matter. It may stand within the clause as the word 'also' does in modern English.

Some of Gower's commonest forms, like 'sigh' for saw, will become quickly familiar. Because an equivocal word like 'not' for 'ne wot'—know not—might cause a stumble now and then, I have interpreted that and other such words rather often in the footnotes, the purpose of those notes being to interrupt the text as little as possible, while enabling the eye to take in at

once the meaning of an obsolete word or form. Where the same word often recurs, the explanation is repeated often but not always: often enough, it is hoped, for the convenience of a reader who dips into the book for a tale or two, and has not yet read it through. The only modernised word is the pronoun 'thee' in a few earlier pages of the volume. It had in Cowers time, like 'me,' only one 'e.' This of course gives readers the trouble of discriminating between pronoun and article. Wherever in the early pages of the book the word 'thee' is found, the second 'e' is of my adding; but after those earlier pages I have avoided making even that slight alteration.

A few notes on the sources of Gower's Tales will be found in the Table of Contents. Of John Gower himself and of his works a fuller account than it is here possible to give will be found in the fourth volume of my "English Writers."

H. M,

CARISBROOKE, *march* 1889.

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" But certainly no word ne writeth he
Of thilke wicke ensample of Canacé,
That loved here owen brother sinfully;
Of all swiche cursed stories I say fy."

As all readers must agree with Chaucer, I omit this tale. Cower against his own habitual good sense' has by some aberration of mind here made his Confessor tolerant of incest. Chaucer condemns also the repulsive incident of King Antiochus in the story of Apollonius of Tyre. But that is necessary to the tale, and Gower does not there, or anywhere else than in the Tale of Canace, confuse the boundaries of right and wrong. I have dropped, however, here and there a few honest but unwholesome lines that no reader will miss.

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CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

prologue'

Men that writenusto-fore,
The bokds dwelle, and we
therfore
Ben taught of that was writcn tho.¹
Forthy good is, that we also
In ourd time amonge us here
Do write of newe some matere
Ensamplerd of the olde wise,
So that it might in suche a wise,
Whan we be dede and elles where,
Bcleve² to the worldds ere
In time comend after this.
But for men sain, and sothe it is,
That who that al of wisdom writ
It dulleth ofte a manne's wit
To hem that shall it allday rede,
For thilkd cause if that ye rede
I woldd go the middle wey
And write a boke betwene the twey
Somwhat of lust, somewhat of lore,
That of the lasse or of the more
Som man may like of that I write.
And for that fewe men enclite
In ourc englisshe, I thenke' make³
A boke for Englonde's sake

¹ Tho, then. ² Beleve, remain.
MS. Harl. 3490: This was the original form of the passage,

In our englisshe I thenke" make
A boke for king Richardes sake,
To whom belonged! my legeaunce
With all min hertes obeisaunce
In all that ever a lege man
Unto his king may don or can,
So ferforth, and me recommaunde
To him which all me may commaunde,

The yere sixtenth of King Richard,
What shall befall here afterward
God wote, for now upon this side
Men seen the worlde on every side

Preiend unto the highe legne
Which causeth every king to iegne
That his corone longe stonde.

I thenke and have it understonde,
As it befell upon a tide,
As thing which shulde tho betide,
Under the town of newe" Troy,
Which toke of Brute his firste joy,
In Themse, whan it was flowend,
As I by bole came rownd
So as Fortune her time sette,
My lege lord perchaunce I mette.
And so befell as I came nigh
Out of my bote, whan he me sigh,
He bad me come into his barge.
And whan I was with him at large,
Amonge's other thinges said
He hath this charge upon me laid
And bad me do my besinesse,
That to his highe worthynesse
Some newe thing I shulde boke,
That he him self it mighte loke
After the forme of my writing,
And thus upon his comnaundi'ng
Min herte is well the more glad
To write so as he me bad,
And eke my fere is well the lasse,
That none envie shall compasse
Without a resonable wite
To feigne and blame', that I write.
A gentil herte his tunge stilleth
That it maille' none distilleth
But preise that is to be preisel.
But he that hath his worde unpeised
And handleth out wrong any thing,
I pray unto the heaven king
Fro suche tinges he me shilde,
And netheles this world is wilde
Of suche jangling, and what befall.
My kinges heste" shall nought falle,
That I in hope to deserve
His thank ne shall his will observe
And elles were I nought excused.

¹ 1 Wite blame.

In sondry wibe so diversed,
That it wel nigh stant all reversed.

Als for to speke of time ago,
The cause' why it chaungceth so
It nedeth nought to specifie,
The thing so open is at eye,
That every man it may beholde.
And nethdles by dales olde,
Whan that the bokes weren lever,¹
Writinge was beloved ever
Of hem that weren vertuuous.
For here in erthe amonges us,
If no man write' howe it stood,
The pris of hem that were good
Shulde, as who saith, a great partie,
Be lost; so for to magnifie
The worthy princes that tho were
The boko's shewen here and there
Wherof the worlde cnsampled is,
And tho that diden then amis
Through tjranny and cruelte,
Right as they stonden in degre
So was the writinge of the werke.
Thus I which am a borel² clerke
Purpose' for to write a boke
After the worlde that whilom toke
Long time in olde dales passed.
But for men sain it is now lassed³
In worse' plight than it was tho,

For that thing may nought be refused
What that a king him selfd bit
Forthy the simplesse of my wit
I thenke if that I may availe
In his service to travaile,
Though I sikenesse have upon honde
And longe have had, yet woll I fonde,⁵
So as I made my beheste,
To make a boke after his heste
And write in such a maner wise,
"Which may be wisdom to the wise
And play to hem that list to play.
Bit in proverbe I have herde say,
That who that wel his work beginneth,
The rather a good end he winneth.
And thus the prologue of my boke
After the world that whilom toke,
And eke somdele⁶ after the newe
I woll beginne' for to newe.

¹ Lever, better loved.

² Borel rough homespun.

³ Lassed, become smaller.

⁴ Bit, prays for. ⁵ Fonde try.

⁶ Somdela, some part.

I thenke' for to touche also
The world which neweth every day,
So as I can, so as I may.
Though I sikenesse have upon honde
And longe have had, yet wol I
fonde¹

To write and do my besinessc,
That in some part, so as I gesse,
The wise man may ben advised.
For this Prologue is so assised,
That it to Wisdome all belongeth ;
That wise man that it underfongeth
He shal drawe into remembrance
The fortune of this worldes chaunce,
The which no man in his persone
May knowe, but the God alone.
Whan the Prologue is so dispended,
This boke shall afterward ben ended
Of Love, which doth many a wonder
And many a wise man hath put
under;

And in this wise I thenke to treate
Towarde's hem, that now be greate,
Betwene the vertue and the vice
Which longcth unto this office.
But for my wittes ben to smale
To tellen every mannes tale,
This boke, upon amendement,
To stonde at his commaundment,
With whom min herte is of accorde,
I sende unto min owne lorde
Which of Lancabtre is Henry
named.

The highd god hath him proclamd
Full of knighthod and alle grace.
So wolde I now this werke embrace
With hol truste and with hol beleve:
God gratnte I mote it well acheve.
if I shall drawe into my minde
The time' passdd, than I finde
The worlde stode in al his wclthe,
Tho² was the life of man in helthe,
Tho was plente, tho was richdsse,
Tho was, the fortune of prgwdjse,

¹ Fonde, try. ² Tho, then.

Tho was knighthode in pris by
name,

Wherof the wide worldes fame
Write in croniques is yet withhold.¹

Justice of lawe tho was holde,
The privelege of regalie

Was sauf, and all the baronie
Worshiped was in his estate.

The citees knewen no debate,
The people stode in obeisaunce

Under the reule of governaunce,
And pees, withrightwisnessekeste,

With charite tho stode in reste,
Of mannes hertd the conige

Was shewed than in the visage.
The word was liche to the conceipte

Withoute semblaunt of deccipte ;
Tho was there unem fed love,

Tho was vertue bet above,
And vice was put under fote.

Now stant the crope under the
rote,

The worlde is chaunged overall,
And thcrof moste in speciall

That Love is falle into discorde'.
And that I take into rerorde

Of every lond for his partie
The comun vois, which may nought

lie,
Nought upon one, but upon alle

It is that men now clepe and calle
And sain, that regnds ben devided,

In stede of love is hate guided,
The werre² wol no pees purchase,

And lawe hath take her double
face,

So that justice out of the wey
Withrightwisnesse is gone away.³

And thus, to loke on every halve,³
Men sene the sord without salve,

Whiche al the worlde hath overtake.
Ther is no regne of alle out take,⁴

For every climat hath his dele¹
After the turninge of the whele

Which blinde Fortune overthrow-
eth,

Wherof the certain no man knoweth.
The heven wot what is to done.

But we that dwelle under the mone
Stonde in this worlde upon a

were,²
And namely but³ the power

Of hem that ben the worldes guides,
With good counseil on alle sides

Ben kept upright in suche a wisp,
That Hate brekd nought thassise

Of Love, whiche is all the chefe
To kepe a regne out of mischeffe :

For alle reson wolde this,
That unto him, which the' heved¹ is,

The membres buxom shall bowe,
And he shuldeekc here trouth alowe

With all his hert, and make hem
chere,

For good counseil is good to here ;
All though a man be wise him selve,

Vet is the wisdom more of tweleve.
And if they stonden both in one,

To hope it were" than anone
That God his grace woldd sende

To make of thilke werre an ende,
Whiche every day now groweth

newe,—
And that is gretely for to rewe,

In speciall for Cristds sake,
Which wolde his owne life forsake

Amonge the men to yeven pees,⁵
But nowe men tellen netheles,

That Love is fro the world departed,
So stant the pees uneven parted

With hem that liven now a daies.
But for to loke at all assaies,

To him, that woldd reson seche
After the; comun worldds speche'

¹ Witholde, held or kept with us.

² Werre war.

³ Ouevery *halve*, on all sides.

⁴ Out take, excepted.

¹ Dele, share.

² Upon a were, in conflict and confusion.

³ But, unless. ⁴ Heved, head.

⁵ To yeven pees, to give peace.

It is to wonder of thilke werre,
In which none wote who hath the
werre.¹

For every lond him self deceiveth
And of diseis his parte receiveth,
And yet ne take men no kepe.²
But thilke Lorde, whiche al may
kepe,

To whom no counseil may be hid
Upon the world, whiche is betid,
Amende that wherof men pleine
With trewd hertes and with pleine,
And reconcile Love agayne,
As he, whiche is king soverayne
Of all the worldes governaunce,
And of his highe purveiance
Afferme pees bitwene the londes
And take here cause into his hondes,
So that the world may stande
appesed

And his godhede also be plesed '.

so thenke upon the daies olde
The life of clerkes to beholde,
Men sain, how that they were tho
Ensample and reule of alle tho
Which of wisdom the vertue
soughten.

Unto the God first they besoughten
As to the substaunce of here scole,
That they ne sholden nought befole
Her witte upon none erthly werkes,
Whiche were ayein th'estate of
clerkes,

And that they mighten flee the
vice,

Which Simon hath in his office,
Wherof he taketh golde in honde.
For thilke time, I understonde,
The Lumbardemadenon eschaunge
The bisshoppriches for to chaunge,
Ne yet a letter for to sende
For dignite ne for provende

¹ That war in which none knows who has the worse.

² No kepe, no heed.

Or cured or withoute cure,
The chirche keie in adventure
Of armds and of brigantaille¹
Stood no thing than upon bataille,
To fight or for to make cheste²
It thought hem thannd nought
hondste.

But of simplesce and pacidnce
They maden thanne no defence.
The courte of worldly regalie
To hem was thanne no bailie.
The vain hondur was nought desired,
Which hath the proude herthd fired.
Humilite was tho witholde
And pride was a vied holde.³
Of holy chirchd the largesse
Yaf thanne and dide great almesse
To pouer men that hadden nede.
They were eke chast in word and
dede,

Wherof the people ensample toke.
Their lust was al upon the boke,
Or for to preche or for to preie
To wisse⁴ men the righte weie
Of such as stode of trouth unlered.
Lo, thus was Peters bargd stered
Of hem that thilke timd⁵ were.

And thus came first to mannes ere
The feith of Criste, and alle good
Through hem that thanne weren
good

And sobre and chaste and large and
wise.

And now, men sain, is other wise.
Simon the cause hath undertake,
The worlde's swerde on hond is take.
And that is wonder netheles,
Whan Criste him self hath bode⁶
pees

And set it in his Testament,
How now that holy chirche is went
Of that here lawe positif,

¹ Brigantaille, armour.

³ Holde, esteemed.

⁵ Thilke time, in that time.

⁰ Bode, commanded.

² Cheste, strife.

⁴ Wisse, teach.

Hath set to make werre and strife
For worldes goods which may
nought last !¹

God wote the cause² to the last
Of every right and wronge also.
But while the lawe is reuled so
That clerkes to the werre entende,
I not² how that they shall amende
The woful worlde, in other thinges
To make' pees between the kinges
After the lawe of charite,
Which is the propre duetd
Belongend unto the presthode.
But as it thinketh to manhode,
The heven is fer, the worlde is nigh,
And vainglorie is eke so sligh,³
Which covetise hath now witholde,⁴
That they none other thing be-
holde

But only that they mighten winne.
And thus the werres they beginne,
Wherof the holy chirche is taxed,
That in the point as it is axed
The disme⁵ goth to the bataile,
As though Crist mighte nought
availe

To don hem right by other weie.
Into the swerd the chirche keie
Is torned, and the holy bede
Into cursinge, and every stede
Whiche sholde stonde upon the
feith

And to this cause an ere leyth
Astoned is of the quarele.
That⁶ sholde be the worldes hele
Is now, men sain, the pestilence,
Which hath exited pacience
Fro the clergie in special!
And that is shewed overall
In any thing whan they be greved.
But if Gregoire be beleved

As it is in the bokes write,
He dothe us somdele for to wite¹
The cause of thilke prelacie,
Where God isought of compaignie.
For every werke as it is founded
Shall stonde, or elles be confounded.
Who that only for Cristes sake
Desireth curd for to take
And nought for pride of thilke
estate

To beare a name of a prelate,
He shal by reson do profite
In holy chirche, upon the plite
That he hath set his conscience.
But in the worldes reverence
Ther ben of suche many glade
Whan they to thilke estate ben
made,

Nought for the merite of the charge
But for they wolde hem self dis-
charge

Of pouerte and become grete ;
And thus for pompe and for beyete²
The scribe and eke the pharisee
Of Moises upon the see
In the chaire on high ben set,
Wherof the feith is ofte let³
Whiche is betaken⁴ hem to kepe.
In Cristes cause all day they slepe,
But of the worlde is nought foryete.
For wel is him that now may gete
Office in court to be honoured.
The stronge cofre hath al devoured
Under the keie of avarice
The tresor of the benefice,
Wherof the pouer⁵ shulden clothe
And eteand drinkeand house bothe.
The charite goth all unknowe,
For they no greine of pite sowe,
And slouthe kepeth the librarie
Which longeth to the seintuarie.

¹ For the transitory goods of this world.

² 'not' I know not.

³ Sligh, cunning.

⁴ Withholde, held with, had for comrade.

⁵ Disme, tithe.

⁶ That, that which.

¹ Doth us somdele for to wite, causes us in some part to know.

² For beyete, for what they can get.

³ Let, hindered.

⁴ Betaken, entrusted.

⁵ The pouer, the poor.

To studie upon the worlde's lore
 Sufficeth now withoute more.
 Delicacies his swete tothe
 Hath soffred so that it fordothe
 Of abstinence al that ther is.
 And for to loken over this,
 If Etna brenne in the clergie,
 Al openly to mannes eye
 At Avignon the experience
 Therof hath yove an evidence
 Of that men seen hem so devided.
 And yet the cause is nought decided,
 But it is saide and ever shall:
 Bitwen two stooles is the fall,
 Whan that men wenen best to sitte.

In holy chirche of suche a slitte
 Is for to rewe unto us alle.

God graunte it mote wel befall
 Towardes him which hath the trouthe.
 But ofte is seen, that mochel slouth,
 Whan men ben drunken of the
 cuppe,

Doth mochel harme whan fire is
 uppe,

But if¹ somwho the flamme
 staunche ;

And so to speke upon this braunche
 Which proud envie hath made to
 springe

Of scisme, causeth for to bringe
 This newe secte of Lollardie,
 And also many an heresie,
 Among the clerkes in hem selve.
 It were better dike and delve
 And stonde Upon the righte feith
 Than knowe al that the Bible saith
 And erre as some' clerkes do.

Upon the hohd to were a slide
 And set upon the foot a glove,
 Accdrdeth nought to the behove
 Of resonable mannes use.

If men behelden the vertuse,
 That Criste in erthe taught us here,
 They shulden nought in such manere

1 But if¹ unless.

Among hem that ben holden wise
 The papacie so disguise
 Upon divers election,
 Whiche stant after thaffection
 Of sondry londes al aboute.
 But whan God wol it shal were oute,
 For trouthe mot stonden atte laste.
 But yet they argumenten faste
 Upon the Pope and his estate,
 Wherof they fallen in great debate.
 This clerk saith yea, that other nay,
 And thus they drive forth the day ;
 And eche of hem him self amendeth
 Of worlde's good: but none entendeth
 To that which comun profite were.
 They sain, that God is mighty there,
 And shal ordeine what he wille ;
 There make they none other skille,
 Where is the perill of the feith:
 But every clerke his herte leith
 To kepe his worlde in speciall;
 And of the cause generall
 Whiche unto holy chirche longeth,
 Is none of hem that underfongeth¹
 To shapen any resistance.
 And thus the right hath no defence,
 But there I love, there I holde.
 Lo, thus to-broke is Cristes folde,
 Wherof the flock withoute guide
 Devoured is on every side,
 In lacke of hem that ben unware
 Shepherdes, which here wit beware²
 Upon the worlde in other halve.
 The sharpe pricke in stede of salve
 They usen now, wherof the hele³
 They hurte of that they shulden
 hele.⁴

And what sheep that is full of wulle
 Upon his backe they toose and pulle
 While ther is any thinge to pille.
 And thoitgh there be none other
 skille,

¹ Underfongeth, undertakes.

² Beware, spend.

³ Hele, heel.

⁴ Hele, heal.

But onely for they wolde winne,
 They leuenought whan they beginne
 Upon here acte to procede,
 Whiche is nogood shephefdes dede.
 And upon this also men srtin
 That fro the leese whiche is pleine,
 Into the breres they forcacche
 Here orf, for that they wolden lacche
 With such duresse and so bereve
 That shal Upon the thornes leve
 Of wulle whiche the brere hath tore,¹
 Wherof the sheep ben al to-tore,²
 Of that the herdes make hem lese.²
 Lo, how they feignen chalk forehese!
 For though they speke and teche wel,
 They don hem self therof no dele.
 For if the wolf come in the wey,
 Their gostly staf is then away,
 Wherof they shulde her flock
 defende.

But if the pouer sheep offendc
 In any thing, though it be lite,³
 They ben al redy for to smite ;
 And thus, howe ever that they tale,
 The strokes falle upon the smale,
 And upon other that bene greate
 Hem lacketh herte for to beate,
 So that under the clerkds lawe
 Men seen the merel al misdrawe.⁴
 I wol nought say in general!,
 For there ben somme in special!,
 In whome that al vertue dwelleth,
 And tho ben, as tha postel telleth,
 That God of his election
 Hath cleped to perfection
 In the maner as Aaron was.
 They be nothinge in thilke cas
 Of Simon, which the foldes gate
 Hath lete and goth in othergate,

¹ That fro the Ierse, &c. That from the meadow which is open plain they bunt their hock into the briars, because they would seize profit by such hard treatment and so rob them of wool that the briar has torn.

² Lese, lose. ³ Lite, little.

⁴ The merel al misdrawe, the world all drawn awry.

But they gone in the righte weie.
 There bene also somme as men
 saie,
 That folwen Simon atte heles
 Whose carte goeth upon wheles
 Of covetise and worldes pride,
 And holy chirche goth beside,
 Whiche sheweth outwarde a visage
 Of that is nought in the corage.
 For if men loke in holy chirche
 Betwene the worde and that they
 wirche,

There is a ful great difference.
 They prechen us in audience,
 That noman shall his soule em-
 peire,¹

For al is but a chery feire²
 This worldes good, so as they telle.
 Also they sain there is an helle,
 Whiche unto mannes sinne is due,
 And bidden us therfore escheue
 That wicked is, and do the good.
 Who that her wordes understood
 It thinketh they wolden do the
 same;

But yet betwene erndst and game
 Ful oft it torneth other wise.
 With holy tales they devise,
 How meritdry is thilke dede
 Of charite to clothe and fede
 The pouer folke, and for to parte
 The worldes good, but they departe
 Ne thenken nought³ fro that they
 have.

Also they sain, good is to save
 With penaunce and with abstinence
 Of cliastid the continence.
 But plainly for to speke of that,
 I not⁴ how thilke body fat,
 Which they with deinte metes kepe,
 And lein it softe for to slepe,

¹ Empeire damage.

² Chery feire, charivari.

³ They departe me thenken nought they do not think of distributing.

⁴ Not, ne wot, know not.

Whan it hath elles of his wille,
 With chastite shall stondd stille.
 And netheles I can nought say
 In aunter¹ if that I missay
 Touchendofthis, how ever it stonde,
 I here and wol nought understonde,
 For therof have I nought to done.
 But he that made first the mone,
 The highe God of his goodndsse,
 If ther be cause, he it redresse.
 But what as any man can accuse,
 This may reson of trouthe excuse.

The vice of hem that ben ungood
 Is no reproef unto the good.
 For every man his owne werkes
 Shall beare, and thus as of the clerkes
 The goode men ben to commende,
 And all these other God amende !
 For they ben to the worldes eye
 The mirroure of ensamplarie
 To reulen and to taken hede
 Betwene the men and the Godhede.

Now for to speke of the comune
 It is to drede of that fortune
 Whiche hath befallē in sondry
 londes.

But often for defaute of bondes
 Al sodeinlich er it be wist
 A tonne, whan his lie arist,²
 To-breketh, and renneth al aboute
 Whiche ellds sholdd nought gone
 oute.

And eke ful ofte a litel scar
 Upon a banke, er men be ware,
 Let in the streme which with gret
 paine,

If ever, man it shal restraine.
 Where lawe lacketh errorr groweth,
 He is nought wise who that ne
 troweth,

For it hath proved oft er this.
 And thus the comun clamour is

¹ In aunter, peradventure.

² Whan his lie arist, when its lees rise, when
 its contents are fermenting.

In every lond where people dwelleth
 And eche in his compleinte telleth,
 How that the worldē is al miswent.
 And therupon his argument
 Yeveth every man in sondry wise.
 But what man wolde him self avise
 His conscience and nought misuse,
 He may well at the first excuse
 His God, whiche ever stant in one,
 In Him there is defaute none.
 So must it stonde upon us selve,
 Nought only upon ten ne twelve,
 But plenerlich¹ upon us alle,
 For man is cause of that shal falle.

And netheles yet som men write
 And sayn Fortune is to wite ;²
 And som men holde opinion
 That it is constellacion,
 Which causeth al that a man dothe ;
 God wot of bothe whiche is sothe.
 The worldē as of his propre kinde
 Was ever untrew, and as the blinde
 Improperlich he demeth fame,
 He blameth that is nought to blame
 Andpreiseth that is noughttopreise.
 Thus whan he shall the thinges
 peise,³

Ther is decepte in his balaiince
 And al is that the variaunce
 Of us, that shulde us better avise.
 For after that we fall and rise
 The worldē ariste and falleth with al,
 So that the man is over al
 His owne cause of wele and wo.
 That we Fortune clepe so
 Out of the man him selfe it groweth.
 And who that other wisd troweth
 Beholde the people of Israel.
 For ever while they deden wel
 Fortune was hem debonaire ;
 And whan they deden the contraire
 Fortune was contrariende.
 So that it proveth wel at ende,

¹ Plenerlich, fully. ² To wite, to blame.

³ Peise, weigh.

Why that the worlde is wonderful
 And may no while' stonde ful,
 Though that it seme wel besein ;
 For every worldes thinge is vain
 And ever goth the whele aboute
 And ever stant a man in doute,
 Fortune' stant no while' stille.
 So hath ther no man al his wille,
 Als far as ever a man may knowe
 There lastethno thing but athrowe.¹

The world stant ever upon debate,
 So may be siker none estate,
 Now here now there, now to now
 fro,

Now up now down, the world goth
 so

And ever hath done and ever shal.
 Wherof I finde in special
 A tale written in the Bible,
 Which must nedes be credible,
 And that as in conclusion
 Saith, that upon division
 Stant why no worldes thing may
 laste

Til it be drive' to the laste,
 And fro the firste regne of all
 Unto this day how so befall
 Of that the regne's be mevadle,
 The man him self hath be coup-
 able,

Whiche of his propre governaunce
 Fortuneth al the worlde's chaunce.

The high almighty purveiaunce,
 In whose eternd re'membraunce
 From first was every thing present,
 He hath his prophecie sent
 In suche a wise, as thou shalt here,
 To Daniel of this matere,
 How that this world shal torne and
 wende

Till it be falle unto his ende ;—
 Wherof the tald tell I shal
 In which it is betokened al.

As Nabugodonosor slepte
 A sweven¹ him toke, the whiche he
 kepte

Til on the morwe he was arise,
 For he therof was sore agrise.
 Til² Daniel his dreame he tolde
 And praid him faire', that he wolde
 Arede' what it token may,
 And saide : a beddd where I lay
 Me thought I sigh³ upon a stage,
 Where stood a wonder straunge
 ymage.

His hed with al the necke also
 They were of fine gold, bothd two
 His brest,his shuldersand his armes
 Were al of silver, but the armes,
 The wombe and al down to the kne
 Of bras they were upon to se,
 His legges were al made of steel,
 So were his feet also somdele,
 And somdele part to hem was take
 Of erthd, which men pottes make.
 The feble meind⁴ was with the
 strong.

So might it nought wel stonde long.

And tho me thoughte, that I sigh
 A great stone from an hill on high
 Fell down of sodein aventure
 Upon the feet of this figure,
 With which stone al to-broke was
 Gold, silver, erthd, steel and bras,
 That al was into pouder brought
 And so forth torne'd into nought.

This was the sweven which he had,
 That Daniel anone arad
 And saide him: that figure straunge
 Betokeneth how the world shal
 chaunge

And waxe lasse worth and lasse,
 Til it to nought all over passe.
 The necke and hed, that weren
 golde,

He saide how that betoken sholde

¹ But a throwe, but for a space of time.

¹ Sweven, dream.

³ Sigh, saw.

² Til, to.

⁴ Meind, mixed.

A worthy worlde, a noble, a riche
To which none after shal be liche.

Of silver that was over forthe
Shal ben a worlde of lasse worthe.

And after that the wombe of bras
Token of a wers worlde it was.
The steel which he sigh afterward
A world betokeneth more hard.

And yet the werste of every dele
Is last, than whan of erth and steel
He sigh the feet departed¹ so,
For that betokeneth mochel wo.

Whan that the world devided is,
It mot algatd fare amis,
For erth which meined is with steel
To-gider may nought laste wele,
But if that one that other waste,
So mot it nedes fail in haste.

The stone, whiche fro the hilly stage
He sigh down falle on that ymage
And hath it into pouder broke,
That sweven hath Daniel unloke
And said, that it is Goddes might,
Which, whan men wene most up-
right

To stonde, shal hem over caste.
And that is of this world the laste,
And than a newe shal beginne,
From whiche a man shal never
twinne

Or al to paine or al to pees,
That world shal laste endeles.

Lo, thus expoundeth Daniel
The kinges sweven faire and wel
In Babiloine the citee,
Wher that the wisest of Caldee
Ne couthen wite² what it mente,
But he tolde al the hole entente,
As in partie it is befall.

Of golde the first regne of alle
Was in that kinges time tho,
And laste many daies so.
There while's that the monarchie
Of al the worlde in that partie

¹ *Reparte*1, departed. ² Wite, know.

To Babiloine was subgite
And helde him still in suche a plight,
Til that the world began diverse.

And that was, whan the kinge of
Perse,

Which Cyrus hight, ayein the pees
Forth with his sone Cambises
Of Babiloine all that empire,
Right as they wolde hem self desire,
Put under in subjection

And toke it in possession,
And slain was Baltazar the king,
Which lost his regne and all his
thing.

And thus whan they it hadde
wonne,

The worlde of silver Was begonne
And that of gold was passed oute ;
And in this wise it goth aboute
Into the regne of Darius,
And than it fell to Perse thus.

There Alisaundre put hem under,
Which wrought of armes many a
wonder,

So that the monarchie left
With Grecs and here estate up left,
And Persiens gone under fote,
So suffre they that nedes mote.

And the the world began of bras,
And that of silver ended was,
But for the time thus it laste,
Til it befelle, that at laste

This king, whan that his day was
come,

With strength of deth was overcome.
And nettleles yet or he dide¹

He shope his regne to devide
To knightes, which him hadde
served,

And after that they have deserved
Yaf the conquestes that he wahne,
Wherof great werre tho beganne
Among hem that the regnes had,
Through proud envie which hemlad,

¹ *Or he dide*, ere he died.

Til it befelle ayein hem thus.
The noble Cesar Julius,
Which tho waskingeof Rome-londe,
With great bataile and with strong
honde

All Greed, Perse and eke Caldee
Wan and put under, so that he
Nought al only of th'orient
But al the marche of th'occident
Governeth under his empire
As he that was hole lord and sire
And helde through his chivalrie
Of al this worlde the monarchic
And was the first of that honour
Which taketh name of Emperour.

Where Rome thanne wolde
assaile,

There mighte no thing contreveile,
But every contre must obeie :

Tho goth the regne of bras aweie
And comen is the worlde of steel,
And stode above upon the whele.
As steel is hardest in his kinde
Above al other that men finde
Of metals, such was Rome' tho
The mightiest and laste so
Long time amonges the Remains,
Til they become so vilains,
That the fals emperour Leo
With Constantin his sone also
The patrimonie and the richesse,
Which to Silvester in pure almesse
The firste Constantinus lefte,
Fro holy chirche they berefte.
But Adrian, which Pope was
And sawe the mischef of this cas,
Goth into Fraunce for to pleine
And praieth the great Charlemaine
For Cristes sake and soule hele,
That he wol take the quafele
Of holy chirche in his defence,
And Charles, for the reverence
Of God, the cause hath undertake
And with his host the waie hath
take

Over the mountes of Lumbardie.
Of Rome and al the tirannie
With blody swerd he overcome
And the citee with strengthe' nome¹
In suche a wise and there he
wroughte,

That holy chirche ayein he broughte
Into fraunchise, and doth restore
The Pope's luste and yaf him more.
And thus whan he his God hath
served,

He toke, as he hath well deserved,
The diademe and was coroned
Of Rome, and thus, was abanddnetl
Thempire, whiche came never
ayeine

Into the hande of no Romaine.

But a long time it stode so stille
Under the Frensshe kinges wille,
Til that Fortune her whele so lad,
That afterward Lumbardes it had,
Nought by the swerd, but by
suffraunce

Of him that tho was king of
Fraunce,

Whiche Carle Calvus cleped was ;
And he resigneth in this cas
Thempire of Rome unto Lowis
His cousin, which a Lumbarde is,
And so it laste into the yere
Of Alberte and of Berenger.

But than upon dissension
They felle and in division
Among hem self that were grete,
So that they loste the beyete²
Of worship and of worldes pees.
But in proverbe netheles

Men sain: ful seldome is, that
welthe

Can suffre his owne estate in helthe,
And that was in the Lumbardes
sene,

Suche comun strife was hem be-
twene

1 *Nome* took.

2 *Beyete* possession.

Through covetise and through
 envie,
 That every man drough his partie,
 Which mighte leden any route
 Withinne bourgh and eke withoute.
 The comun right hath no felawe,
 So that the governaunce of lawe
 Was lost; and for necessite
 Of that they stode in suche degre
 Al only through division
 Hem nedeth in conclusion
 Of straunge londes helpe beside,
 And thus for they hem self divide
 And stonden out of reule uneven,
 Of Alemaine princes seven
 They chose, in this condition,
 That upon here election
 Thempire of Rome sholde stonde.
 And thus they left it out of honde
 For lacke of grace, and it forsoke
 That Alemaines upon hem toke.
 And to confermen here estate
 Of that they stoden in debate,
 They token the possession
 After the composition
 Among hem self, and ther upon
 They made an Emperour anon,
 Whos name as the cronique telleth
 Was Othes, and so forth it dwelleth,
 Fro thilke daie yet unto this,
 Thempire of Rome hath ben and is
 To thalemaines : and in this wise
 As ye to-fore have herd devise¹
 How Daniel the sweven² ex-
 poundeth
 Of that ymage, on whom he
 foundeth
 The world which aftersholde falle,—
 Comen is the last token of alle.
 Upon the feet of erthe and steel
 So stant the world now every dele
 Departed,³ which began right tho
 Whan Rome' was divided so.

And that is for to rewe sore,
 For alwey sithe¹ more and more
 The worlde empeireth² every day,
 Wherof the sothe shewe may.
 At Rome first if we beginne,
 The walle and al the citee withinne
 Stant in mine and in deeds,
 The feld is where the palais was,
 The town is wast, and over that
 If we beholden thilke estate
 Whiche whilome was of the Ro-
 mains,
 Of knightthod and of citeizens,
 To peise³ now with that beforne,
 The chaf is take for the corne.
 And for to speke of Romes might
 Unnethes⁴ stant ther ought upright
 Of worship or of worldes good,
 As it before time' stood.
 And why the worship is away
 If that a man the sothe shall say,
 The cause hath ben devisioun,
 Which moder of confusioun
 Is, where she cometh overall
 Nought only of the temporall
 But of the spiritual also.
 The dede proveth it is so,
 And hath do many daies er this,
 Through venim which that medled⁵
 is
 In holy chirche of erthely thing.
 For Crist him self maketh know-
 leching,
 That no man may togeder serve
 God and the World but if⁶ he swerve
 Froward that one, and stonde un-
 stable :
 And Crises word may nought be
 fable.
 The thing so open is at theye,
 It nedeth nought to specific

¹ Sithe, since.² Empeireth, growþ worse.³ Peise, weigh.⁵ Medled, mixed.⁶ But if, unless.

Unnethes, hardly.

¹ Devise, relate. ² Sweven, dream.³ Every dele departed, every part divided.

Or speke ought more in this matere.
 But in this wise a man may lere¹
 How that the worlde is gone aboute,
 The whiche wel nigh is wered out
 After the forme of that figure,
 Which Daniel in his scripture
 Expoundeth as to-fore is tolde :
 Of bras, of silver and of golde
 The worlde is passed and agone,
 And nowe upon his olde tone²
 It stant, of brutel³ erthe and steel
 The whiche accorden never a
 dele,⁴

So mot it nedes swerve aside
 As thing the which men seen divide.

Choopostel writ unto us alle
 And saith, that upon us is falle
 Thend of the world, so may we
 knowe

This ymage is nigh overthrowe
 By which this world was signified,
 That whilom was so magnified
 And nowe is olde and feble and
 vile,

Full of mischefe and of perile,
 And stant divided eke also
 Lyke to the feet, that were so
 As I tolde of the statue above.
 And thus men seen, through lacke
 of Love

Where as the lond divided is,
 It mot algate fare amis.
 And now, to loke on every side,
 A man may se the world divide :
 The werres ben so generall
 Amonge the Cristen overall,
 That every man now seeth
 wreche,⁵

And yet these clerkes alday preche
 And sain, good dede' may none be
 Whiche stant nought upon charite.

I not ' how charite' sholde stonde
 Where dedly werre is taken on
 honde,

But al this wo is cause of man
 The which that wit and reson can ;
 And that in token and in wisesse,
 That ilke ymage bare liknesse
 Of man, and of none other beste.
 For first unto the mannes heste
 Was every creature ordeigned,
 But afterward it was restreigned ;
 Whan that he fel they fellen eke,
 Whan he wex seke they wexen seke ;
 For as the man hath passion
 Of sikenesse, in comparison
 So suffren other creatures.
 Lo, first the heavenly figures.

The sonne and mono eclipsen
 both

And ben with mannes sinne wroth ;
 The purest air, for sinne, alofte
 Hath ben and is corrupt ful ofte ;
 Right now the highe windes blo\ve
 And anon after they ben lowe,
 Now cloudy and now clere it is ;
 So it may proven wel by this,
 A mannes sinne is for to hate²
 Which maketh the welken to de-
 bate.

And for to se the properte
 Of every thinge in his degre,
 Benethe forth amonge us here
 Al stant a like in this matere.
 The see now ebbeth and nowe it
 floweth,'

The lond now welketh and now it
 groweth ;

Now be the trees with leves grene,
 Now they be bare and no thing
 sene ;

Now be there lusty somer floures,
 Now be there stormy -winter
 shoures ;

¹ Lere, learn.

² Tone, toes.

³ Brutel, brittle.

⁴ Never a dele, never a bit.

⁵ Wreaking wreaking of vengeance.

¹ Not, know not.

² For to hate, to be hated.

Now be the daies, now the nightes,
So stant there no thing al uprightes:
Nowe it is light, nowe it is derke,
And thus stant al the worldes werke
After the disposicion

Of man, and his condicion.
Forthy¹ Gregoire in his morall
Saith, that a man in speciall
The lasse worlde² is properly ;
And that he proveth redily.
For man of soule resonable
Is to an angel resemblable ;
And lyke to beste, he hath feling ;
And lyke to tres, he hath growing.
The stones ben, and so is he,
Thus of his propre qualite
The man, as telleth the clergie,
Is as a worlde in his partie ;
And whan this litel world mis-
torneth

The grete worlde al overtorneth.
The lond, the see, the firmament
They axen alle jugdment
Aycin the man, and make him
warre,
Ther while him selfe stant out of
harre³

The remenaunt wolnought accorde :
And in this wise as I recorde
The man is cause of alle wo,
Why this worlde is divided so.
Division the gospel saith
One house upon an other lakh,
Til that the regne al overthrowe.
And thus may e^l cry man wel knowe
Division aboven alle
Is thing which maketh the world to
falle

And ever hath do, sith it began ;
It may firste prove upon a man.

The which for his complexion
Is made upon division

¹ *Forthy*, for that

² *The lasse worlde*, the microcosm.

³ *Out of harre*, unhinged, out of order.

Of cold of hot of moist of drie,
He mot by verry kinde¹ die.
For the contraire of his estate
Stant evermore in such debate,
Til that a part be overcome
There may no final pees be nome.²
But otherwise if a man were
Made al togeder of one matere
Withouten interrupcidn,
There shulde no corrupcion
Engendre upon that unite ;
But for there is diversite
Within him selfe, he may nought
laste

That he ne deieth at the kibte.
But in a man yet over this
Full great diviision there is,
Through which that he is ever in
strife

While that him lasteth any life.

The body and the soule also
Among hem ben divided so,
That what thing that the body hateth
The soule loveth and debateth.
But netheles ful ofte is sene
Of werre whiche is hem betwene,
The feble hath wonne the victoire ;
And whoso draweth into memoire
What hath befall of olde and newe
He may that werre sore rewe ;
Which first began in paradis :
For there was proved what it is
And what disese there it wrought ,
For thilke werre tho³ forth brought
The vice of alle dedly sinne
Through which division came inne
Among the men in erthe here,
And was the cause and the matere,
Why God the grete flodes sende
Of all the world and⁴ made an ende

¹ *Kinde*, nature.

² *Nome*, taken.

³ *Tho*, then.

⁴ *And*. The place of "and" in a sentence might be varied, as we vary the place of "also."

But Noe with his felaship,
Which only weren sauf by ship.

And over that through sinne it
come,

That Nembroth such emprise nome,
Whan he the totire Babel on hight
Let make, as he that wolde fight
Ayein the highe goddes might,
Wherof devided anon right

Was the language in suche entent
There wiste non what other ment,
So that they mighten nought pro-
cede.

And thus it stant of every dede
Where sinne taketh the case on
honde

It may upright nought longe stonde,
For sinne of her condicion
Is mother of duision,
And token whan the world shall
faile.

For so saith Crist withoute faile,
That nigh upon the worldes ende
Pees and accorde away shall wende
And alle charite shall cease
Among the men, and hate encrease.
And whan these tokens ben befall
All sodeinly the stone shall fall,
As Daniel it hath beknowe,
Which all this world shal over-
throwe :

And every man shall than arise
To joie or elles to juisse,¹
Where that he shall for ever dwell,
Or straight to heven or straight to
hell.

In heven is pees and al accorde,
But helle is full of such discorde
That there may be no Love day.-
Forthy³ good is, while a man
may,

¹ *Juisse*, judgment.

² *Love-day*, day of peacemaking by sub-
mitting quairrels. to the judgment of a Christian
minister.

³ Forthy, for that.

Echone to sette pees with other
And loven as his owne brother,
So may he winne worldes welthe
And afterwarde his soule helthe.

But wolde god that now were one
An other suche as Arione,
Whiche had an harpe of such tem-
prure,

And therto of so good mesure
He song, that he the bestes wilde
Made of his note tame and milde,
The hinde in pees with the leon,¹
Thewolfe in pees with the motton,¹
The hare in pees stood with the
hounde,

And every man upon this grounde
Whiche Arion that time herde,
As well the lorde as the shepherde,
Hebrought hem all in good accorde,
So that the comun with the lorde
And lord with the comun also

He sette in Love bothe two
And put away malencolie.
That was a lustie melodie
Whan every man with other lough.²
And if ther were suche one now
Whiche coude harpe as he tho³
ded

He might availle in many a stede
To make pecs where nowe is hate.
For whan men thenken to debate
I not⁴ what other thinge is good ;
But wher that wisdom waxeth wood⁵,
And reson torneth into rage,
So that mesure⁶ upon outrage
Hath set this worlde, it is todrede;
For that bringeth in the comun drede
Whiche stant at every mannes dore.
But whan the sharpnesse of the
spore

The horse side smit to sore
It greveth ofte. And now no more

¹ Motton, sheep. ² *Lough*, laughed.

³ Tho, then ⁴ AW. know not

⁵ wood, mad. ⁶ Mesure, moderation

As for to speke of this matere,
Which none but only God may stere.
So were good if at this tyde
That every man vpon his syde
Besought and prayed for the peace
Whiche is the cause of all in-
cresse

Ofworshippe and of worldeswelthe,
Of hertes reste and soules helthe,
Without peacestondenothinggood,
Forthy to Christ which shed his
blood
For peace byseketh alle men.
Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen.

CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

Book 1.

I map nought streehe up to the
heven
Min hond, ne setten al in even
This world, whiche ever is in bal-
aunce;
It stant nought in my suffisaunce
So greate thinges to compdsse.
But I mote lette it over passe
And treaten upon other thinges :
Forthy the stile of my writmges
Fro this day forth I thenke chaunge,
And speake of thinge is nought so
strange,
Whiche every kinde hath upon
honde,
And wherupon the world mote
stonde
And hath done sithen¹ it began
And shall while there is any man,
And that is Love ; of whiche I mene
To treat, as after shall be sene,
In whiche there can no man him
reule
For Loves lawe is out of reule
That of to moche or of to lite²
Wellnigh is every man to wite.³
And netheles there is no man
In all this world so wise, that can
Of Love' temper the mesure
But as it falleth in aventure.

¹ *Sithen*, since. ² *Lite*, little.
³ *To wite*, to blame.

For wit ne strengthe may nought
helpe
And he which elles wolde him
yelp¹
Is rathest² throwen under foote,
Ther can no wight therof do bo³te."
For yet was never such covine⁴
That couth ordeine a medicine
To thing which God in lawe of
kinde⁵
Hath set, for there may no man
finde
The righte salve for suche a sore.
It hath and shal be' evermore
That Love is maister where he will,
There can no life make other skill,⁶
For where as ever him list to set
There is no might which him may
let.
But what shall fallen atte laste,
The sothe can no wisdom caste,
But as it falleth upon chaunce,
For if there ever was balaunce
Whiche of Fortune stant governed,
I may well leve as I am lerned⁷
That Love hath that baldunce on
honde
Whiche wol no reson understonde.

¹ *Yelp*, boast. ² *Rathest*, soonest
³ *Bate*, remedy. ⁴ *Covtre*, contrivance.
⁵ *Kinde*, Nature. ⁶ *Skill*, distinction.
⁷ *Leve as I am lerned*, believe as I am
taught.

For Love is blinde and may nought
se,

Forthy there may no certeinte
Be sette upon his jugement.
But as the whele aboute went
He yeveth his graces undeserved,
And fro that man which hath him
served

Ful ofte he taketh away his fees ;
As he that plaieth at the dies¹
And therupon what shal befall
He not² til that the chaunce' fall
Where³ he shall lese or he shal
winne.

And thus full ofte men beginne
That if they wisten what it ment
They wolde chaunge all here entent.

And for to prove that it is so
I am my selfe one of tho⁴
Whichetothisscoleamunderfonge,"
For it is sithe go nought longe⁵
As for to speake of this matere
I may you telle, if ye woll here,
A wonder hap which me befelle,
That was to me bothe harde and
felle,

Touchend of Love and his fortune,
The which me liketh to commune
And plainly for to telle it oute
To hem that lovers ben aboute ;
Fro point to pointe I wol declare
And writen of my woful care,
My woful day, my woful chaunce,
That men mow take remembraunce
Of that they shall here after rede.⁷
For in good feith this wolde I rede,⁷
That every man ensample take
Of wisdom which is him betake,⁸
And that he wote of good apprise⁹
To teche it forth, for suche emprise

¹ Dies, dice.

³ Where, whether.

⁵ Undtrfonge, received.

⁶ Since not long ago.

⁷ Rede, counsel.

⁸ Betake, entrusted

And that which he knows to be worth learning.

² Not, knows not.

Tho, them.

Is for to preise : and therfore I
Wol write and shewe all openly,
How love and I togider mette,
Wherof the worlde ensample fette
May¹ after this, whan I am go,
Of thilke unsely jolif wo,
Whose rente stant out of the wey,
Now glad, and now gladnesse away,
And yet it may nought be with-
sonde

For ought that men may under-
sonde.

Upon the point that is befall
Of love, in which that I am falle,
I thenke telle my matere.

Now herken, who that woll it here,
Of my fortune how that it ferde
This endcrday,² as I forth ferde
To walke, as I you telle may.

And that was in the moneth of May,
Whan every brid hath chose his
make

And thenketh his merthes for to
make

Of love, that he hath achieved.
But so was I no thing releved,
For I was further fro my love
Than erthe is fro the heaven above.

And for to speke of any spede³
So wiste I me none other rede,⁴
But as it were a man forfare⁵

Unto the wood I gan to fare,
Nought for to singe with the briddes,
For whan I was the wood amidde

I fonde a swote grene pleine,
And there I gan my wo compleine⁶
Wisshinge and wepinge all min one⁶
For other mirthes made I none.

So hard me was that like throwe,⁷
That ofte sithes⁸ overthrowe

¹ Ensamle fette may, may fetch example.

² This enderday, this past day, lately.

³ Spede, success.

⁵ Forfare, undone.

⁶ All min one, all by myself.

⁷ Throwe, throe.

⁸ Ofte sithes, many times.

Togrounde I was, withoute brethe ;
 And ever I wisshed after dethe,
 Whan I out of my peine awoke,
 And caste up many a pitous loke
 Unto the heaven and saidd thus :
 ' O thou Cupide, O thou Venus,
 Thou god of love and thou god-
 desse,

Where is pite? where is mekenesse?
 Now doth me¹ plainly live or die,
 For certes suche a maladie
 As I now have, and longe have had,
 It mighte make a wise man mad,
 If that it shulde longe endure.
 O Venus, quene of loves cure,
 Thou life, thou lust, thou mannes
 hele,

Beholde my cause and my quarele
 And yef me some part of thy grace,
 So that I may finde in this place,
 If thou be gracious or none !'
 And with that worde I sawe anone
 The Kingeof Love and Quenebothe..
 But he, that king, with eyen wrothe
 His chere aweiward fro me caste
 And forthe he passed atte laste
 But netheles er he forth wente
 A firy dart me thought he hente²
 And threwe it through min herte
 rote.³

In him fonde I none other bote,⁴
 Forlengerlist him nought to dwelle.
 But she, whiche is the source and
 welle

Of wele or wo that shal betide
 To hem that loven, at that tide
 Abode, but for to tellen here
 She cast on me no goodly chere,
 Thus netheles to me she saide :
 'What art thou, sonne?' And I
 abraide⁵

Right as a man doth out of slepe,
 And therof toke she right good
 kepe¹

And bad me nothing be adradcle,
 But for all that I was nought glackle,
 For I ne sawe no cause why.
 And eft² she asketh, what was I ?

I saide : 'A caitif that lyth here.
 What wolde' ye my lady dere ?
 Shall I be hole or allas die?'
 She saide : 'Telle thy maladie.
 What is thy sore of which thou
 pleinst,

Ne hide it nought, for if thou feignest
 I can do thee no medicine.'

'Madame, I am a man of thine
 That in thy Court have longe served
 And axe that I have deserved,
 Some wele after my longe wo.'

And she began to loure tho
 And saide : 'There be many of you
 Faitours,³ and so may be that thou
 Art right suche one, and by faintise
 Saist, that thou hast me do service.'
 And netheles she wistd wele
 My word stood on an other whele
 Withouten any fairerie.
 But algate of my maladie
 She bad me tell and say her trouhe.

'Madame, if ye wolde havd routhe,'
 Quod I, 'than wolde I telle you.'

'Say forth,' quod she, 'and telle me
 how,
 Shewe me thy sikenesse every dele.'

'Madame, that can I do wele,
 Be so my life therto wol laste.'

With that her loke on me she caste
 And saide : 'In aunter⁴ if thou live
 My wille is first, that thou be
 shrive;

¹ Doth me. cause me to.

² Hente, seized.

³ Min herte rote, the root of my heart.

⁴ Bote, remedy. ⁵ Abraide, sarterd.

¹ Kepe heed

³ Faitours, dissemblers.

⁴ In aunter, if it happen,

² Eft, again.

And netheles how that it is
 I wot my selfe, but for all this
 Unto my Prest which cometh anone
 I wol thou telle it one and one,
 Both al thy thought and al thy werke.
 O Genius, min owne clerke,
 Come forth, and here this mannes
 shrifte,¹
 Quod Venus tho. And I uplifte
 Min hede with that, and gan be-
 holde
 The selfe Prest, whiche as she
 wolde
 Was redy there and fet him doune
 To here my Confession.

This worthy prest, this holy man
 To me spekend thus began
 And saide : " Benedicite
 My sone, of the felicite
 Of Love and eke of all the wo
 Thou shalt be shrive of bothe two.
 What thou er¹ this for loves sake
 Hast felt, let nothing be forsake ;
 Tel pleinely as it is befaller."

And with that worde I gan down
 falle
 On knees, and with devocion
 And with full great contricion
 I saide thanne ! " Dominus
 Min holy fader Genius,
 So as thou haste experience
 Of Love, for whose reverence
 Thou shalt me shriven at this time,
 I pray thee let me nought mistime
 My shrifte, for I am destourbed
 In all min herte and so contourbed,
 That I ne may my wittes gete ;
 So shal I nioche² thing foryete.²
 But if thou wolt my shrifte oppose³
 Fro point to pointe, than I suppose
 There shall nothing be left behinde.
 But now my wittes be so blinde,

¹ Er, ere.² Foryete, forget.³ Oppose, test by argument

That I ne can my selfe teche."
 Tho¹ he beganne anon to preche,
 And with his wordes debonaire
 He saide to me softe and faire :
 " My sone, I am assigned here
 Thy shrifte to oppose and here
 By Venus the goddesse above,
 Whose prest I am touchend of love.
 " But netheles for certain skill²
 I mote algate³ and nedes will
 Nought only make my spekinges
 Of Love, but of other thinges
 That touchen to the cause of Vice.
 For that belongeth to thoffice
 Of Prest, whose ordre that I bere :
 So that I wol nothing forbore
 That I the Vices one and one
 Ne shall thee shewen everichone,
 Wherof thou might take evidence
 To reule with thy conscience.
 But of conclusion finall
 Conclude I wolde in speciall
 For Love, whose servaunt I am
 And why the cause is that I cam.
 So thenke I to do bothe two,—
 First that⁴ min ordre longeth to
 The Vices for to telle a rewre ;"
 But nexte, above all other, shewe
 Of Love I wol the propretes,
 How that they stonde by degres
 After the disposicion
 Of Venus, whose condicion
 I must folwe as I am holde,
 For I with Love am al witholde,⁶
 So that the lasse I am to wite,⁷
 Though I ne conne but a lite⁸
 Of other thinges that bone wise ;
 I am nought taught in suche a wise.

¹ Tho, then; from an indeclinable *tha*. When it means 'those,' it is from *tha*, plural of 'that'² Skill, discrimination.³ Mote algate, must always.⁴ That which belongs to my calling.⁵ A rewre, in row, in their order.⁶ Witholde, retained.⁷ To wife, to blame.⁸ Know but a little.

For it is nought my comun use
 To speke of vices and vertuse,
 But all of Love and of his lore,
 For Venus bokes of no more
 Me techen, nouthur text ne glose.
 But for als moche as I suppose
 It sit a Prest to be wel thewed¹
 And shame it is if he be lewed,-
 Of my presthode after the forme
 I wol thy shrifte so enforme,
 That at the laste thou shalt here
 The Vices, and to thy matere
 Of Love I shal hem so remeve
 That thou shalt knowe what they
 meve.

For what a man shall axe or saine
 Touchend of shrifte, it mot be
 pleine;³

It nedethnought to make it queinte,⁴
 For Trouth his wordes wol nought
 peinte.

That I wol axe of thee forthy,
 My sone, it shal be so plainly
 That thou shalt knowe and under-
 stonde

The pointes of Shrift how that they
 stonde."

[*The Senses : Sight and Hearing.*]

Betmene the life and death I
 herde

This Prestes tale er I answerde ;
 And than I praid him for to say
 His will, and I it wolde obey
 After the forme of his apprise.
 Tho spake he to me in such wise
 And bad me, that I sholde shrive
 As touchende of my wittes five,
 And shaped that they were amended
 Of that I hadde hem mispended.

¹ *Well thewed*, of good manners.

² *Lewed*, unlearned as the common people.

³ *Pleine*, plain.

⁴ *Queinte*, ingeniously elaborated.

For tho¹ be properly the gates,
 Through which as to the hert
 algates²

Cometh all thing unto the feire
 Which may the mannes foule em-
 peire.³

And now this matter is brought in,
 " My sone, I thenke first beginne
 To wit⁴ how that thin eye hath
 stonde,

The whiche is as I understonde
 The moste principal of alle
 Through whom that peril may be-
 falle.

And for to speke in Loves kinde,
 Full many suche a man may finde
 Whiche ever caste aboute here eye
 To loke if that they might aspie
 Ful ofte thing which hem ne touch-
 eth,

But only that here herte soucheth⁵
 In hindringe of an other wight.

And thus ful many a worthy knight
 And many a lusty lady bothe
 Have be full ofte sithes wrothe ;
 So that an eye is as a thefe
 To Love, and cloth ful great mes-
 chefe ;

And also for his owne part
 Ful ofte thilke firy dart
 Of love, which that ever brenneth,
 Through him⁶ into the herte ren-
 neth.

And thus a mannes eye ferst
 Him selfe greveth altherwerst,⁷
 And many a time that he knoweth
 Unto his owne harme it groweth.
 My sone, herken now forthy
 A tale, to be ware therby

¹ *Tho*, those. ² *Algates*, always.

³ *Empeire*, impair, injure.

⁴ *To wit*, to know.

⁵ *Soucheth*, suspecteth.

⁶ *Him*, (the eye). It was used only in the
 nominative and accusative. 'His' and 'him'
 are both masculine and neuter.

⁷ *Althenverst*, worst of all.

Thin eye for to kepe and warde,
So that it passe nought his warde.

" Onide telleth in his boke
Ensample touchend of misloke
And saith, how whilom ther was one
A worthy lord, whiche Acteon
Was hote,¹ and he was cousin nigh
To him that Thebes first on high
Upsette,² which king Cadme hight.
This Acteon, as he wel might,
Above all other cast his chere,³
And used it from yere to yere
With houndes and with grete homes
Among the wodes and the thornes
To make his hunting and his chace ;
Where him best thought, in every
place,

To finde gamen in his way,
There rode he for to hunte and play.
So him befelle upon a tide⁴
On his hunting as he gan ride
In a foreste alone he was ;
He sigh⁶ upon the grene gras
The faire fresshe floures springe ;
He herd among the leves singe
The throstel with the nightingale.
Thus, er he wist, into a dale
He came, wher was a litel pleine
All rounde aboute wel beseine
With bussches grene and cedres
high,—

And there within he caste his eye.
Amid the plaine he saw a welle
So faire there might no man telle,
In which Diana naked stood,
To bathe and play her in the flood,
With many a nimphe which her
serveth.

But he his eye away ne swerveth
Fro here, which was naked all.
And she was wonder wroth withall,

¹ *Hote*, called.

² *Upsette*, set up.

³ *Cast his chere*, lifted his face.

⁴ *Upon a tide*, upon a time. ⁵ *Sigh* saw.

And him, as she which was god-
desse,

Forshope¹ anone, and the likenesse
She made him him taken of an herte,
Which was tofore his houndes sterte,
That ronne besilich aboute
With many an home and many a
route,

That maden mochel noise and crie :
And atte laste unhappilie
This hert his owne houndes slough
And him for vengeaunce all to-
drough.²

" Lo now, my sone, what it is
A man to caste his eye amis,
Which Acteon hath dere abought ;
Beware forth³ and do it nought.
For ofte, who that nede toke,
Better is to winke than to loke.
And for to proven it is so
Ovide the poete also
A talc, whiche to this matere
Accordeth, saith, as thou shalt here.

In Methamor⁴ it telleth thus,
How that a lord whiche Phorceus
Was hote,⁵ hadde doughters thre.
But upon their nativite
Such was the constellacion,
That out of mannes nacion
For kinde they be so miswent,
That to the likenesse of a serpent
They were bothe, and so that one
Of hem was cleped Stellibone,
That other suster Suriale,
The thrid, as telleth in the tale,
Medusa hight; and netheles
Of comun name Gorgones
In every centre there about,
As monstres whiche that men
doute,⁶

¹ Forshope, transformed.

² *All to-drough*, pulled to pieces.

³ *Forthy*, therefore.

⁴ *Methamor*, (Ovid's) *Metamorphoses*.

⁵ *Was hote*, was called.

⁶ *Dente*, fear

Men clepen¹ hem ; and but one eye
Among hem thre in purpartie²
They had of which they mighte se,
Now hathe it this, nowe hath it
she.

After that cause and nede it ladde
By throwes eche of hem it hadde.³

A wonder thing yet more amis
There was, wherof I telle al this :

What man on hem his chere caste¹
And hem behelde, he was als faste
Out of a man into a stone

Forshape,⁵ and thus ful many one
Deceived were, of that they wolde
Misloke where that they ne shulde.

But Perseus that worthy knight,
Whom Pallas of her grete might

Halpe, and toke him a shield therto,
And eke the god Mercury also

Lent him a swerde, he, as it fell,
Beyond Athlans the highe hill

These monstres sought, and there
he fonde

Diverse men of thilke londe
Through sight of hem mistorned
were

Stondend as stones here and there.
But he,—which wisdom and prow-

esse

Hath of the god and the goddesse,—
The shielde of Pallas gan embrace,

With which he covereth sauf⁶ his
face,

Mercuries swerde and out he
drough,

And so he bare him that he slough
These dredfull monstres alle thre.

"Lo now, my sone, avise the,
That thou thy sight nought misuse ;

Cast nought thin eye upon Meduse

That thou be torned into stone.

For so wise man was never none

But if he woll his eye kepe

And take of foul delite no kepe,¹

That he with luste nis² ofte nome

Through strengthe of love, and over-
come.

Of mislokinge how it hath ferde,

As I have told, now hast thou herde.

"My gode sone, take good hede,

And over this yet I thee rede,³

That thou beware of thin hering,

Which to the herte the tiding

Of many a vanite hath brought

To tarie with⁴ a mannes thought.

And netheles good is to here

Such thing, wherof a man may lere

That⁵ to vertue is accordaunt ;

And toward all the remenaunt

Good is to torne his ere fro,

For elles but a man do so

Him may ful ofte misbefalle.

I rede ensample amonges alle,

Wherof to kepe wel an ere

It oughte put a man in fere.

"A serpent, which that aspidis

Is cleped, of his kinde hath this,

That he the stone noblest of alle

The which that men carbuncle calle

Bereth in his heed above on heighte

For which whan that a man by

sleighte,

The stone to whine and him to

daunte

With his carecte⁶ him wolde en-

chaunte,

Anone as he perceiveth that,

He lith down his one ere al plat

Unto the ground, and halt it faste,

And eke that other ere als faste

¹ Clepen, name. - Purpartie, share.

³ As cause and need directed, each of them
had it at times.

⁵ His chere caste, turned his face.

⁵ Forshape, transformed.

⁶ Sauf, safely.

¹ No kepe, no heed. ² Nis, is not.

³ In addition to this I counsel you.

⁴ To tarie with, wherewith to corrupt,
French 'tarer.'

⁵ Learn that which.

⁶ Carecte, magic spell.

He stoppeth with his tail so sore,
That he the wordes lasse or more
Of his enchauntement ne hereth.

And in this wise him selfe he
skiereth,¹

So that he hath the wordes weived²
And thus his ere is nought deceived.

"An other thing who that re-
cordeth

Lyke unto this ensample accordeth,
Whiche in the tale of Troye I finde.
Sirenes of a wonder kinde

Ben monstres, as the bokes tellen,
And in the Grete See³ they dwellen,

Of body bothe and of viskge

Like unto women of yonge age

Up fro the navel on high they be,

And down benethe, as men may se,

They bere of fisshes the figure.

And over this, of such nature

They ben, that with so swete a
steven⁴

Like to the melodie of heven

In womannishe vois they singe,

With notes of so great likinge,

Of suche mesure, of suche musike,
Wherof the shippes they beswike⁵

That passen by the costes there.

For whan' the shipmen lay an ere
Unto the vois, in here avis⁶

They wene it be a paradis,

Whiche after is to hem an helle.

For reson may nought with hem
dwelle

Whan they the grete lustes⁷ here,

They conne nought here shippes
stere;

So besilich upon the note

They herken and in such wise
assote,⁸

That they here righte cours and
weie

For yete, and to their ere obeie,

And sailen till it so befall

That they into the perill falle

Where as the shippes ben to-drawe

And they ben with the monstres
slawe.

But fro this peril netheles

With his wisd^m king Ulixes

Escapeth and it over passeth,

For he to-fore the hond¹ compciseth

That no man of his compaignie

Hath power unto that folie

His erd for no lust to caste.

For he hem stopped alle faste,

That non of hem may here hem
sing.

So whan they comen forth sailing,

There was such governaunce on
honde

That they the monstres have with-
stonde,

And slain of hem a great partie.

Thus was he sauf with his navie

This wise king through gover-
naunce.

"Herof, my sone, in remem-
braunce,

Thou might ensample taken here

As I have tolde, and what thou here

Be wel ware, and yef no credence

But if² thou se more evidence,

For if thou woldest take kepe³

And wisely coutheest warde and
kepe

Thine eye and ere, as I have spoke,

Than haddest thou the gates stoke¹

Fro such foty as cometh to winne

Thin hertes wit whiche is withinne.

Wherof, that now thy love exceedeth
Mesure, and many a peine bredeth :

¹ Skiereth, secureth. ² Weived set aside.

³ The Grete See, was the name of the Medi-
teranean.

⁴ Steven, voice. ⁵ Beswike, betray.

⁶ Here avis, their opinion.

⁷ Lustes, delight.

⁸ Assote, become besotted.

¹ To-fore the hond, before hand.

² But if, unless.

³ Take kepe, take heed.

⁴ Stokefro, barred against.

But if thou coutheest sette in reule
 Tho two, the thre were eth¹ to reule.
 Forthy as of thy wittds five
 I wol as nowe no more shrive,
 But only of these ilke two.
 Tel me, therefore, if it be so,—
 Hast thou thine eye nought mis-
 throwe?"

" My fader yea, I am beknowe,
 I have hem cast upon Meduse,
 Therof I may me nought excuse.
 Min hert is growen into stone,
 So that my lady there upon
 Hath suche a printe of Love grave,
 That I can nought my selfe save."

'What saist thou sone, as of thin
 ere?"

" My fader, I am gilty of there,
 For whanne I my lady here,
 My wit with that hath lost his stere.
 I do nought as Ulixes dede,
 But falle anon upon the stede²
 Where as I se my lady stonde.
 And there I do you understonde³
 I am to-pulled in my thought,
 So that of reson leveth⁴ nought
 Wherof that I me may defende."

"My gode sone, God the amende.
 For as me thenketh by thy speche
 Thy wittes ben right far to seche.
 As of thin ere and of thin eye
 I wol no more specific,
 But I woll axen over this
 Of other thing how that it is.

[Of the Seven Deadly Sins: and
 PRIDE, the First of them.]

My sone, as I thee shall enforme,
 There ben yet of another forme

1 *Eth*, easy. 'The two' are sight and hearing, which have been discussed; if you could rule those two of the Five Senses, it would be easy to rule the other three. Therefore of the rest of the five, &c.

2 *Stede*, place.

3 Make you to understand.

4 *Leveth*, remaineth.

Of Dedly Vices, Seven applied,
 Wherof the herte is ofte plied¹
 To thing which after shal himgreve.
 The first of hem thou shalt beleve
 Is Pride", whiche is principall,
 And hath with him in speciall
 Ministres five ful diverse,
 Of which as I thee shal reherse
 The first is said Ypocrisie.
 If thou art of his compaignie
 Tel forth, my sone, and shrive thee
 clene."

" I wote nought, fader, what ye
 mene,
 But this I wolde you beseche,
 That ye me by somweie teche
 What is to ben an ypocrite.
 And than if I be for to wite³
 I wol beknownen³ as it is."

" My sone, an ypocrite is this,—
 A man which feigneth conscience
 As though it were al innocence
 Without, and is nought so withinne;
 And doth so, for he wolde winne
 Of his desire the vein estate :
 And whan he cometh anone thereat,
 He sheweth thanne what he was ;
 The corne is torned into gras,
 That was a rose is than a thorne,
 And he that was a lamb beforne
 Is than a wolfe ; and thus malice
 Under the colour of justice
 Is had, and, as the people telleth,
 These Ordres witen⁴ where he
 dwelleth

As he that of her⁵ counseil is ;
 And thilke world, which they er this
 Forsoken, he draweth in ayeine ;
 He clotheth riches, as men saine,
 Under the simplest of poueVte
 And doth to seme of great deserte

1 *Plied*, bent.

2 *To wite*, to blame.

3 *Beknownen*, acknowledge and confess.

4 These religious orders know.

5 *Her*, their.

Thing whiche is litel worth withinne,
 He saith, in open, fy ! to sinne,
 And in secre there is no vice
 Of which that he nis a norfce.¹
 And ever his chere is sobre and
 softe,
 And where he goth he blesseth ofte.
 Wherof the blinde world he dre-
 cheth,²

But yet all only he ne strecheth
 His reule upon religion.
 But next to that condicion,
 In suche as clepe hem holy cherche,
 It sheweth eke howe he can werche
 Amonge tho wide furred hodes
 To geten hem the worldes goodes.
 And they have self ben thilke same
 That setten most the world in blame,
 But yet in contraire of here lore
 There is nothing they loven more ;
 So that, feignend of light, they werke
 The dedes whiche are inward derke,
 And thus this double Ypocrisie
 With his devoute apparancie,
 A viser set upon his face
 Wherof toward this worldes grace
 He semeth to be right wel thewed,
 And yet his herte is all beshrewed
 But netheles he stant beleved
 And hath his purpos ofte acheved
 Of worship and of worldes welthe,
 And taketh it as who saith by stelthe
 Through coverture of his fallas.³
 And right so in semblable cas
 This Vice hath eke his officers
 Among these other seculers
 Of grete men,—for of the smale
 As for to accompt he set no tale,⁴
 But they that passen the comune
 With suche him liketh⁵ to comune ;

¹ *Norice*, nurse,

² *Drecheth*, troubleth.

³ *Coverture of his, alias*, concealment of his
 deceit.

⁴ *Set no tale* makes no account.

⁵ *Him liketh*, it pleases him.

And where he saith he wol socoure
 The people, there he wol devoure.
 For now-a-day is many one
 Which speketh of Peter and of John
 And thenketh Judas in his herte ;
 There shall no worldes good asterte¹
 His honde, and yet he yeveth al-
 messe

And fasteth ofte and hereth messe
 With *mea culpa*, whiche he saith ;
 Upon his brest ful ofte he leith
 His hond and cast upward his
 eye,

As though he Cristes face sie,
 So that it semeth atte sight
 As he alone al other might
 Rescue with his holy bede.²

But yet his herte in other stede
 Among his bedes most devoute
 Goth in the worldes cause aboute,
 I low that he might his warison³
 Encrese, and in comparison
 There ben lovers of suche a sorte,
 That feignen hem an humble porte,
 And al is but Ypocrisie,
 Which with deceiptc and flaterie
 Hath many a worthy wife beguiled.
 For whan he hath his tunge affiled
 With softe speche and with lesinge
 Than with his fals pitdus lokinge
 He wolde make a woman wene
 To gon upon the faire grene,
 Whan that she falleth in the mire.

For if he may have his desire,
 How so falle of the remenaunt,
 He halt⁴ no worde of cove-naunt,
 But er the time that he spede
 There is no sleightc at thilke nede,
 Which any loves faitour⁵ may,
 That he ne put it in assay
 As him belongeth for to done.
 The colour of the reiny mone

¹ *Asterter*, escape from. ² *Bede*, prayer.

³ *Warison*, advantage.

⁴ *Halt*, hold. ⁶ *Faitour*, dissembler.

With medicine upon his face
 He set, and than he axeth grace,
 As he which hath sikenessd feigned;
 Whan his visage is so disteigned,
 With eye up cast on her he siketh
 And many a continaunce he piketh¹
 To bringen her into beleve
 Of thing which that he wold achieve,
 Wherof he bereth the pale hewe,
 And for he wolde seme trewe
 He maketh him sike, whan he is
 heil.

But whan he bereth lowest sail,
 Than is he swiftest to beguile
 The woman which that ilke while
 Set upon him feith or credence.

"My sone, if thou thy conscience
 Entamed² hast in such a wise,
 In shrifte thou the might avise
 And telle it me, if it be so."

"Min holy fader, certes no.
 As for to feigne such sikenesse
 It nedeth nought, for this witnessse
 I take of God, that my corage³
 Hath ben more sike than my visdge.
 And eke this may I well avowe,
 So lowe couthe I never bowe
 To feigne humilite withoute
 That me ne liste better loute
 With all the thoughtes of min herte.
 For that thing shall me never
 asterte,

I speke as to my lady dere,
 To make her any feigned chere ;
 God wot well there I lie nought,
 My chere hath been such as my
 thought.

For in good feith, this leveth wele,⁴
 My wil was better a thousand dele
 Than any chere that I couthe.⁵

"But sire, if I have in my youthe

Done other wise in other place,
 I put me therof in your grace.
 For this excusen I ne shall,
 That I have elles over all
 To Love and to his compaignie
 Be plein without ypocrisie.
 But there is one, the whiche I serve,
 All though I may no thank deserve,
 To whom yet never unto this day
 I saide onlich or 'ye or 'nay,'
 But if it so were in my thought
 As touchend other say I nought
 That I nam somdele for to wite¹
 Of that ye clepe an ypocrite."

"My sone, it sit wel every wight
 To kepe his worde in trouth upright
 Towardes Love in alle wise.
 For who that wold him wel avise
 What hath befall in this matere,
 Hcshulde nought with feigned chere
 Deceive Love in no degre.
 To Love is every herte fre,
 But in deceit if that thou feignest
 And therupon thy luste atteignest,
 That thou hast wonne with thy wile,
 Though it thee like for a while,
 Thou shalt it afterward repente.
 And for to prove min entente
 I finde ensample in a cronique
 Of hem that Love so beswike.-

If fell by olde daies thus,
 Whil themperour Tiberius
 The monararch of Rome ladde,
 There was a worthy Romain hadde
 A wife, and she Pauline hight,
 Which was to every mannes sight
 Of al the cite the fairest
 And as men saiden eke the best.
 It is and hath ben ever yit
 That so strong is no mannes wit,
 Which through beaute ne may be
 drawe
 To love, and stonde under the lawe

¹ *Piketh*, pitches, sets up.

² *Entamed*) subdued.

³ *Corage*, disposition of the heart.

⁴ Believe well.

⁵ Than any face that I could put on.

¹ That I am not some prut to blame.

² *Beswike*, deceive.

Of thilke bore¹ freite kinde,
Which maketh the hertes eyen
blinde,

Where no resdn may be communed.
And in this wise stode fortunéd
Of whiche I wol this tale mene,
This wife, whiche in her lustes grene
Was faire and fressh and tender of
age.

She may nought lette the corage
Of him that wol on her assote.²
There was a Duke, and he was
hote³

Mundus, which had in his baillie⁴
To lede the chevalerie
Of Rome, and was a worthy knight.
But yet he was nought of such might
The strength of love to withstonde,
That he ne was so brought to honde,
That malgre where⁵ he wol or no
This yongd wife he loveth so,
That he hath put all his assay
To winne thing which he ne may
Get of her graunt in no manere,
By yefte of gold, ne by praiere.
And whan he sigh,⁶ that by no
mede⁷

Toward her love he mighte spede,
By sleighte feignend than he
wrought:

And therupon he him bethought,
How that there was in the cite
A temple of suche auctorite,
To which Avith great devocion
The noble women of the towne
Most comunlich a pelerindge
Gone for to praye thilke ymdge,
Which the goddesse of childing is
And cleped was by name Ysis.
And in her temple thanne were
To reule and to minfstre there

After the lawe which was tho,
Above all other prestos two.
This Duke, which thought his love
get,

Upon a day hem two to mete
Hath bede, and they come at his
heste,

Where that they had a riche feste.
And after mete in prive place
This lord, which wold his thank
purchdce,

To eche of hem yaf thanne a yift
And spake so by waie of shrift,
He drough hem into his covfne¹
To helpe and shape, how he Pauline
After his lust deceive might.
And they her² trouthesbothteplight,
That they by night her shulden
winne

Into the temple, and he therinne
Shall have of her all his entent.
And thus accorded forth they went.
Now list, through which Ypocrisie
Ordeigned was the trechcre,
Wherof this lady was deceived.
These prestes hadden wel con-
ceived,

That she was of great holinessce
And with a counterfeit simplesse,
Which hid was in a fals corderge,
Feignend an hevenly message
They cam and saide unto her thus :
Pauline, the god Anubus
Hath sent us bothe prestes here
And saith, he wol to the appere
By nightes time him selfe alone,
For love he hath to thy persone.
And therupon he hath us bede,
That we in Ysis temple a stede
Honestly for thee purveie,
Where thou by night as we thee
saie

Of him shalt take a vision.

¹ *Bore* born—born of that frail nature.

² *Assote*, dote. ³ *Hote*, called.

⁴ *Baillie*, office. ⁵ *Where*, whether.

⁶ *Sigh*, saw.

⁷ *Mede*, means, mode.

¹ *Covine*, secret treacherous agreement.

² *Her*, their.

For upon thy condicion,
The whiche is chaste and full of
feith,

Suche price, as he us tolde, he leith,
That he wol stonde of thin accorde ;
And for to beare herof recorde
He sende us hider bothe two.
Glad was her innocence tho
Of suche wordes as she herd,
With humble chere and thus an-
swerd

And saide, that the goddes will
She was all redy to fulfill,
That by her husebondes leve
She wolde in Ysis temple at eve
Upon her goddes grace abide
To serven him the nightes tide.
The prestes tho gon home ayeine,
And she goth to her sovereigne ;
Of goddes will and as it was¹
She tolde him all the plaind cas,
Wherof he was deceived eke,
And bad that she her shulde meke
All hole unto the goddes heste.
And thus she, which was all honeste
To godward, after her entent
At night unto the temple went
Where that the false prestes were.
And they receiven her there
With suche a token of holinesse,
As though they seen a goddesse ;
And all within in prive place
A softe bedde of large space
They hadcle made and encortined,²
Where she was afterward engfnd.²
But she, whiche all honour sup-
poseth,

The false prestes than opposeth
And axeth by what observaunce
She mighte most to the plesaunce
Of god that nightes reule kepe.
And they her bidden for to slepe

¹ And she told all the plain case, of how it was the god's will. 'And' was not always, placed at the beginning of a clause.

² Engined, trapped by a crafty contrivance.

Liggend upon the bedde a loft,
For, so they said, al still and soft
God Anubus her wolde awake.
The counseil in this wise take
The prestes fro this lady gone.
And she that wiste of guile none
In the maner as it was said
To slepe upon the bedde is leid,
In hope that she sholde acheve
Thing which stode than upon beleve
Fulfilled of all holinesse.
But she hath failed as I gesse,
For in a closet faste by
The Duke was hid so prively,
That she him mighte nought per-
ceive.

And he that thoughte to deceive
Hath suche array upon him nome,¹
That whan he wold unto her come
It shulde semen at her eye,
As though she verriliche seie
God Anubus, and in suche wise
This Ypocrite of his quaintise
Awaiteth ever til she slept.
And than out of his place he crept
So stille, that she nothing herde,
And to the bed stalkend he ferde
And sodeinly, er she it wiste,
Beclipt in armes he her kiste,
Wherof in womannisshe drede
She woke and niste what to rede.²
But he with softe wordes mildc
Comforteth her and saith, with
childe
He wolde her make in suche a
kinde,
That al the world shall have in
minde
The worshippe of that ilke sone ;
For he shall with the goddes wone³
And ben him selfe a god also.
With suche worded and with mo,

¹ Nome, taken.

² Knew not what counsel to take.

³ Wone, dwell

The which he feigneth in his speche,
 This ladies wit was al to seche,¹
 As she which alle trouthe weneth.
 But he, that all untrouthe meneth,
 With blinde tales so her ladde,
 That all his will of her he hadde.
 And whan him thought it was inough,
 Aye in the day he him withdrough
 So prively, that she ne wiste
 Where he be come, but as him liste
 Out of the temple he goth his way.
 And she began to bid and pray,
 Upon the bare ground knelende,
 And after that made her offrende
 And to the prestes yeftes great
 She yaf, and homeward by the strete
 The Duke her mette and saide thus:
¹ The mighty god, whiche Anubus
 Is hote, he save the Pauline,
 For thou art of his discipline
 So holy, that no mannas might
 May do that he hath do to night,
 Of thing which thou hast ever
 eschued.

But I his grace have so pursued,
 That I was made his lieutenaunt.
 Forthy by way of covenaint
 Fro this day forth I am all thine,
 And if thee like to be mine
 That stant upon thin owne wille.
 She herde his tale and bare it stille
 And home she went as it befell
 Into her chambre and there she fell
 Upon her bed to wepe and crie
 And saide : O derke Ypocrisie,
 Through whose dissimulation
 Off false ymagination
 I am thus wickedly deceived !
 But that I have it apperceived
 I thonke unto the goddes alle.

¹ *All to seek*, all away, as she who believes
 all to be truth. ² *To seek* was a phrase long
 used to represent want of knowledge. So the
 elder brother in Milton's *Comus*—

³ I do not think my sister so to *seek*
 Or so undisciplined in virtues book'

For though it ones be befall
 I shall never eft while that I live,
 And thilke avow to god I yive.
 And thus wepende she compleigneth
 Her faire face and all disteigneth
 With wofull teres of her eye,
 So that upon this agonie
 Her husebonde is inne come
 And sigh¹ how she was overcome
 With borwe, and axeth her what
 her eilcth.

And she with that her self beweileth
 Well more than she didde afore
 And said : 'Alas, wifehode is lore
 In me which whilom was honest,
 I am none other than a beste
 Nowe I defouled am of two !'
 And as she mighte speake tho
 Ashamed with a pitous onde,-
 She tolde unto her husebonde
 The soth of all the hote tale,
 And in her speche dead and pale
 She swouneth well nigh to the laste.
 And he her in his armes faste
 Upheld and ofte swore his oth,
 That he with her is nothing wroth,
 For wel he wot she may then-
 nought.

But netheles within his thought
 His hert stode in a sory plite
 And said, he wolde of that despite
 Be venged how so ever it falle ;
 And send unto his frendes alle,
 And whan they were come inferre,¹
 He tolde hem upon this matere
 And axeth hem what was to done.
 And they avised were sone
 And said, it thought hem for the
 beste

To sette first his wife in reste
 And after pleine to the king
 Upon the matter of this thing.
 Tho was his wofull wife comforted

¹ *Sigh*, saw.
 2 *Onde*, anger. 3 *Inferre*, together.

By alle waies and disported,
 Til that she was somdele amended.
 And thus a day or two dispended
 The thridde day she goth to pleine
 With many a worthy citezeine
 And he with many a citezein.
 Whan themperour it herde saine
 And knew the falsehed of the vice,
 He said he wolde do justice.
 And first he let the prestes take,
 And for they shulde it nought for-
 sake¹

He put hem into question.
 But they of the suggestion
 Necouthte nought a word refuse,
 But for they wold hem self excuse
 The blame upon the Duke they
 laide.

But thereyein the counseil saide,
 That they be nought excused so
 For he is one and they be two,
 And two have more wit than one,
 So thilke excusement was none.
 And over that, was said hem eke
 That whan men wolden vertue seke
 Men shulden it in the presto's finde,
 Their ordre is of so high a kinde,
 That they be divisers² of the wey.
 Forthy if any man forswey³
 Through hem, they be nought ev-
 cusable,

And thus by lawe resonble
 Among the wise juges there
 The prestos bothe dampned wero,
 So that the privd trechery
 Hid under false Ypocrisie
 Was thanne all openliche shewed,
 That many a man hem hath be-
 shrewed.

And whan the prestes weren dede,
 The temple of thilk horrible dede
 They thoughten purge and thilke
 ymage

¹ Forsake, deny. ² Divisers, tellers
³ Forswey, swerye aside, go wrong,

Whose cause was the pelrinage
 They drowen out and also faste
 Fer into Tiber they it caste,
 Where the river it hath defied.¹
 And thus the temple purified
 They have of thilke horrible sinne,
 Which was that time do² therinne.
 Of this point such was the divise.
 But of the duke was otherwise ;
 For³ he with love was bestad
 His dome was nought so hardd lad.
 For love put refon away
 And can nought se the righte wey.
 And by this cause he was respfcted,
 So that the deth him was acquitted,
 Hut for all that he was exiled,
 For he his love had so beguiled,
 That he shall never come ayeine.
 For he that is to trouth unpleine
 He may nought failen of vengeaunce
 And eke to take remembraunce
 Of that Ypocrisie hath wrought.
 On other half, men shulde nought
 To lightly leve all that they here,
 But thanne shulde a wiseman stere
 The ship, whan suchewindes blowe;
 For first though they beginnd lowe,
 At ende they be nought mevdbble,⁴
 But all to-broken mast and cable,
 So that the ship, with sodain blast
 Whan men leste wene, is overcast.
 As now full ofte a man may se,
 And of old time how it hath be
 I finde a great experience,
 Wherof to take an evidence
 Good is, and to beware also
 Of the perill er him be woo.⁵

"Of hem that ben bo derk
 withinne
 At Troie also if we beginne,

¹ Defied, digested. So in 'The Vision of
 Piers Plowman,' 'wyn the roste to defye'

² At that time done.

³ For, because.

⁴ Mevable, to be moved.

⁵ Before woe betides him.

Ypocrisie it hath betraied.
 For whan the Grekes had all assaied
 And founde that by no bataile
 Ne by no siege it might availle
 The town to winne through prow-
 esse,

This Vice feigned of simplese,
 Through sleight of Calcas and of
 Crise

It wan by such a maner wise :—
 An horse of brass they let do forge
 Of suche entaile,¹ of suche a forge,
 That in this world was never man
 That such an other werk began.
 The crafty werkeman Epilus
 It made, and for to telle thus,
 The Grekes that thoughten to be-
 guile

The king of Troie in thilke while
 With Antenor and with Enee,
 That were bothe of the citee
 And of the counseil the wisest,
 The richest and the mightiest,
 In prive place so they trete
 With fair behestes and yeftes grete
 Of gold, that they hem have enginod
 To-gider and whan they be covined,
 They feignen for to make pees,
 And under that yet nethelless
 They shopen the destruction
 Bothe of the king and of the town.
 And thus the false pees was take
 Of hem of Grace and undertake,
 And therupon they founde a way,
 Where strengthe mighte nought
 away,

That sleighte shulde helpe thanne,
 And of an inche a large spanne,²
 By colour of the pees they made :
 And tolden how they were glade
 Of that they stoden in accorde,
 And, for it shall ben of recorde,

¹ *Entaile*, carving.

² An ell should be got out of an inch under
 outward show of the peace made.

Unto the king the Gregois saiden
 By way of love and thus they
 praiden,—

As they that wolden his thank
 deserve,

A sacrifice unto Minerve
 The pees to kepe in good entent
 They must offre, or that they went
 The King, counselled in the cas
 By Anten6r and Eneds,

Therto hath yoven his assent.
 So was the pleine trouthe blent '
 Through counterfeit Ypocrisie.

Of that they shulden sacrificie
 The Grekes under the holinesse
 Anone with alle besinesse
 Here hors of brass let faire dight,
 Which was to sene a wonder sight.

For it was trapped of him selve
 And had of sinale whelms twelve,
 Upon the whiche men inowe
 With craft toward the town it drowe,
 And goth glistrend ayein the sonne.
 Tho was there joie inough begonne,
 For Troie in great devocidn
 Came also with procession

Ayein this noble sacrifice
 With great honour, and in this wise
 Unto the gates they it broughte :
 But of here entre whan theysoughte,
 The gates weren all to smale.

And therupon was many a tale ;
 But for the worship of Minerve,
 To whom they comen for to serve,
 They of the town which understood
 That all this thing was done for
 good,

For pees, wherof that they ben
 glade,

The gates that Neptunus made
 A thousand winter ther to-fore
 They have anone to-broke and tore,
 The stronge wanes down they bete,
 So that into the large strete

¹ *Blent*, blinded.

This horse with great solempnite
Was brought withinne the cite,
And offred with great reverence,
Which was to Troie an evidence
Of love and pees for evermo.
The Gregois token leve tho
With all the hole felaship,
And forth they wenten into ship,
And crossen sail, and made hem
yare,¹

Anone as though they wolden fare.²
But whan the blacke winter night
Withoute mone or sterre light
Bederked hath the water strondc,
Al prively they gone to londe
Full armed out of the navie.
Sinon, whiche made was here espie
Withinne Troie, as was conspired,
Whan time was, a tokne hath fired,
And they with that here waie holdcn
And comen in, right as they wolden,
There as the gate was to-broke.
The purpose was full take and spoke
Er any man may teke kepe,
Whil that the citee was aslepe ;
They slowen al that was withinne
And token what they mightenwinne
Of such good as was suffisaunt
And brenden³ up the remenaunt.
And thus come out the trechcrie,
Which under false Ypocrisie
Was hid, and they that wende⁴ pees
Tho mighten finde no releese
Of thilke swerd whiche al cle-
voureth.

Full ofte and thus the swetd sourcth
Whan it is knowd to the taste,
He spilleth many a worde in waste
That shal with such a people trete,
For whan he weneth most beyete⁵
Than is he shape most to lese.

¹ Yare ready.

² As though they would go.

³ Brenden, burnt.

⁴ Wende hoped for, expected.

⁵ When he expects to get most.

And right so if a woman chese¹
Upon the wordes that she hereth,
Som man whan he most true ap-
pereth

Than is he furthest fro the trouthc.
Hut yet full ofte, and that is routhe,
They speden that ben most untrue
And loven every day a newe,
Wherof the life is after lothe
And love hath cause to be wrothe.
But what man that his lust desireth
Of love and therupon conspireth
With wordes feigned to deceive,
He shall nought faile to receive
His peine as it is ofte sene.

"Forthy my sone, as I the mene,
It sit thee well to taken hede,
That thou escheue of thy manhede
Ypocrisie and his semblaunt,
That thou ne be nought deceivaunt
To make a woman to beleve
Thing whiche is nought in thy
beleve.

For in suche feint Ypocrisie
Of Love is all the trecherie,
Through which love is deceived
ofte.

For feigned semblaunt is so softe,
Unnethes- Love may be ware.
Forthy my sone, as I well dare,
I charge the to flee that vice,
That many a woman hath made
nice,

But loke thou dele nought with-
all."³

"Iwis³ my fader, no more I
shall."

"Now, sone, kepe that thou hast
swore.

For this that thou hast herd before
Is said the firste point of Pride.
And next upon that other side

¹ Chese, choose.

² Unnethes, not easily.

³ Iwis ("gewis") certainly.

To shrive and speken over this,
Touchend of Pride, yet there is
The Point Seconde I thee behote,¹
Which Inobedience is hote.

Inobedience.

This Pice of Inobedience
Ayein the reule of conscience
All that is humble he disalloweth,
That he toward his God ne boweth
After the lawes of his heste.²
Nought as a man, but as a beste
Whiche goth upon his tastes wilde
So goth this proude Vice unmilde,
That he disdeigneth alld lawe.
He not³ what is to be felawe,
And serve may he nought for pride.
So is he Iedde on every side
And is that selve of whom men
speke,
Which woll nought bowe er that he
breke.
I not³ if Love might him plie,⁴
For elles for to justifie
His herte, I not³ what might availe.
Forthy⁵ my sone, of suche cнтаile
If that thin herte be disposed,
Telle out and let it nought beglosed.
For if that thou unbuxome⁶ be
To love, I not³ in what degre
Thou shalt thy goode worde
acheve."—

"My fader, ye shal well beleve,⁷
The yonge whelp which is affaited⁷
Hath nought his maister better
awaited
To couche whan he saith : go lowe,
Than I anone as I may knowe
My lady will me bowe more.

¹ Behote, promised.

² Heste, commandment.

³ Not, knows not.

⁴ Plie, bend.

⁵ Forthy, therefore.

⁶ Unbuxome, unbending, un-bow-some.

⁷ Affaitet, bound to some object, tamed.

But other while I grucche sore
Of some thinges that she doth,
Wherof that I woll telle soth.
For of two pointes I am bethought,
That though I wolde I mighte nought
Obeie unto my ladies hest;
Hut I dare make this behest
Sauf only of that ilke two,
I am unbuxome of no mo."

"What ben tho two, tell on," quod
he.

"My fader, this is one, that she
Commaundeth me my mouthe to
close,

And that I shulde her nought oppose
In love, of whiche I ofte preche,
And plenerlich¹ of suche a speche
Forbere and suffre her in pees.

But that ne might I netheles
For all this worlde obey iwis.²

For whan I am there as she is,
Though she my tales nought allowe,
Ayein her will yet mote I bowe
To seche if that I might have grace.
But that thing may I nought cin-
brace

For ought that I can speke or do.
And yet full ofte I speke so,
That she is wroth and saith : be
stille.

If I that heste shall fulfille
And therto ben obedient,
Than is my cause fully shent,
For specheles may no man spede.³
So wote I nought what is to rede.³
But certes I may nought obeie,
That I ne mote algate⁴ saie
Some what of that I wolde mene,
For ever it is aliche grene
The greате love which I have,
Wherof I can nought bothe save
My speche and this obedience.

¹ Plenerlick, fully, wholly.

² Iwis, certainly

³ I know not what is to be counselled.

⁴ Algate, always.

And thus full ofte my silence
I breke, and is the firste point
Wherof that I am out of point
In this, and yet it is no Pride.

" Now than upon that other side
To tell my disobeisance,

Full sore it stant to my grevaunce
And may nought sinke into my wit.
Full ofte time she me bit¹

To leven her and chese a newe ;
And saith, if I the sothe knewe
How fer I stonde from her grace,
I shulde love in other place.

But therof wol I disobeie,
For also wel she mighte saie
' Go take the mone there it sit,'

As bringe that into my wit.

For there was never rooted tree
That stood so faste in his degree,
That I ne stonde more faste
Upon her lo\c, and may nought
caste

Min herte away all though I woldw.

For God wote though I never sholde

Sene her with eye after this daie,

Yet stant it so, that I ne maie

Her love out of my brest remue.

This is a wonder retenue,

That malgre where² she noil or
none

Min herte is exermo in one, .

So that I can none other chese,

But whether that I winne or lese

I must her loven till I deie ;

And thus I breke, as by that weie,

Herhestesandher commaundinges.

But trulich in none other thinges.

Forthy my fader, what is more

Touchende unto this ilke lore

I you beseche, after the forme

That ye plainly me wolde enforme,

So that I may min herte reule

In Loves cause after the reule."

Murmur and Complaint.

'Comard this Vice of which we
trete

There ben yet tweie of thilke
esirete,¹

Her² name is Murmur and Com-
pleinte.

Ther can no man her chere peinte
To sette a glad semblaunt ther-
inne:

For though Fortune make hem
winne,

Yet grucchen they; and if they lese

There is no waie for to chese

Wherof they mighten stonde ap-
pesed.

So ben they comunly disesed,

There may no welth ne no pouertr

Attempren hem to the deserte³

Of buxomnesse by no wise.

For ofte time they despise

The goode fortune as the badde,

As they no marines reson hadde,

Through Pride wherof they be
blinde.

And right of such a maner kinde

Ther be lovers, that though they
have

Of love all that they wolde crave,

Yet woll they grucche by sonic
were,

That they wol nought to love obeie

Upon the trouth, as they do sholde.

And if hem lacketh that they wolde,

Anon they falle in such a peine,

That ever unbuxomly they pleine

Upon Fortune and curse and crie,

That they wol nought her hertes
plie

To suffre, till it better falle..

Forthy if thou amonges alle

¹ *Ofthilke estrete*, of the same street, neigh-
bours.

² *Her*, their. ³ *Daserle* merit,

¹ *Bit*, prays.

² *Where*, whethen

Hast used this condicidn,
My sone, in thy Confession
Now tell me plainly what thou
art."—

"My fader, I beknewe¹ a part
So as ye tolden here above
Of Murmur and Complaint of Love;
That for I se no spede-comende,
Ayein Fortune compleignende
I am, as who saith, evermo
And eke full ofte time also.
Whan so as that I se or here
Of hevy word or hevy chere
Of my lady, I grucche anone,
But wordes dare I speke none
Wherof she mighte be displeed.
But in min herte I am disesed
With many a Murmur god it wote,²
Thus drinke I in min owne swote.³
And though I make no semblaunt,
Min herte is all disobeisaunt,
And in this wise I me confesse
Of that ye clepe Unbuxomnesse.
Now telleth what your counseil
is."—

"My sone, as I thee rede this,
What so befall of other weie,
That thou to loves hest obeie
Als fer as thou it might suffice.
For ofte sith³ in such a wise
Obedience in love availleth,
Where all a mannes strengthe
faileth :

Wherof if that thee list to wit,
In a cronique as it is writ
A great ensample thou might finde,
Which now come is into my minde.

There mas whilom by daies olde
A worthy knight, and as men tolde
He was neuveu to themperour
And of his court a courtedur.
Wifeles he was, Florent he hight,
He was a man that mochel might.

¹ Beknowe, confers. ² Swote. sweat.
³ Ofte sith oftentimes.

Of armes he was desirous,
Chivalerous and amorous,
And for the fame of worldes speche
Straunge adventures for to seche
He rode the marches all aboute.
And fell a time, as he was oute,
Fortune, which may every threde
To-breke¹ and knitte of mannes
specie,²

Shope, as this knight rode in a pas,
That he by strengthe taken was,
And to a castell they him ladde,
Where that he fewe frendes hadde.
For so it fell that ilke stounde,
That he hath with a dedly wounde,
Fightend, his owne hondes slain
Branchus, whiche to the Capitain
Was sone and heire, wherof ben
wrothe

The fader and the moder bothe.
That knight Branchus was of his
honde

The worthiest of all his londe,
Andfain theywoldendoveengeance
Upon Florent, but remembraunce
That they toke of his worthinesse,
Of knighthode and of gentilesse,
And how he stood of cousinage
To themperour, made hem assuage,
And dorste nought slaine him for
fere.

In great disputeson they were
Among hem selfe, that³ was the
best.

There was a lady, the sliest
Of alle that men knewen tho,
So olde she might unnethes go,
And was graunt dame to the dede,
And she with that began to rede⁴
And saide hem she wol bring him
inne,

That she shal him to dethe winne

¹ To-breke-break up altogether. To- is an
intensive prefix.

² Spede, prosperity, prosperity.

³ What. ⁴ Rede, counsel.

All only of his owne graunt
Through strength of verray cove-
naunt¹

Withoute blame of any wight.
Anone she sende for this knight
And of her sone she alleide²
The deth, and thus to him she
saide:

' Florent, how so ever thou be to
wite³

Of Branchus deth, men shal respite
As now to take vengement,
Be so thou stonde in jugement
Upon certein condicion,

That thou unto a question
Which I shall axe shah answere.

And over this thou shalt eke swere,
That if thou of the sothe faile,
There shal non other thinge availe,
That thou ne shalt thy deth receive;
And for men shal thee nought de-
ceive

That thou therof might ben avised,
Thou shalt have day and time
assised

And leve saufly for to wende,
Be so that at thy daies ende
Thou come ayein with thin avise.'
This knight, which worthy was and
wise,

This lady praieth, that he may wit
And have it under scales wiit,
What question it sholde be
For which he shall in that degre
Stonde of his life in jeopartic.

With that she feigneth compaignie
And saith: ' Florent, on love it
hongeth

All that to min axinge longeth :—
What alle women most desire—
This woll I axe, and in thempire
Where thou hast moste kno\w-
leching

Take counseil of this axinge,'
Florent this thing hath undertake ;
The day was set and time take;
Under his seale he wrote his othe
In such a wise, and forth he gothe
Home to his ernes¹ courte ayein,
To whom his aventure plein
le tolde, of that is him befallle.
And upon that they weren alle
The wisest of the londe assent,
But netheles of one assent
They mighte nought accorde plat,
One saide this, an other that;
After the disposition
Of natural complexion
To some woman it is plesaunce
That to another is grevatince,
But suche a thinge in speciall
Whiche to hem alle in generall
Is most plesaunt and most desired
Above all other and most con-
spired,

Suche o² thing connd they naught
finde

By constellation ne kinde.³
And thus Florent withoute cure
Mot stonde upon his aventure
And is al shape unto the lere,⁴
And in defaulte of his answere
This knight hath lever for to dcie
Than breke his trouth, and for to lie
In place where he was swore,
And shapeth him gone ayein⁵ ther-
fore.

" Whan time cam he toke his leve
That lenger wolde he nought be-
leve⁶

And praieth his eme he be nought
wroth,

For that is a point of his oth,

¹ Eme, uncle.

² O, one.

³ Kind, nature.

⁴ Lere, learning (finding the answer to the question).

⁵ Makes himself ready to go back agam.

⁶ Beleve, remain.

¹ Verray covenannt, a true agreement.

² Alleide, alleged. ³ To wite, to blame.

He saith, that no man shal him
 wreke,¹
 Though afterward men here speke
 That he peraventure deie.
 And thus he wente forth his weie
 Alone as a knight aventurous
 And in his thought was curious
 To witte what was best to do.
 And as he rode alone so
 And cam nigh there he wolde be,
 In a forest there under a tree
 He sigh² where sat a creature,
 A lothly womannissh figure,
 That for to speke of flesshe and
 bone
 So foule yet sigh he never none.
 This knight behelde her redily,
 And as he wolde have passed by
 She cleped him and bad abide.
 And he his hors heved³ aside
 Tho⁴ torned and to her he rode
 And there he hoved⁵ and abode
 To witte⁶ what she wolde mene.
 And she began him to bemene⁷
 And saidd : ' Florent, by thy name
 Thou hast on honde such a game
 That but thou be the better avised
 Thy deth is shapen and devised,
 That al the world ne may thee save,
 But if⁸ that thou my counseil have.'
 Florent whan he this tale herde,
 Unto this olde wight answerde
 And of her counseil he her praide.
 And she ayein to him thus saide :
 ' Florent, if I for thee so shape,
 That thou through me thy deth
 escape
 And take worship of thy dede,
 What shall I have to my mede ?'
 'What thing,' quod he, 'that thou
 wolde axe.'

1 Wreke, avenge.

3 Heved, head.

5 Hoved, waited.

7 Bemene, bemoan,

2 Sigh, saw.

4 Tho, then.

6 To witte, to know.

8 But if, unless.

' I bid never a better taxe,'
 Quod she, 'but first, or thou be
 sped,
 Thou shalt me leve suche a wed'
 That I woll have thy trowth on
 honde,
 That thou shalt be min husebonde.'
 ' Nay,' saith Florent, ' that may
 nought be.'
 ' Ride thanne forth thy way,' quod
 she,
 ' And if thou go withoute rede,
 Thou shalt be sekerliche dede.'
 Florent benight² her good inough
 Of londe, of rent, of parke, of
 plough,
 But all that compteth she at nought.
 Tho fell this knight in mochel
 thought,
 Now goth he forth, now cometh
 ayein,
 He wot nought what is best to sain,
 And thought as he rode to and fro,
 That chesehe mote one of the two —
 Or for to take her to his wife
 Or elles for to lese his life.
 And than he caste his avauntdege,
 That she was of so great an age
 That she may live but a while,
 And thought to put her in an ile
 Where that no man her shulde
 knowe
 Til she with deth were overthrown
 And thus this yonge lusty knight
 Unto this olde lothly wight
 Tho said: ' If that none other
 chaunce
 May make my deliveraunce
 But only thilke same speche
 Which as thou saist thou shalt me
 teche,
 Have here min honde, I shal thee
 wedde.'

1 Wed, pledge.

2 Behight²promised.

And thus his trouth he leith to
wedde.

With that she frounceth up the
browe :

' This covenatmt woll I allowe,'

She saith, ' if any other thing
But that thou hast of my teching
Fro deth thy body may respite,
I woll thee of thy trouth acquite,
And elles by none other waie.

Now herken me what I shall saie :

Whan thou art come into the
place,

Where now they maken great
manace

And upon thy coming abide,
They wol anone the samd tide
Oppose thee of thine answdre.

I wot thou wolt no thing forbere
Of that thou wenest be thy bestc,
And if thou might so finde reste
Wei is, for than is ther no more.
And elles this shall be my lore,
That thou shalt saie:—Upon this

Molde

That alle Women levest wolde
Be Soverein of Mannes Love :-
For what woman is so above
She hath, as who saith, all her wille,
And elles may she nought fulfille
What thinge her were levest have.
With this answer thou shalt save
Thy self, and other wise nought.
And whan thou hast thy ende
wrought,

Come here ayein, thou shalt me
finde,

And let nothinge out of thy minde.'
He goth him forth with hevy cheie,
As he that not¹ in what manere
He may this worldes joie atteigne :
For if he deie he hath a peine ;
And if he live he mote him binde
To suche one which of alle kinde

Of women is the unsemlieste.
Thus wot he nought what is the
beste.

But be him lief or be him loth
Unto the castel forth he goth
His full answer for to yive
Or for to deie or for to live.
Forth with his counseil came the
lorde,

The thinges stoden of recorde,
He send up for the lady sone,
And forth she cam that olde mone.¹

In presence of the icmenaunt
The strengthe of all the covenaut
Tho was rehersed openly,
And to Florent she bad forthy
That he shall tellen his avise
As he that wot what is the prise.
Florent saith all that ever he couth,
But such word cam ther none to
mouth,

That he for yefte or for bcheeste
Might any wise his deth areste-.

And thus he tarieth longe and late,
Til that this lady bad algate

That he shall for the dome finall
Yef² his nnswee in speciall
Of that she had him fust opposed.

And than he hath tiuly supposed,
That he him may of nothing yelp³,

But if so by tho wordes helpe
Which as the woman hath him
taught,

Wherof he hath an hope caught
That he shall be excused so,
And tolde out plein his wille tho.
And whan that this matrond herde
The maner how this knight an-
swerde,

She said: ' Ha, treson ! Wo thee be
That hast thus tolde the privete,
Whiche alle women most desire !
I wolde that thou were afire !'

¹ Mone, wicked one, hag.

2 Yef, give.

3

Yelp^e, boast.

¹ Not, knows not.

But netheles in suche a plite
 Florent of his answeere is quite.
 And tho began his sorwe newe,
 For he mot gone or ben untrewed
 To hire which his trouthe hadde.
 But he, which alle shame dradde,
 Goth forth in stede of his penaunce
 And taketh the fortune of his
 chaunce

As he that was with trouthe affaited.¹
 This olde wight him hath awaited
 In place where as he her lefte.
 Florent his wofull hed up lifte
 And sigh this vecke² where that
 shesyte,

Which was the lothlieste wyght,
 That ever man cast on his eye.
 Her nase bass,³ her browes high,
 Her eyen smal and depe set,
 Her chokes ben with teres wet
 And rivelin⁴ as an empty skin
 Hangend down unto the chin,
 Her lippes shrunken ben for age,
 There was no grace in her visage,
 Her front was narwe, her lockes
 hore,

She loketh forth as doth a more,⁵
 Her necke is short, her shuldres
 courbe,

That might a mannes lust dis-
 tourbe,

Her body great and no thing small,
 And shortly to describe her all
 She hath no lith⁶ without a lack;
 But liche unto the wolfe sack
 She profreth her unto this knight
 And bad him, as he hath behight,
 So as she hath by his warrant,
 That he her holde covenauant.
 And by the bridell she him seseth,

¹ With *trouthe* *affaited*, bound to truth only. Goods and chattels might be promised in Old French 'pour estre et demourer affaiz et ypothequez.'

² Vecke, old woman. ³ Bass, low.

⁴ Rivelin, wrinkled, shrunken.

⁵ Witch, hag.

⁶ Lith, limb.,

But god wot how that she him
 pleseth

Of suche wordes as she speketh :
 Him thenketh wel nigh his herte
 breketh

For sorwe that he may nought fle
 But if¹ he wolde untrewed be.

Loke, how a seke man for his hele
 Taketh baldemoin with caneles²

And with the mirre taketh the
 sucre,

Right upon such a maner lucie
 Stant Florent, as in this diete
 He drinketh the bitter with the
 swete,

He medleth sorwe with liking
 And liveth so as who saith dying.

His youthe shall be cast away
 Upon suche one, which as the wey
 Is olde and lothly overall.

But nede he mot that nede shall
 He wolde algate his trouthe holde
 As every knight therto is holde
 What hap so him is ever befaller,
 Though she be the foulest of alle.

Yet to thonour of womanhed
 Him thought he shulde taken heed,
 So that for pure gentillesse

As he her couthe best adrese,
 In ragges as she was to-tore

He set her on his hors to-fore,
 And forth he taketh his way softe.
 No wonder though he siketh³ ofte.

But as an oule fleeth by nighte
 Out of all other briddes sighte,
 Right so this knight on daies brode
 In close him held, and shope his
 lode

On nightes time till the tide
 That he come there he wolde abide,
 And prively withoute noise
 He bringeth this foule greates coise⁴

¹ But if, unless.

² Baldemoin with caneles, gentian with cinamon.

³ Siketh, sigheth. ⁴ Coise, mistress.

BOOK I.—PRIDE.

To his castell in suche a wise,
 That no man might her shape avise,
 Til she into the chambre came,
 Where he his privd counseil name
 Of¹ suche men as he most truste
 And told hem, that he nedes muste
 This beste² wedde to his wife,
 For elles had he lost his life.
 The prive women were assent³
 That sholden ben of his assent.
 Her ragges they anone of drawe
 And as it was that time lawe
 She hadde bath, she hadde rest,
 And was arraied to the best.
 But with no craft of combes brode
 They might her hore lockes shode,⁴
 And she ne wolde nought be shore
 For no counseil, and they therfoie
 With suche attire as tho was used
 Ordeinen,⁵ that it was excused
 And had so craftilich aboute
 Thatnoman mighte seen hemoute.⁶
 But whan she was fulllich arraied
 And her attire was all assaied,
 Tho was she fouler unto se.
 But yet it may non other be,
 They were wedded in the night;
 So wo begone was never knight
 As he was than of manage.
 And she began to pleie and rage
 As who saith, I am well inough;
 But he therof nothing ne lough.⁷
 For she toke thanne chere on honde
 And clepeth him her husebonde
 And saith: 'My lord, go we to
 bedde,
 For I to that entente wedde
 That thou shalt be my worldes
 blisse.'

¹ Took private counsel with.

² This beast.

³ Assent, sent to her.

⁴ Part her hoary locks.

⁵ Set it in order.

⁶ So craftily surrounded with the customary headgear that one could see any grey locks peep out of it

⁷ Lough, laughed.

And profreth him with that to
 As she a lusty lady were.
 His body mighte well be
 But as of thought and me
 His hert was in purgatorie
 But yet for strengthe of mat
 He mighte make non esson
 That he ne mote algatds ph
 To gon to bed of compaigni
 And whan they were a bedde
 Withoute slepe he was awaked,
 He torneth on that other side
 For that he wolde his eyen hide
 Fro loking of that foule wight.
 The chamber was all full of light,
 The courtines were of sendall
 thinne,
 This newe bride which lay withinne,
 Though it be nought with his
 accorde,
 In armes she beclept her lorde
 And praid, as he was torned fro
 He wolde him torne ayeinward tho.
 'For now,' she saith, 'we be both
 one.'
 But he lay stille as any stone,
 And ever in one she spake and
 praide
 And bad him thenke on that he
 saide,
 Whan that he toke her by the honde.
 He herd and understood the bonde,
 How he was set to his penaunce.
 And as it were a man in traunce
 He torneth him all sodeinly
 And sigh a lady lay him by
 Of eightene winter age,
 Which was the fairest of visage,
 That ever in all this world he sigh.
 And as he wolde have take her
 nigh,
 She put her hond, and by his leve
 Besought him that he wolde leve,
 And saith, that for to winne or lese
 He mot one of two thinges ches'

But netheles in suche a plite
 Florent of his answdre is quite.
 And tho began his sorrvve newe,
 For he mot gone or ben untrewē
 To hird which his trouthd hadde.
 But he, which alle shame dradde,
 Goth forth in stede of his penaunce
 And taketh the fortune of his
 chaunce

As he that was with trouth affaited.¹
 This olde wight him hath awaited
 In place where as he her lefte.
 Florent his wofull hed² up lifte
 And sigh this vecke² where that
 shesyt,

Which was the lothlieste wyght,
 That ever man cast on his eye.
 Her nasd bass,³ her browes high,
 Her eyen smal and depd set,
 Her chekes ben with teres wet
 And rivelin⁴ as an empty skin
 Hangend down unto the chin,
 Her lippes shrunken ben for age,
 There was no grace in her visage,
 Her front was narwe, her lockes
 hore,

She loketh forth as doth a more,⁵
 Her necke is short, her shulders
 courbe,

That might a mannes lust dis-
 tourbe,

Her body great and no thing small,
 And shortly to describe her all
 She hath no lith⁶ without a lack;
 But liche unto the wolfe sack
 She profreth her unto this knight
 And bad him, as he hath behight,
 So as she hath by his warrant,
 That he her holde covenaut.
 And by the bridell she him seseth,

¹ With *trouth affaited*, bound to truth only. Goods and chattels might he piomised in 'Old French' pour estre et demourer affaiz et ypothequez.

² Vecke, old woman.

³ Bass, low.

⁴ Rivelin, wrinkled, shrunken.

⁶ Witch, hag.

⁶

Lith, limb.,

But god wot how that she him
 pleseth

Of suche wordes as she speketh :
 Him thinketh wel nigh his herte
 breketh

For sorwe that he may nought fle
 But if¹ he wolde untrewē be.
 Loke, how a seke man for his hele
 Taketh baldemoin with canele -
 And with the mirre taketh the
 sucre,

Right upon such a maner lucie
 Stant Florent, as in this diete
 He drinketh the bitter with the
 swete,

He medleth sorwe with liking
 And liveth so as who saith dying.
 His youthe shall be cast away
 Upon biiche one, which as the wey
 Is olde and lothly overall.

But nede he mot that nede shall
 He wolde algate his trouthe holde
 As every knight therto is holde
 What hap so him is ever befallē,
 Though she be the foulest of alle.

Yet to thonour of womanhed
 Him thought he shulde taken heed,
 So that for pure gentillesse
 As he her couthd best adresse,

In ragges as she was to-tore
 He set her on his hors to-fore,
 And forth he taketh his way softe.
 No wonder though he siketh³ ofte.
 But as an oule fleeth by nighte
 Out of all other briddes sighte,
 Right so this knight on daies brode
 In close him held, and shope his
 rode

On nightes time till the tide
 That he come there he wolde abide,
 And prively withoute noise
 He bringeth this foule greate coise⁴

¹ But if, unless.

² Baldemoin with canele, gentian with cin-
 namon.

³ Siketh, sigheth.

⁴ Coise, mistress.

To his castell in suche a wise,
 That no man might her shape avise,
 Til she into the chambre came,
 Where he his prive counseil name
 Of¹ suche men as he most truste
 And told hem, that he nedes muste
 This beste - wedde to his wife,
 For elles had he lost his life.
 The prive women were assent³
 That sholden ben of his assent.
 Her ragges they anone of drawe
 And as it was that time lawe
 She hadde bath, she hadde rest,
 And was arraied to the best.
 But with no craft of combes brode
 They might her hore lockes shode,⁴
 And she ne wolde nought be shore
 For no counseil, and they therfoie
 With suche attire as tho was used
 Ordeinen,⁵ that it was excused
 And had so craftilich aboute
 That no man mighte seen hemoute.⁶
 But whan she was fullich arraied
 And her attire was all assaied,
 Tho was she fouler unto se.
 But yet it may non other be,
 They were wedded in the night;
 So wo begone was never knight
 As he was than of manage.
 And she began to pleie and rage
 As who saith, I am well inough;
 But he therof nothing ne lough.⁷
 For she toke thanne chere on honde
 And clepeth him her husdbonde
 And saith: 'My lord, go we to
 bedde,
 For I to that entente wedde
 That thou shalt be my worldds
 blisse.'

1 Took private counsel with.

2 This beast.

3 Assent, sent to her.

4 Part her hoary locks.

5 Set it in order.

6 So craftily surrounded with the customary
 headgear that one could see any grey locks
 peep out of it.

7 Lough, laughed.

And profreth him with that to kisse,
 As she a lusty lady were.
 His body mighte well be there,
 But as of thought and memorie
 His hert was in purgatorie.
 But yet for strengthe of matrimoine
 He mighte make non essdone,
 That he ne mote alगतds pile
 To gon to bed of compaignie.
 And whan they were a bedde naked
 Withoute slepe he was awaked,
 He torneth on that other side
 For that he wolde his eyen hide
 Fro loking of that foule wight.
 The chamber was all full of light,
 The courtines were of sendall
 thinne,
 This newd bride which lay withinne,
 Though it be nought with his
 accorde,
 In armes she beclept her lorde
 And praid, as he was torned fro
 He wolde him torne ayeinward-tho.
 'For now,' she saith, 'we be botli
 one.'
 But he lay stille as any stone,
 And ever in one she spake and
 praide
 And bad him thenke on that he
 saide,
 Whan that he toke her by the honde.
 He herd and understood the bonde,
 How he was set to his penaunce.
 And as it were a man in traunce
 He torneth him all sodeinly
 And sigh a lady lay him by
 Of eightend winter age,
 Which was the fairest of visage,
 That ever in all this world he sigh.
 And as he wolde have take her
 nigh,
 She put her hond, and by his leve
 Besought him that he wolde leve,
 And saith, that for to winne or lese
 He mot one of two thingds chese,

Where¹ he woll have her such on
night

Or elles upon daies light,
For he shall nought have bothe
two—

And he began to sorwe tho
In many a wise and caste his
thought,

But for al that yet couth he nought
Devise him self which was the best.
And she that wolde his hertes rest
Praieth that he shulde chese algate,
Til at the laste longe and late

He saide : 'O, ye my lives hele,
Say what ye liste in my quarele.

I not² what answeere I shall yive,
But ever while that I may live

I woll that ye be my maistresse ;
For I can nought my selfe gesse

Which is the best unto my chois,
Thus graunt I you min hole vois,

Chese for us both, I you praie,
And what as ever that ye saie,
Right as ye wolle so woll I.'

'My lord,' she saide, 'graunt mercy,
For of this word that ye now sain

That ye have made me Soverein
My destine is overpassed,
That never hereafter shall be
lassed³

My beaudt which that I now have,
Til I be take into my grave.

Both night and day as I am now
I shall all way be such to you.

The kinges daughter of Cecile
I am; and fell but sith a while,⁴

As I was with my fader late,
That my stepmoder for an hate,
Which toward me shehathbegonne,
Forshope⁵, me, till I hadde wonne
The love and the sovereinte

Of what knight that in his degre
All other passeth of good name.

And as men sain ye ben the same
The dede proveth it is so ;

Thus am I youres cvermo.⁷

Tho was plesaunce and joie inough,
Echone with other pleidand lough,

They live longe, and well they ferde,
And clerkes that this channel herde

They writen it in evidence

To teehc how that obedience

May well fortune a man to love

And set him in his luste above,

As it befell unto this knight.

"Forthy,, my sone, if thou do
right,

Thou shalt unto thy love obeie

And folwe her will by alle weie."—

"Min holy fader, so I will.

For ye have told me such a skill

Of this ensample now to-fore,

That I shall evermo therfore

Here afterward min observaunce

To love and to his obeissaunce

The better kepe, and over this '

Of Pride if there ought elles is

Wherof that I me shrive shall,

What thing it is in speciall,

My fader, axeth, I you pray."—

"Now list, my sone, and I shall say.

For yet there is Surquederie,²

Which slant with Pride of com-
paignie,

Wherof that thou shalt here anone

To knowe if thou have gnlt or
none,

Upon the forme as thou shalt here ;

No' understond well the matere.

Surquederie.

Surzuederie is thilke Vice
Of Pride which the third office

¹ Where, whether.

² Not, know not.

³ Lassed, lessened.

⁴ Sith a while, a while since.

⁵ Fershope, transformed.

¹ Over this, beyond this.

² Surquedene, presumption.

Hath in his court and wol nought
knowe

The trouthe till it overthrowe.

Upon his fortune and his grace
Cometh *had I wist*¹ full ofte a place,
For he doth all his thing by gesse
And voideth alle sikernessee ;
None other counseil good him
semeth

But such as he him selfe demeth.
For in such wise as he compdsseth
Mis wit alone all other passeth,
And is with Pride so thorough
sought

That he all other set at nought,
And weneth of him selven so
That such as he there be no mo
So fair, so semely, ne so wise,
And thus he wolde beare a prise
Above all other, and nought forthy
He saith nought ones graunt mercy-
To God, which alle grace sendeth,
So that his wittes he dependeth
Upon him selfe, as though there were
No God which might availle there,
But all upon his owne wit
He stant, till he fall in the pit
So fer that he may nought arise.

" And right thus in the same wise
The Vice upon the cause of Love
So proudly set the hert above
And cloth him plainly for to wene,
That he to loven any quene
Hath worthinesse and suffisaunce.
And so withoute purveiaunce
Full ofte he heweth up so highe,
That chippes fallen in his eye ;
And eke full ofte he weneth this,
There as he nought beloved is

¹ *Had I wist*, if I had only known. " *Had I wist*" was a popular phrase for the repentance of the rash. So in Spenser's "Mother Hubbard"-Tale "

" Most miserable man, whom wicked Fate
Hath brought to court, to sue for *Had-y-wist*!"

2 *Graunt mercy*, gramercy, great thanks !

To be beloved altherbeste.

Now, sone, telle what so thee leste
Of this that I have told thee here."—

" Ha fader, be nought in a were.¹

I trowe there be no man lesse

Of any maner worthinesse

That halt him lesse worthy than I

To be beloved, and nought forthy

I say in excusing of me

To alle men, that love is fre.

And certes that may no man werne.²

For love is of him selfe so erne,²

It luteth⁴ in a mannes herte.

But that ne shall me nought asterte⁵

To wend for to be worthy

To loven, but in her mercy.

But sir, of that ye wolde mene,

That I shulde other wisd wene

To be beloved than I was,

I am beknowe as in this cas."—

" My gode sone, telle me how."—

" Now list, and I woll telle you,

My gode fader, how it is.

Full ofte it hath befalle er this

Through hope, that was nought
certein,

My waning hath be set in vein

To trust in thing that helpe me
nought

But onlich of min owne thought.

For as it semeth that a bell

Like to the wordes that men tell

Answereth right so, no more ne
lesse,

To you, my fader, I confesse

Such will my wit hath over set,

That what so hope me behet⁶

Full many a time I wene it soth,

But finally no spede it doth.

Thus may I tellen, as I can,

Wening beguileth many a man.

1 *Ina were*, in confusion or doubt.

2 *Werne* refuse 3 *Derne*, secret.

4 *Luteth*, lies hidden.

5 Drive me to think myself worthy of love,
but through her mercy.

6 *Me behet*, promises me.

So hath it me, right wel I wot,
 For if a man wol in a bote
 Whiche is withoute botme rowe,
 He must nedes be overthrowe.
 Right so wening hath fard by me,
 For whan I wende next have be
 As I by my wening caste,
 Than was I furthest atte laste,
 And as a fool my bowe unbende
 Whan all was failed that I wende.
 Forthy, my fader, as of this
 That my wening hath gone amis
 Touchend unto surquederie,
 Yef me my penaunce or I die.
 But if ye wolde in any forme
 Of this mater a tale enforme,
 Which were ayein this Vied set,
 I shulde fare well the bet."—

"My sone, in alle maner wise
 Surquederie is to despise,
 Wherof I finde write thus:—
 The proude knight Capaneus
 He was of suche surquederie,
 That he through his chivalerie
 Upon him self so mochel triste,¹
 That to the goddes him ne liste
 In no quarele to beseche,
 But saide it was an idel speche
 Which cause was of pure drede,
 For lacke of hert and for no nede.
 And upon such presumption
 He held this proude opinion,
 Till atte laste upon a day
 Aboute Thebes, where he lay,
 Whan it of siege was belaine,
 This knight, as the croniques saine,
 In alle mannes sighte there,
 Whan he was proudest in his gere
 And thought how nothing might
 him dere,²
 Full armed with his shield and
 spere

As he the cite wolde assaile,
 God toke him selfe the bataile

1 *Triste*, trusted. 2 *Dere*, hurt.

Ayein his pride, and fro the sky
 A firy thonder sodeinly
 He sende and him to poudre smote.
 And thus the Pride, which was hote
 Whan he most in his strengthe
 wende,

Was brent and lost withouten ende.
 So that it proveth well therfore
 The strength of man is sond lore,¹
 But if² that he it well govrne.
 And over this a man may lerne,
 That eke full ofte time it greveth
 What that a man him self beleveth,
 As though it shulde him well beseme
 That he all other men can deme³
 And hath foryete his owne vice.
 A tale of hem that be so nice
 And feigne hem self to be so wise
 I shall thee telle in suche a wise,
 Wherof thou shalt ensample take,
 That thou no such thing undertake.

I finde upon surquederie,
 How that whilom of Hungarie
 By olde daies was a king
 Wise and honest in alle thing.
 And so befell upon a daie,
 And that was in the month of May,
 As thilke time it was usaunce,
 This king with noble purveiaunce
 Hath for him selfe his chare⁴ arraied,
 Wherin he wolde ride amaied⁵
 Out of the cite for to pleie
 With lordes and with great nobleie
 Of lusty folk that were yonge,
 Where some pleide andsomsonge,
 And some gone and some ride,
 And some prick her horse aside
 And bridlen hem now in now oute.
 The kinge his eye cast aboute,
 Til he was atte laste ware
 And sigh comend ayein his chare

1 *Lore*, lost. 2 *Bit* if, unless.
 3 *Deme*, judge. 4 *Chare*, chariot.
 5 *Amaied* a-Maying. Professor Skeat, in
 explaining this peculiar construction, started
 from the phrase in "Piers Plowman" "they
 gon a begged" for "they go a begging."

Two pilgrimes of so great age,
That lich unto a drie ymage
They weren pale and fade hewed,
And as a busshe, whiche is be-
snewed,

Here berdes weren hore and white,
There was of kinde¹ but a lite
That they ne semen fully dede.

They comen to the king and bede²
Some of his good, pur³ charitd.

And he with great humilite
Out of his chare to grounde lepte
And hem in both his armes kepte
And kist hem bothe foot and honde
Before the lordes of his londe
And yaf hem of his good therto.

And whan he hath this dede do
He goth into his chare ayeine.
Tho⁴ was murmur, tho was dis-
deine,

Tho was compleinte on every side,
They saiden of their owne pride
Echone till other, 'What is this?

Our king hath do this thing amis
So to abesse⁵ his roialte,
That every man it mighte se,
And humbled him in such a wise
To hem that were of none emprise.'

Thus was it spoken to and fro
Of hem that were with him tho
All prively behinde his backe.

Hut to him selfe no man spake.
The kinges brother in presence
Was thilke time, and great offence

He toke therof and was the same
Above all other which moste blame
Upon his lege lord hath laid,

And hath unto the lordes said
Anone as he may time finde,
There shall nothing be left behinde,

That he wol speke unto the king.
Now list what fell upon this thing.

The weder was merie and fair
inough,

Echone with other pleid and lough
And fellen into tales newe,

How that the fresshe floures giewe,
And how the grene leves spronge,
And how that love amonge the
yonge

Began the hertes thanne awake,
And every brid hath chose his
make.

And thus the Maids day to thende
They lede, and home ayein they
wende.

The king was nought so sone come,
That whan he had his chambre
nome,

His brother ne was redy there
And brought a tale unto his ere
Of that he didde such a shame

In hindring of his owne name,
Whan he him selfe wolde dreche¹
That to so vile a pouer wrecche

Himdeignethshewesuch simplesse
Ayein the state of his noblesse.

And saith, he shall it no more use
And that he mot him selfe excuse
Toward his lordes everichone.

The king stood still as any stone
And to his tale an ere he laide
And thoughte more than he saide.

But netheles to that he herde
Well curteisly the king answered
And tolde, it shulde ben amended.

And thus whan that here tale is
ended,

All redy was the bord and cloth,
The king unto his souper goth
Among the lordes to the halle.

And whan they hadde souped alle,
They token leve and forth they go.
The king bethought him selfe tho,

How he his brother may chastie,
That he through his surquederie

1 Of kinde, by nature lite, little.

2 Bede, pray. 3 Pur (pour), for.

4 Tho, then. 5 Abasse, abase.

¹ Dreche, trouble.

Toke upon honde to dispreise
 Humilite, which is to preise,
 And therupon yaf such counseil
 Toward his king, that was nought
 heil,

Wherof to be the better lered
 He thenketh to make him afered.

It fell so, that in thilke daw¹
 There was ordeigned by the lawe
 A trompe with a sterne bieth,
 Which was cleped the Trompe of
 Deth.

And in the court where the king
 was

A certain man this trompe of biass
 Hath in keping and therof serveth,
 That whanalord his dethdeserveth,
 He shall this dredfull trompe blowe
 To-fore his gate, and make it knowe
 How that the jugement is yive
 Of deth, which shall nought be
 foryive.

The king whan it was night anone
 This man assent² and bad him gone
 To trompen at his brothers gate.
 And he, which mot so done algate,
 Goth forth and doth thekingeshest.
 This lord, which herde of this
 tempest

That he to-fore his gate blewe,
 Tho wist he by the lawe and knewe
 That he was sekerliche dede.
 And as of helpe he wist no rede,
 But sende for his frendes all
 And tolde hem how it is befalle.
 And they him axe cause why,
 But he the sothe nought forthy
 Ne wist, and there was sorwe tho.
 For it stood thilke time so,
 This trompe was of such sentence,
 That there ayein no resistance
 They couthe ordeine by no weie,
 That he ne mot algate deie,
 But if so that he may purchase

1 Dawe, day. 2 Assent, bent to.

To get his lege lordes grace.
 Here wittes therupon they caste
 And ben appointed atte laste.
 This lorde a worthy lady had
 Unto his wife, whiche also drad
 Her lordes deth, and children five
 Betwene hem two they had alive,
 That weren yonge and tender of age
 And of stature and of visage
 Right faire and lusty on to se,
 Tho casten they, that he and she
 Forth with their children on the
 morwe,

As they that were full of sorwe,
 All naked but of smock and sheite
 To tendre with the kinges herte
 His grace shulden go to seche
 And pardon of the deth beseche.
 Thus passen they that wofull night,
 And erly whan they sigh it light
 They gonehem forth in suchea wise,
 As thou to-fore hast herd devise,
 All naked but here shertes on
 They wepte and made mchell
 mone.

Here hair hangend about here eres,
 With sobbing and with sory teres
 This lord goth than an humble pas
 That whilom proud and noble was,
 Wherof the cite sore a flight¹
 Of hem that sawen thilke sight.
 And netheless all openly
 With suchweping and with such cry
 Forth with his children and his wife
 He goth to prairie for his life.
 Unto the court whan they be come
 And men therin have hede nome,
 There was no wight, if he hem sigh,
 From water mighte kepe his eye
 For sorwe which they maden tho.
 The king supposeth² of this wo
 And feigneth as he nought ne wiste,
 But netheles at his upriste

1 A flight, was afflicted, grieved
 2 Supposeth, makes believe.

Men tolden him, howe that it ferde.
And whan that he this wonder
herde,

In hast he goth into the halle.
And all at ones down they falle,
If any pite may be founde.
The king, which seeth hem go to
grounde,

Hath axed hem what is the fere,
Why they be so dispuiled there.
His brother said; 'Ha, lord, mercy!
I wote none other cause why,
But only that this night full late
The trompe of deth was at my gate
In token that I shulde deie;
Thus we be come for to preie
That ye my worldes deth respite.'

'Ha, fool, how thou art for to
wite,'¹

The kinge unto his brother saith,
'That thou art of so litel feith,
That only for a trompes soun.
Hath gone dispuiled through the
town

Thou and thy wife in such manere
Forthwith thy children that ben here
In sight of alle men aboute.
For that thou saist, thou art in
doubte²

Of deth which standeth under the
lawe

Of man, and man it may withdrawe,
So that it may perchaunce faile,
Now shalt thou nought forthy mer-
veile,

That I down from my chare alight,
Whan I beheld to-fore my sight
In hem that were of so great age
Min owne deth through here
ymage,

Which God hath set by lawe of
kinde,

Wherof I may no bote³ finde.

For well I wot, suche as they be
Right suche am I in my degre,
Of flesshe and blood, and so shall
deie.

And thus though I that lawe obeie
Of which that kinges ben put under,
It ought ben well the lasse wonder
Than thou, which art withoutenede
For lawe of londe in suche a drede,
Which for to accompte is but a jape
As thing which thou might over-
scape.

Forthy, my brother, after this
I rede that sithen it so is
That thou canst drede a man so
sore,

Drede God with all thin herte more.
For all shall deie and all shall passe,
As well a leon as an asse,
As well a begger as a lorde,
Towardes dethe in one accorde
They shullen stonde.' And in this
wise

The kinge with his wordes wise
His brother taught and all foryve.
Forthy, my sone, if thou wolt live
In Vertue, thou must Vice escheue
And with lowe herte humblesse sue,
So that thou be nought surque-
dous."—

"My fader, I am amorous,
Wherof I wolde you beseche
That ye me some ensample teche,
Which might in Loves cause
sonde."—

"My sone, thou shalt under-
sonde

In Love and other thinges alle,
If that surquederie falle,
It may to him nought well betide
Which useth thilke Vice of Pride,
Which torneth wisdom to wening
And sothfastnesse into lesing
Through foll imagination.
And for thin dnformatidn,

† 1 To wite, to blame. 2 Boubte, fear.
3 Bote, remedy.

That thou this Vice as I thee rede
Escheue shalte, a tale I rede,
Which fell whilom by daies olde,
So as the clerke **Ovide** tolde.

There **mas** whilom a lordes
sone,
Which of his Pride a nice wone¹
Hath caught, that worthy to his
liche²

To sechen all the worldes riche
There was no woman for to love.
So high he set him selfe above
Of stature and of beaute bothe,
That him thought alle women lothe.
So was there no comparison
As towarde his condition.

This yonge lord Narcizus hight.
No strength of Love bowe might
His herte, whiche is unaffiled.³
But atte laste he was beguiled.
For of the goddes purveiaunce
It felle him on a day perchaunce,
That he in all his proude fare
Unto the forest gan to fare
Amonge other, that there were,
To hunten and disporte him there.
And whan he cam into the place,
Where that he wolde make his
chace,

The houndes weren in a throwe
Uncoupled and the homes blowe,
The grete herte anone was founde
With swifte feet set on the grounde.
And he with spore in horse side
Him hasteth faste for to ride,
Till alle men be left behinde.
And as he rode under a linde
Beside a roche, as I thee telle,
He sigh where spronge a lusty
welle.

The day was wonder hote withalle,
And suche a thirst was on him
falle,

That he must outhere deie or drinke.
And downe he light and by the
brinke

He tide his hors unto a braunche
And laid him lowe for to staunche
His thirst. And as he cast his
loke

Into the welle and hede toke,
He sigh the like of his visage
And wende there were an ymage
Of suche a nimphe, as tho was say,¹
Wherof that love his herte assay
Began, as it was after sene
Of his sotie² and made him wene
It were a woman, that he sigh.³
The more he cam the welle nigh,
The nere cam she to him ayein,
So wist he never what to sain ;
For whan he wepte he sigh her
wepe,

And whan he cried he toke good
kepe,

The same worde she cried also;
And thus began the newe wo,
That whilom was to him sostraunge.
Tho made him Love an harde
eschaunge

To set his herte and to beginne
Thing whiche he might never winne.
And ever amonge he gan to loute,⁴
And praith that she to him come
oute.

And other while he goth afer
And other while he draweth ner
And ever he founde her in one place.
He wepeth, he crieth, he axeth
grace,

There as he mighte gete none.
So that ayein a roche of stone,
As he that knewe none other rede,
He smote him self til he was
dede.

¹ Wone, custom. ³ Liche, body.

³ Unaffiled, attached to no one.

¹ Tho was say, then was seen.

² Sotic, folly. ³ Sigh, saw,

⁴ Loute, bow.

Wherof the nimphes of the welles
 And other that there weren elles
 Unto the wodes belongende
 The body, which was dede ligende,
 For pure pite that they have
 Under grave they begrave.¹
 And than out of his sepulture
 There spronge anone peraventure
 Of floures suche a wonder sight,
 That men ensample take might
 Upon the dedes whiche he dede.
 And tho was sene in thilke stede,
 For in the winter fressh and faire
 The floures ben, whiche is contraire
 To kinde, and so was the folie
 Which felle of his Surquederie.

"Thus he which Love had in
 disdeigne,

Worst of all other was beseine,
 And as he set his prise most hie,
 He was lest worthy in Loves eye
 And most bejaped in his wit,
 Wherof the remembraunce is yit;
 So that thou might ensample take,
 And eke all other, for his sake."—

"My fader, as touchend of me
 This Vice I thanke for to fle,
 Whiche of his wening overthroweth
 And namelich² of thing which
 groweth

In Loves cause or well or wo,
 Yet prided I me never so.
 But wolde God that grace sende,
 That toward me my lady wende
 As I towards hire wene,
 My love shulde so be sene
 There shulde go no Pride a place.
 But I am fer fro thilke grace
 And for to speke of time nowe
 So mote I suffre and prate you
 That ye woll axe on other side,
 If there be any point of Pride
 Wherof it nedeth me to be
 shrive."—

¹ Begrave, bury. ² Namelich, especially.

" My sone, God it thee foryive,
 If thou have any thing misdo
 Touchend of this, but evermo
 Ther is another yet of Pride
 Which couthe never his wordes
 hide,
 That he ne wold him selfe avaunt.
 There may nothing his tunge daunt,
 That he ne clappeth as a belle,
 Wherof if thou wolt that I telle
 It is behovely for to here,
 So that thou might thy tungd stere
 Toward the worlde and stonde in
 grace,
 Which lacketh ofte in many a place
 To him that can nought sitte stille,
 Whiche elles shuld have all his
 willle

Boasting.

The nice cleped Avauntance¹
 With Pride hath take his acquein-
 tance,
 So that his owne prise he lasseth
 Whan he such mesure overpasseth,
 That he his owne herald is.
 That first was wel is thanne mis,
 That was thankworthy is than
 blame,
 And thus the worship of his name
 Through pride of his avauntarie
 He torneth into vilenie.
 I rede, how that this proude Vice
 Hath thilke wind in his office
 Which through the bastes that he
 bloweth
 The mannes fame he overthroweth
 Of vertue which shulde dies
 springe
 Unto the worldes knoueleching.
 But he fordeth it all to sore,
 And right of such a maner lore
 There ben lovers ; forthy if thou
 Art one of hem, tell and say how,

¹ Avauntance, vaunting, boasting.

Whan thou hast taken any thinge
Of loves yefte or ouche¹ or ringe,
Or toke upon thee for the colde
Some goodly word that thee was
tolde

Of frendly chere or token or letter,
Wherof thin herte was the better,
Of that she sende thee gretinge,
Hast thou for pride of thy likinge
Made thin avaunt where as thee
liste?"—

"I wolde, fader, that ye wiste
My conscience lith not here.
Yet had I never such inatere,
Wherof min herte might amende,
Nought of so mochel as she sende
By mouth and saide, 'grete him
wel.'

And thus for that there is no dele
Wherof to make min avaunt,
It is to reson accordaunt,
That I may never, but I lie,
Of love make avauntarie.

I wote nought what I shulde have do
If that I had encheson so
As ye have said here many one ;
But I found cause never none,
But Daunger which me welnigh
slough.

Therof I couthe telle inough
And of none other avauntaunce.
Thus nedeth me no repentaunce.
Now axeth further of my life,
For herof am I nought gultife."—

"My sone, I am wel paidwithall.
For wite it wel in speciall,
That love of his verray justice
Above all other ayein this Vice
At alle times most debateth
With all his hert and most it hateth.
And eke in alle maner wise
Avauntarie is to despise,
As by ensample thou might wite,
Whiche I finde in the bokes write.

¹ Ouhe, jewel in its setting.

Of hem that we Lombardes now
calle

Albinus was the firste of alle
Which bare crowne of Lombardie,
And was of great chivalerie
In werre ayeinst divers kinges.
So felle it amonge other thinges
That he that time a werre had
With Gurmund which the Geptes
lad.'

And was a mightie kinge also.
But nethdles it fell him so
Albinus slough him in the felde,
Ther halpe him nouthur spere ne
shelde,
That he ne smote his heved of
thanne,

Wherof he toke away the panne,
Of whiche he saide he wolde make
A cuppe for Gurmundes sake
To kepe and drawe into memoire
Of his bataile the victoire.
And thus when he the felde had
wonne,

The londe anon was overronne
And sesed in his owne honde ;
Where he Gurmundes doughter
fonde,

Which maicle Rosemunde hight,
And was in every mannes sight
A fair, a fressh, a lusty one.

His herte fell to her anone,
And suche a love on her he cast,
That he her wedded atte last.
And after that long time in reste
With her he dwelleth, and to the
beste

They love eche other wonder wele.
But she that kepeth the blinds'
whele,

Venus, when they be most above
In all the hottest of her love,
Her whele she torneth : and they
felle

In the maner, as I shall telle.
This king which stood in all his
welth

Of pees, of worship and of helth,
And felt him on no *side* greved
As he that hath his worlde acheved,
Tho thought he wolde a feste make
And that was for his wives sake,
That she the lordes atte feste,
That were obeisaunt to his heste,
May knowe. And so forth there
upon

He lette ordeigne and send anon
By letters and by messengers
And warned all his officers,
That every thing be well arraied,
The greate stedes were assaied
For justinge and for tornement,
And many a perled garnement
Embrouded was ayein the day.
The lordes in her beste array
Be comen at the time set;
One justeth well, an other bet,
And other white they torney;
And thus they casten care away
And token lustes upon honde.
And after thou shalt understonde
To mete into the kinges halle
They comen, as they be bidden alle.
And whan they were set and served
Than after, as it was deserved
To hem that worthy knightes were,
So as they setten here and there,
The prise was yove and spoken out
Among the heralds all about.
And thus benethe and eke above
All was of armes and of love,
Wherof abouten atte bordes
Men had many sondry wordes,
That of the mirthe which they made
The kinge him self began to glade
Within his hert and toke a Pride
And sigh the cuppe stonde aside,
Which made was of Gurmundes
hed,

As ye have herd, when he was ded,
And was with golde and riche stones
Beset and bounde for the nones,
And stode upon a fote on highte
Of burned golde, and with great
slighte

Of werkmanship it was begrave
Of such worke as it shulde have
And was polissed eke so clene
That no signe of the scull was sene
But as it were a gripes¹ eye.
The king bad bere his cuppe away
Which stood before himontheborde
And fettd thilke.² Upon his worde
The sculle is fette and wine ther-
inne,

Wherof he bad his wife beginne :
' Drink with thy fader, dame.' he
said.

And she to his bidding obeid
And toke the sculle, and what her list
She drank, as she which nothing wist
What cup it was. And than all out
The kinge in audience about
Hath tolde, it was her faders sculle,
So that the lordes knowe shulle
Of his bataile a soth wittenesse,
And made avaunt through what
prowesse

He hath his wives love wonne,
Whiche of the sculle hath so be-
gonne.

Tho was there mochel pride alofte,
They spoken all, and she was softe,
Thenkend on thilke unkinde Pride,
Of that her lord, so nigh her side,
Avaunteth him that he hath slaine
And piked out her faders braine
And of the sculle had made a cuppe.
She suffreth all till they were uppe.
And tho she hath sekenesse feigned
And goth to chambre and hath
compleigned

¹ Gripes, eagle.

² Fette thilke, fetch that one.

Unto a maide which she triste,¹
 So that none other wight it wiste.
 This maide Glodeside is hote,
 To whom this lady hath behote²
 Of ladship all that she can
 To vengen her upon this man,
 Which did her drink³ in suche a
 plite

Among hem alle for despite
 Of her and of her fader bothe,
 Wherof her thoughtes ben so
 wrothe,

She saith, that she shall nought be
 glad,

Till that she se him so bestad
 That he no more make avaunt.
 And thus they felle in covenaut,
 That they accorden atte laste
 With suche wiles as they caste,
 That they wol get of here accorde
 Some orped⁴ knight to slethis lorde.
 And with this sleighte they beginne,
 How they Helmege mighten winne,
 Which was the kinges boteler,
 A proude and lusty bachiler,
 And Glodeside he loveth hote.

And she to make him more assote⁵
 Her love graunteth, and by nighte
 They shape how they to-gider
 mighte

A bedde mete. And done it was
 This same night. And in this cas
 The queue her self the night
 seconde

Went in her stede and there she
 fonde

A chambre derke without light
 And goth to bedde to this knight.
 And he to kepe his obeisaunce
 To love doth his obeisaunce
 And weneth it be Glodeside.
 And she than after lay a side

¹ *Triste*, trusted.

² *Behote*, promised.

³ *Did her drink*, caused her to drink.

⁴ *Orped*, bold. ⁵ *Assote*, to dote.

And axeth him what he hath do,
 And who she was she tolde him tho
 Andsaid: 'Helmege, I am thy quene,
 Now shall thy love well be sene
 Of that thou hast thy wille wrought;
 Or it shall sore ben aboutg,
 Or thou shah worche, as I thee saie.
 And if thou wolt by suche a waie
 Do my plesaunce and holde it stille,
 For ever I shall ben at thy wille
 Bothe I and all min heritage.'

Anone the wilde loves rage,
 In which no man him can governe,
 Hath made him that he can nought
 werne,¹

But felle all hole to her assent,
 And thus the whele is all miswent,
 The which Fortune hath upon
 honde.

For how that ever it after stonde,
 They shope among hem such a wile
 The king was ded within a while.
 So slyly came it nought aboute,
 That they ne ben discovered out,
 So that it thought hem for the beste
 To fle, for there was no reste.
 And thus the tresor of the kinge
 They trusse, and mochel other
 thinge,

And with a certaine felaship
 They fled and went away by ship
 And helde her right cours from
 thenne

Till that they comen to Ravenne,
 Where they the dukes helpe sought.
 And he, so as they him besought,
 A place graunteth for to dwelle.
 But after, whan he herde telle
 Of the maner how they have do,
 The duke let shape for hem so,
 That of a poison which they drunke
 They hadden that they have be-
 swunke.²

¹ *Werne*, refuse.

² *Beswunke*, laboured for.

And all this made Avaunt of Pride.
 Good is therefore a man to hide
 His ownd prise, for if he speke,
 He may lighty his thanke breke.
 In armes lith none avauntance
 To him, which thenketh his name
 avaunce

And be renomd of his dede.
 And also who that thenketh tospede
 Of Love he may nought him avaunte.
 For what man thilke Vice haunte,
 His purpose shall full ofte faile.
 In armes he that woll travaile
 Or elles Loves grace atteigne,
 His lose tunge he mot restreigne,
 Whiche bereth of his hondur the
 keie.

"Forthy my sone, in alle waie
 Take right good hede of this
 matere."—

"I thonke' you, my fader dere,
 This scole is of a gentil lore.
 And if there be ought elles more
 Of Pride whiche I shall escheue,
 Nowe axeth forth, and I woll sue!
 What thing, that ye me woll en-
 forme."—

"My sone, yet in other forme
 There is a Vice of Prides lore,
 Which like an hawk whan he will
 sore,

Fleeth up on high in his delices
 After the likinge of his vices
 And woll no mannes reson knowe
 Till he down falle and overthrowe.
 This vied Vaynglorie is hote,
 Wherof, my sone, I thee behote
 To trete and speke in suche a wise,
 That thou thee might better avise.

Vainglory.

The proude Vice of Veinglorie
 Remembreth nought of purgatorie,

¹ Sue, follow.

His worldes joies ben so grete,
 Him thenketh of heven no beyetc.¹
 This lives pompe is all his pees,
 Yet shall he deie netheles,
 And therof thenketh he but a lite,²
 For all his lust is to delite
 In newe thinges, proude and veine,
 Als ferforth as he may atteine.
 I trowe, if that he mighte make
 His body newe, he wolde take
 A newe forme and leve his olde.
 For what thing that he may beholde
 The which to comun use is straunge,
 Anone his olde guise chaunge
 He woll, and falls' therupon
 Lich unto the camelien,
 Whiche upon every sondry hewe
 That he beholt he mote newe
 His colour; and thus unavisd
 Ful ofte time he stant disguised.
 More jolif than the brid in Maie,
 He maketh him ever fresshand gaie
 And doth all his array disguise,
 So that of him the newe guise
 Of lusty folke all other take.
 And eke he can carolles make,
 Roundel, balade and virelay.
 And with all this, if that he may
 Of lovd gete him avauntage
 Anone he wext of his corage
 So over glad, that of his ende
 He thenketh there is no deth
 comende.

For he hath than at alle tide
 Of love such a maner Pride,
 Him thenketh his joy is endeles.

"Now shrive thee, sone, in
 Goddess pees
 And of thy love tell me plein,
 If that thy glorie hath be so
 vayne."—

"My fader, as touchend of all
 I may nought well ne nought ne
 shall

¹ Beyete, gain. ² Lite, little.

Of vayn glorie excuse me,
 That I ne have for love be
 The better addressed and arraied.
 And also I have ofte assaied
 Roundel, balade and virelay
 For her on whom min herte lay,
 To make and also for to peinte
 Carolles with my wordes queinte
 To sette my purpos alofte.
 And thus I sang hem forth full ofte
 In halle and eke in chambre aboute
 And made merie among the route :
 But yet ne ferde I nought the bet.
 Thus was my glorie in vayn beset
 Of all the joie that I made.
 For when I wolde with her glade
 And of her love songes make,
 She saide, it was nought for her
 sake,
 And liste nought my songes here,
 Ne when what the wordes were.
 So for to speke of min array
 Yet couth I never be so gay
 Ne so well make a songe of love,
 Wherof I mighte ben above
 And have encheson¹ to be glad.
 But rather I am ofte adrad
 For sorwe, that she saith me nay.
 And netheles I woll nought say,
 That I nam glad on other side
 For fame that can nothing hide.
 All day woll bringe unto min ere
 Of that men speken here and there,
 How that my lady berth the prise,
 How she is faire, how she is wise,
 How she is womanlich of chere.
 Of all this thing whan I may here,
 What wonder is though I be fain.
 And eke whan I may here sain
 Tidinges of my ladis hele,
 All though I may nought with her
 dele,
 Yet am I wonder glad of that.
 For whan I wote her good estate,

1 Encheson, occasion.

As for that time I dare well swere,
 None other sorwe may me dere.
 Thus am I gladed in this wise.
 But, fader, of your lores wise,
 Of whiche ye be fully taught,
 Now tell me if ye thenketh ought,
 That I therof am for to wite."¹—
 "Of that there is, I thee acquite,
 My sone," he saide, "and for thy
 good
 I wolle that thou understood,
 For I thenke upon this matere
 To tell a tale, as thou shalt here,
 How that ayein this proude Vice
 The highe God of his justice
 Is wrothe and great vengeance
 doth.
 Nowe herken a tale, that is soth,
 Though it be nought of Loves
 kinde.
 A great ensample thou shalt finde
 This Veinglorie for to fle,
 Whiche is so full of vanite.
 There was a king, that mochel
 might,
 Which Nabugodonosor hight,
 Of whom that I spake here to-fore.
 Yet in the bible this name is bore,
 For all the worlde in thorient
 Was hole at his commaundement,
 As than of kinges to his liche
 Was none so mighty ne so riche,
 To his empire and to his lawes
 As who saith all in thilke dawes
 Were obeisaunt and tribute bere,
 As though he god of erthe were.
 With strengthe he putte kinge'
 under
 And wrought of Pride many a
 wonder,
 He was so full of Veinglorie,
 That he ne hadde no memorie,
 That there was any God but he
 For pride of his prosperite.

1 To wite, to blame.

Till that the highe King of Kinges,
Which seeth and knoweth alle
things,

Whose eye may nothings asterolte
The privetes of mannes herte,¹
They speke and sounen in his ere
As though they loude windes were,
He toke vengeance of his Pride.
But for he wolde a while abide
To loke if he wolde him amende,
To him afore token he sende.
And that was in his slepe by night
This proude kinge a wonder sight
Had in his sweven² there he lay.
Him thought upon a mery day,
As he beheld the world aboute,
A tre full growe he sigh³ there oute
Which stood the world amidde
even,

Whos heichte straught up to the
heven.

The leues weren faire and large,
Of fruit it bore so ripe a charge,
That alle men it mighte fede.
He sigh also the bowes sprede
Above all erth, in which were
The kinde of alle briddes there.
And eke him thought he sigh also
The kinde of alle bestes go
Under the tre abouten round
And fedden hem upon the ground.
As he this wonder stood and sigh,
Him thought he herdevois on high
Criende, and saide aboven alle :
'Hewe down this tree and let it falle,
The leues let defoule in haste
And do the fruit destruye and waste;
And let ofshreden every braunche,
But atte roote be let it staunch.
Whan all his Pride is cast to
grounde

The roote shall be faste bounde;

1 From whose eye the secrets of man's heart
may in no wise escape.

2 Sweven, dream.

3 Sigh saw.

And shall no mannes herte bere,
But every lust he shall forbere
Of man, and lich an oxe his mete
Of gras he shall purchase and etc,
Till al the waters of the heven
Have wasshen him by times seven,
So that he be through-knowe
aright

What is the hevenliche might,
And be made humble to the wille
Of Him which may all save and
spille.'

This king out of his sweven ab-
raide¹

And he upon the morwe it saide
Unto the clerkes which he hadde.
But none of hem the soth aradde,
Was none his sweven couth undo.
And it stood thilke time so,
This kinge had in subjection
Judee and of affection

Above al other one Daniel
He loveth, for he couthe well
Divine that none other couthe.
To him were alle things couthe,
As he it hadde of Goddes grace.
He was before the kinges face
Assent and bode² that he shulde³
Upon the point the kinge of tolde³
The fortune of his sweven ex-
pounde,

As it shulde afterward be founde.
Whan Daniel this sweven herde,
He stood long time, er he answerde,
And made a wonder hevychere.⁴
The king toke hede of his manere
And bad him telle that he wiste
As he to whome he mochel triste,⁵
And said, he wolde nought be
wroth.

But Daniel was wonder loth

¹ Awoke suddenly from his dream.

² Sent for and commanded.

³ Oftolde, told of.

⁴ Hevychere, sad face.

⁵ Triste, trusted.

And said : ' Upon thy fomen alle,
 Sir king, thy sweven mote falle.
 And netheles touchend of this
 I woll thee tellen howe it is,
 And what disese is to thee shape,
 God wote if thou it shall escape.
 The highe tre which thou hast sein,
 With lef and fruit so wel besein,
 The which stood in the world
 amiddes,
 So that the bestes and the briddes
 Governed were of him alone,
 Sir King, betokeneth thy persdne
 Which stonde above all erthely
 thinges.
 Thus regnen under thee the kinges
 And all the people unto thee louteth¹
 And all the worlde thy person
 douteth,²
 So that with vein honour deceived
 Thou hast the reverence weived³
 Fro him whiche is thy kinge above,
 That thou for drede ne for love
 Wolt nothing knownen of this God,
 Which now for thee hath made a
 rod,
 Thy Vaynglorie and thy folie
 With grete peines to chastie.
 And of the vois thou herdest speke,
 Which bad the bowes for to breke
 And hewe and felle down the tre,
 That word belongeth unto thee.
 Thy regne shall be overthrowe,
 And thou despoiled for a throwe.⁴
 But that the roote shulde stonde,
 By that thou shalt wel understonde,
 There shall abiden of thy regne
 A time ayein when thou shall regne.
 And eke of that thou herdest saie
 To take a mannes hert aweie
 And sette there a bestiall,
 So that he lich an oxe shall

1 *Louteth*, bows,

2 *Douteth*, fears.

3 *Weived*, put aside.

4 *Throwe*, space of time.

Pasture, and that he be bereined
 By times seven and sore peined,
 Till that he knowe his Goddes
 mightes,
 Than shall hestond ayein uprightes.
 All this betokeneth thine estate,
 Which now with God is in debate :
 Thy mannes forme shall be lassed,
 Till seven yere ben overpassed,
 And in the likenesse of a beste
 Of gras shall be thy roiall feste,
 The wedder shall upon thee rayne.
 And understonde, that all this payne
 Which thou shalt sufifre thilke tide,
 Is shape all only for thy Pride
 Of Vaynglorie and of the sinne
 Which thou hast longe stondeninne.
 So upon this condicion
 Thy sweven hath exposicion.
 But er this thing befallen in dede,
 Amende thee, this wold I rede,
 Yif and departe¹ thin almesse,
 Do mercy forth with rightwisnesse,
 Beseche and praie the highe grace,
 For so thou might thy pees pur-
 chase
 With God and stonde in good ac-
 corde.'
 But Pride is loth to leve his lorde
 And wol nought suffre Humilite
 With him to stonde in no degre.
 And whan a ship hath lost his stere,
 Is none so wise that may him stere
 Ayein the wawes in a rage.
 This proude king in his corage
 Humilite hath so forlore.
 That for no sweven he sigh to-fore
 Ne yet for all that Daniel
 Him hath counsiled every dele,
 He let it passe out of his minde
 Through Vaynglorie, and as the
 blinde
 He seth no weie er him be wo.
 And fel withinne a time so,

1 *Depart*, divide, distribute.

As he in Babiloine wente,
 The Vanite of Pride him hente.¹
 His hert aros of vayn glorie,
 So that he drough to memorie
 His lordship and his regalie
 With wordes of surquederie.
 And whan that he him most avaun-
 teth,
 That Lord, which Vaynglorid daun-
 teth,
 All sodeinlich, as who saith treis,²
 Where that he stood in his paleis
 He toke him fro the mennes sight.
 Was none of hem so ware that might
 Set eye where that he becom.
 And thus was he from his kingdom
 Into the wilde forest drawe,
 Where that the mighty Goddes lawe
 Through his power did him trans-
 forme
 Fro man into a bestes forme.
 And lich an oxe under the fote
 He graseth as he nedes mote
 To geten him his lives fode.
 Tho thought him colde grasses
 goode,
 That whilome ete the hote spices,
 Thus was he torned fro delices.
 The wine which he was wont to
 drinke,
 He toke than of the welles brinke
 Or of the pit or of the slough,
 It thought him thanne good inough.
 In stede of chambres well arraied
 He was than of a bussh well paid;
 The harde ground he lay upon,
 For other pilwes had he non.
 The stormes and the reines fall,
 The windes blowe upon him all,
 He was tormented day and night.
 Such was the highe Goddes might,
 Till seven yere an ende toke.
 Upon him self tho gan he loke:

1 *Hente*, seized.

2 *As who seith treis*, in a trice.

In stede of mete gras and streis ;
 In stede of handes longe cleis¹
 In stede of man a bestes like ;²
 He sigh,³ and than he gan to sike⁴
 For cloth of golde and of perrie.⁵
 Which him was wont to magnifie.
 When he beheld his cote of heres
 He wepte and with full wofull teres
 Up to the heaven he caste his chere⁶
 Wepend and thought in this manere ;
 Though he no wordes might ewinne,
 Thus said his hert and spake
 withinne:

¹ O mighty God, that all hast
 wrought
 And all might bring ayein to
 nought,
 Now knowe I wei but all of thee
 This world hath no prosperite,
 In thin aspect ben alle aliche
 The pouer man and eke the riche,
 Withouthe thee there may no wight,
 And thou above all other might.
 O mighty Lord, toward my vice
 Thy mercy medle⁷ with justice,
 And I woll make a covaunt
 That of my life the remenaunt
 I shall it by thy grace amende
 And in thy lawe so dispende,
 That Vaynglorie I shall escheue,
 And bowe unto thin heste, and sue
 Humilite, and that I vowe.⁸
 And so thenkend he gan down
 bowe,
 And though him lacke vois of
 speche,
 He gan up with his fete areche
 And wailend in his bestly Steven⁸
 He made his plaint unto the heaven.
 He kneleth in his wise and braieth
 To seche mercy and assaieth

1 *Cleis*, claws. 2 *Like*, body.

3 *Sigh*, saw. 4 *Sike*, sigh,

5 *Perrie*, precious stones.

6 *Chere*, countenance.

7 *Medle*, mix, join. 8 *Steven*, voice.

His God, which made him nothing
straunge.¹

Whan that he sigh his Pridd
chaunge

Anone as he was humble and tame
He found toward his God the same,
And in a twinkeling of a loke

His mannes forme ayein he toke
And was reformed to the regne
In whiche that he was wont to
regne,

So that the Pride of Vaynglorie
Ever after out of memorie
He lett it passe. And thus is
shewed

What is to ben of Pride unthewed ²
Ayein the highe Goddes lawe,
To whom no man may be feldewe.

"Forthy my sone, take good
hede

So for to lede thy manhede,
Thatt thou ne be nought lich a beste.
But if thy life shall ben honeste
Thou must Humblesse take on
honde,

For thanne might thou siker stonde,
And for to speke it other wise
A proud man can no love assise.³
For though a woman wolde him
plese,

His Pride can nought ben at ese.
There may no man to mochel blame
A Vice which is for to blame.

Forthy men shulden nothing hide
That mighte fall in blame of Pride,
Whiche is the worste Vice of alle,
Wherof so as it was befall

The tale I thenke of a cronique
To telle, if that it may thee like,
So that thou might Humblesse sue
And eke the Vice of Pride escheue,

¹ Showed himself no whit estranged—did not turn from him.

² *Unthowed*, showing want of discipline against the law of the high God to whom, &c.

³ *Assise*, *be* in session with.

Wherof the glorie is fa
vaine,

Which God him self hath
disdeine,

That though it mounthe forathrowe,¹
It shall down falle and overthrowe.

Akingwhilomwasyongeand
wise,

The which set of his wit great prise.
Of depe ymaginations

And straunge interpretations,
Problemes and demaundes eke
His wisdom was to finde and seke,
Wherof he wolde in sondry wise
Opposen hem that weren wise.

But none of hem it mighte bere
Upon his word to yive answer
Out taken² one, which was' a
knight,

To him was every thing so light,
That al so sone as he hem herde
The kinges wordes he answerde,
What thing the king him axe wolde,
Whereof anone the trouth he tolde.
The king somdele had an envie
And thought he wolde his witter
plie

To sete some conclusion,
Which shulde be confusion
Unto this knight, so that the name
And of wisdom the highe fame
Toward him selfe he wolde winne.
And thus of all his wit withinne
This king began to studie and muse
What straunge mater he might use
The knightes wittes to confounde,
And atte last he hath it founde:
And for the knight anon he sente,
That he shall telle what he mente.
Upon thre points stood the matere
Of questions as thou shalte here.

" The firste point of alle thre
Was this: ' What thing in his degre

¹ *Throwe*, space of time.

² *Out taken*, except.

Of all this world hath nede lest
And yet men helpe it allthermost.¹

The seconde is : 'What moste
is worth
And of costage is lest put forth.'

The thrid is : 'Which is of most
cost

And lest is worth and goth to lost.
The king these thre demaundes
axeth,

To the knight this law he taxeth,
That he shall gone arid comen ayein
Thethriddeweke andtell him pleine
To every point, what it amounteth.
And if so be that he miscounteth
To make in his answer a faile,
There shall none other thinge
availe,

The king saith, but he shall be dede
And lese his goodes and his hede.
This knight was sory of this thinge
And wolde excuse him to the kinge;
But he ne wolde him nought forbere,
And thus the knight of his answer
Goth home to take avisement.

But after his entendement
The more he cast his wit aboute,
The more he stant therof in double.
Tho wist he well the kinges herte,
That he the deth ne shulde asterte²
And suche a sorwe to him hath take,
That gladship he hath all forsake.
He thoughte first upon his life,
And after that upon his wife,
Upon his children eke also,
Of whiche he had doughteres two.
The yongest of hem had of age
Fourtene yere, and of visage
She was right faire and of stature
Lich to an hevenlich figure,
And of maner and goodly speche ;
Though men wolde alle londes
seche,

¹ Allthermost, most of all.

² Averte, escape from.

They shulden nought have founde
her like.

She sigh her fader sorwe and sike
And wiste nought the cause why.
So cam she to him prively
And that was, wher he made his
mone

Within a gardin all him one.¹
Upon her knees she gan down falle
With humble herte and to him calle
And saide : 'O goode fader dere,
Why make ye thus hevy chere
And I wot nothinge how it is ?
And well ye knowd, fader, this,
What aventvire that you felle
Ye might it saufly to me telle,
For I have ofte herd you saide,
That ye such truste have on me
laide,

That to my sister ne to my brother
In all this worlde ne to none other
Ye durste telle a private
So well, my fader, as to me.
Forthy,- my fader, I you praie
Ne casteth nought that hert awuie,
For I am she, that wolde kepe
Your honour.' And with that to
wepe

Her eye may nought be forbore,
She wissheth for to ben unbore,
Er that her fader so mistriste
To tellen her of that he wiste.
And ever among 'Mercy' she cride,
That he ne shulde his counseil
hide

From hire, that so wolde him good
And was so nigh in flesshe and
blood.

So that, with weping, atte laste
His chere³ upon his childe he caste
And sorwefulty to that she praide
He tolde his tale and thus he saide :

¹ All him one. by himself alone.

² Forthy, therefore.

³ Cherc, countenance.

' The sorwe, doughter, which I
make
Is nought all only for my sake,
But for thee bothe and for you alle.
For suche a chaunce is me befallē,
That I shall er this thridde day
Lese¹ all that ever I lese may,
My life and all my good therto.
Therefore it is I sorwe so.'

' What is the cause, alas,' quod
she,

' My fader, that ye shulden be
Dedeanddestruied in sucheawise?'
And he began the points devise,²
Which as the king tolde him by
mouthe

And said her plainly, that he couthe
Answdren to no point of this.

And she, that hereth howe it is,
Her counseil yaf and saide tho³

' My fader, sithen⁴ it is so,
That ye can se none other weie,
But that ye must nedes deie,
I wolde pray you of o thinge,—
Let me go with you to the kinge,
And ye shall make him under-
stonde,

How ye, my wittes for to fonde,⁵
Have laid your answerē upon me,
And telleth him in such degre
Upon my worde ye wol abide
To life or deth what so betide.

For yet perchaunce I may purchase
With some good word the kingds
grace,

Your life and eke your good to save.
For ofte shall a woman have
Thing whiche a man may nought
areche.⁶

Thefader herd his daughtersspeche
And thought there was no reson in,
And sigh his owne life to winne

He couthe done him self no cure.
So better him thought in aventure
To put his life and all his good,
Than in the maner as it stood
His life incertein for to lese.
And thus thenkend he gan to chese¹
To do the counseil of his maid
And toke the purpose, which she
said.

The day was comen and forth they
gon,

Unto the court they come anon,
Where as the kinge in his jugement
Was set, and hath this knight assent.
Arraied in her beste wise

This maiden with her wordes wise
Her fader ledde by the honde
Into the place, where he fonde
The king with other which he wolde,
And to the king knelend he tolde
As he enformed was to-fore,

And praith the king, that he ther-
fore

His daughters wordes wolde take,
And saith that he woll undertake
Upon her wordes for to stonde.

Tho was ther great merveile on
honde,

That he, which was so wise a knight,
His life upon so yonge a wight
Besette wolde in jeopartie,
And many it helden for folie.

But at the laste netheles
The king commaundeth ben in
pees,

And to this maide he cast his chere
And saide, he wolde her tald here,
And bad her speke, and she began:
' My lege lord, so as I can.'

Quod she, 'the pointes which I
herde,

They shull of reson ben answerde.
The first I understonde is this,
What thinge of all the worlde it is,

1 Chese, choose.

1 Lese, lose.

2 Devise, relate.

3 Tho, then.

4 Sithen, since.

5 Fonde, try.

6 Areche, reach to,

Which men most helpe and hath
lest nede.

My lege lord, this wolde I rede
The erthe it is, whiche evermo
With marines labour is bego
As well in Winter as in Maie.
The manners honde doth what he
may

To helpe it forth and make it riche,
And forthy men it delve and diche
And eren¹ it with strength of
plough,

Wher it hath of him self inough
So that his nede is atte leste.
For every man and birde and beste
Of flour and gras and roote and
rinde

And every thing by way of kinde
Shall sterve,² and erthe it shall be-
come;

As it was out of erthe nome
It shall to therthe torne ayein.
And thus I may by reson sein
That erthe is moste nedeles
And most men helpe it netheles,
So that, my lord, touchend of this
I have answerde how that is.

'That other point I understood,
Which most is worth and most is
good

And costeth lest a man to kepe,
My lorde, if ye woll take kepe,
I say it is Humilite,
Through whiche the high Trinite
As for deserte of pure Love
Unto Marie from above
Of that he knewe her humble entente
His owne sone adown he sente,
Above all other and³ her he chese
For that vertu which bodeth pees.
So that I may by reson calle
Humilite most worthe of alle,

¹ Eren, till. ² Sterve die.

³ And he chose her above all other. "And" used in the middle of a clause, as we might now use "also."

And lest it costeth to mainteine
In all the worlde, as it is seine.
For who that hath humblesse on
honde

He bringeth no werres into londe,
For he desireth for the best
To setten every man in reste.
Thus with your highe reverence
Me thenketh that this evidence
As to this point is suffisaunt.

'And touchend of the reme-
naunt,
Whiche is the thridde of your
axinges,

What lest is worth of alle thinges
And costeth most, I telle it Pride,
Which may nought in the Heven
abide.

For Lucifer with hem that felle
Bar Pride with him into helle.
There was Pride of to grete cost,
Whan he for Pride hath Heven
lost;

And after that in paradise
Adam for Pride lost his prise
In middel-erth. And eke also
Pride is the cause of alle wo,
That all the world ne may suffice
To staunche of Pride the reprise.¹
Pride is the heved² of all sinne,
Which wasteth all and may nought
winne.

Pride is of every mis³ the pricke,
Pride is the worste of alle wicke,
And costeth most and lest is worth
In place where he hath his forth.

'That have I said that I woll
say
Of min answer and to you pray,
My lege lorde, of your office,
That yesuch grace and suche justice
Ordeigne for my fader here
That after this whan men it here,

¹ Reprise, reproach. ² Heved, head.

³ Mis, thing amiss; wrong

The world therof may speke good.
The king, which reson understood

And hath all herde how she hath said,

Was inly glad and so well paid,
That all his wrath is over go.
And he began to loke tho
Upon this maiden in the face,
In which he found so mochel grace,
That all his prise on her he laide
In audience and thus he saide:

¹ My faire maide, well thee be
Of thin answer, and eke of thee
Me liketh well, and as thou wilte
Forgive be thy faders gilte.
And if thou were of such ligndge,
That thou to me were of parage
And that thy fader were a pere,
As he is now a bachelere,
So siker as I have a life,
Thou sholdest thanne be my wife.
But this I saidnethéles,
That I woll shape thin encrease,
What wordes good that thou wolt
crave

Are of my yift, and thou shalt have.'
And she the king with wordes
wise

Knelende thonketh in this wise :
' My lege lord, god mot you quite.¹
My fader here hath but a lite
Of warison,² and that he wende
Had all be lost, but now amende
He may well through your noble
grace.'

With that the king right in his
place
Anon forth in that fresshe hete
An erldome, which than of eschete
Was late falle into his honde,
Unto this knight, with rent and
londe,

¹ Quite, requite.

² Little of reward for service done.

Hath yove and with his chartre
sesed.¹

And thus was all the noise appesed.
This maiden, which sate on her
knees

To fore the kingés charitees,
Commendeth and saith evermore :
' My lege lord, right now to-fore
Ye saide, and it is of recorde,
That if my fader were a lorde
And pere unto these other grete,
Ye wolden for nought elles lette,
That I ne sholde be your wife.
And thus wote every worthy life
A kinges worde mot nede be holde.
Forthy my lord, if that ye wolde
So great a charite fulfille,
God wote it were well my wille.
For he, which was a bachelere,
My fader, is now made a pere ;
So whan as ever that I cam,
An erles doughter nowe I am.'

" This yongé king, which peised
all

Her beaute and her wit withall,
As he which was with lové hente,
Anone therto yaf his assente.
He mighte nought the place asterte
That she nis lady of his herte.
So that he toke her to his wife
To holde while that he hath life.
And thus the king toward his
knight

Accordeth him as it is right.
And over this, good is to wite -
In the cronique as it is write
This noble kinge, of whom I tolde,
Of Spaine by tho daies olde
The kingéom had in governaunce,
And as the boke maketh remem-
braunce

Alphonse was his propre name.
The knight also, if I shall name,

¹ Sesed, "seisin" (possession), given.

² To wite, to know.

Danz Petro hight, and as men telle
 His doughter wise Petronelle
 Was cleped, which was full of grace.
 And that was sene in thilke" place,
 Where she her fader out of tene¹
 Hath brought, and made her selfe
 a quene,

Of that she hath so well desclosed
 The points wherof she was opposed.

"Lo now, my sone, as thou might
 here,

Of all this thing to my matere
 But one I take, and that is Pride,
 To whom no grace may betide.
 In Heven he fell out of his stede,
 And Paradise him was forbode;
 The goode men in erthe him hate,
 So that to helle he mote algate,
 Whereevery Vertueshallbeweived²
 And every Vied be reseived.
 But Humblesse is all other wise,
 Which most is worth, and no re-
 prise³

It taketh ayein, but softe and faire
 If any thing stant in contraire
 With humble speche it is redressed.
 Thus was this yongé maiden blessed,
 The whiche I spake of now to-fore,
 Her faders life she gat therfore

¹ *Tene*, anxious grief.

² *Weived*, put aside.

³ *Reprise*, reproach.

And wan withall the kinges love.
 Forthy my sone, if thou wolt love,
 It sit thee well to leve Pride
 And taken Humblesse on thy side,
 The more of grace thou shalt
 gete."—

" My fader, I woll nought foryete
 Of this that ye have told me here,
 And if that any such manere
 Of humble port may love appaie,
 Here afterwarde I thonke assaie.
 But now forth over I besече,
 That ye more of my shrifte
 seche."—

" My gode sone, it shall be do.
 Now herken and lay an ere to,
 For as touchend of Prides fare
 Als ferforth as I can declare
 In cause of Vice, in cause of Love
 That hast thou plainly herde above,
 So that there is no more to saie
 Touchend of that; but other waie
 Touchend Envie I thenke telle,
 Whiche hath the propre kinde of
 helle,¹

Withoute cause to misdo
 Toward him self and other also ;
 Hereafterward as understonde
 Thou shalt the spieces,³ as they
 stonde.

¹ Which hath from hell its proper nature.

² Species, classification into its several kinds.

Book II.

OF ENVY.

nom

after Pride the secounde
There is, which many a
wofull stounde,
Towardes other berth aboute
Within him self and nought with-
oute.

For in his thought he brenneth ever,
Whan that he wote an other lever¹
Or more vertuos than he,
Which passeth him in his degre;
Therof he taketh his maladie.
That Vice is cleped hot Envie.

Forthy, my sone, if it be so,
Thou art or hast ben one of tho,²
As for to speke in Loves cas
If ever yet thin herte was
Seke of another mannes hele ?³

" So god avaunce my quarele,
My fader, ye⁴ a thousand sithe.
Whan I have sene another blithe
Of love and hadde a goodly chere,
Ethna, which brenneth yere by yere,
Was thanne nought so hote as I
Of thilke sore which prively
Mine hertes thought withinne bren-
neth.

The ship, which on the wawes
renneth
And is forstormed and forblowe.⁵

¹ *Lever*, more beloved.

² *Tho*, those.

³ Sick of another man's health.

⁴ *Ye*, yea.

⁵ " For " is an intensive prefix.

Is nought more peined for a throwe¹
Than I am thanne whan I se
Another which that passeth me
In that fortune of Loves yifte.
But fader, this I telle in shrifte,
That is no where but in o place.
For who that lese or finde grace
In other stede, it may nought greve.
But this ye may right well beleve,
Toward my lady that I serve,
Though that I wiste for to sterve,
Min hert is full of such foly,
That I my selfe may nought chasty,
Whan I the Court se of Cupide
Approche unto my lady side
Of hem that lusty ben and fresshe,
Though it availe hem nought a
resshe,²

But only that they ben of speche,
My sorwe is than nought to seche.
But whan they rounen³ in her ere,
Than groweth all my moste fere.
And namely⁴ whan they talen
longe,

My sorwes thanne be so stronge,
Of that I see hem well at ese
I can nought telle my dise.
But, sire, as of my lady selve,
Though she have wowers, ten or
twelve,

¹ *Throwe*, space of time.

² *Resshe*, rush.

³ *Rounen*, whisper

⁴ *Namely*, especially.

For no mistrust I have of her
 Me greveth nought, for certes, sir,
 I trowe in all this world to seche
 Nis woman, that in dede and
 speche

Woll better advise her what she
 doth,

Ne better, for to saie a sothe,
 Kepe her honour at alle tide
 And yet get her a thank beside.
 But netheles I am beknowe,¹
 That whan I se at any throwe¹

Or elles if I may it here,
 That she make any man good
 chere,

Though I therof have nought to
 done,

My thought woll entermete - him
 sone.

For though I be my selven straunge
 Envie maketh min herte chaunge,
 That I am sorwefully bestad
 Of that I se another glad
 With hire, but of other all
 Of Love what so may befall,
 Or that he faile or that he spede,
 Therof take I but litel hede.
 Nowe have I said, my fader, all,
 As of this point in speciall
 As ferforthly as I have wiste.¹
 Nowaxeth, fader, what you liste."—

"My sone, ere I axe any more
 I thenke somdele for thy lore
 Tell an ensample of this matere
 Touchend Envy, as thou shalt here.

"Write in Civile this I finde,
 Though it be nought the houndes
 kinde

To ete chaff, yet woll he werne
 An oxe, which cometh to the berne,
 Therof to taken any fode.
 And thus who that it understode

It stant of Love in many a place,
 Who that is out of Loves grace
 And may him selven nought availe,
 He wold an other sholde faile.

And if he may put any lette,
 He doth al that he may to lette.
 Wherof I finde, as thou shalt wit,
 To this purpos a tale write.

"There ben of suche mo than
 twelve,

That ben nought able as of hem
 selve

To gette love, and for Envie
 Upon all other they asprie.
 And for¹ hem lacketh that they
 wolde,

They kepe that none other sholde
 Touchend of love his cause spede;
 Wherof a great ensample I rede,
 Whiche unto this matere accordeth,
 As Ovide in his boke recordeth,
 How Poliphemus whilom wrought,
 Whan that he Galathe besought
 Of love, whiche he may nought
 lacche,²

That made him for to waite and
 wacche

By alle waies howe it ferde ;
 Till at the last he knewe and herde
 How that an other hadde leve
 To love there, as he mot leve
 As for to speke of any spede ;
 So that he knew none other rede
 But for to waiten upon alle
 Till he may se the chaunce falle,
 That he her love mighte greve,
 Whiche he him self may nought
 acheve.

This Galathe, saith the poete,
 Above all other was unmete³
 Of beaute, that men thanne knewe,
 And had a lusty love, and trewe

¹ *Throwe*, space of time.

² *Entermete*, go apart from.

³ As far forth as I have known.

¹ *Far*, because.

² *Lacche*, catch, secure.

³ *Unmete*, beyond measure.

A bachelor in his degnf,
 Right such an other as was she;
 On whom she hath her herte set,
 So that it mighte nought be let¹
 For yifte ne for no beheste,
 That she ne was all at his heste.²
 This yonge knight Acis was hote,³
 Whiche her ayeinwarde also hote⁴
 All only loveth and no mo.⁵
 Herof was Poliphemus wo
 Through pure Envie and everaspide
 And waiteth⁶ upon every side,
 Whan he to-gider mighte se
 This yonge Acis with Galathe.
 So longe he waiteth to and fro,
 Till at the laste he founde hem two
 In privé place, where they stood
 To speke and have her wordesgood.
 The place, where as he hem sigh.⁷
 It was under a banke nigh
 The greate se, and he above
 Stood and behelde the lusty love,
 Whiche eche of hem to other made
 With goodly chereand wordes glade
 That all his hert hath sette a fire
 Of pure Envie. And as a vire⁸
 Which flieth out of a mighty bowe,
 Away he fledde for a throwe,⁹
 As he that was for love wode,
 Whan that he sigh how that it
 stode.

This Polipheme a geaunt was.
 And whan he sigh the sothe cas,
 How Galathe him hath forsake
 And Acis to her love take,
 His herte may it nought forbere
 That he ne roreth as a bere
 And as it were a wilde beast
 In whom no reson might areste.
 He ranne Ethna the hill about,
 Where never yet the fire was out,

1 Let, hindered. 2 Heste, command.

3 Hote, named. 4 Hote, hotly.

5 No mo, no more, no one else.

6 Waitetk, watcheth. 7 Sigh, saw.

8 Vire, arrow. 9 Throwe, space of time.

Fulfilled of sorwe and great disease
 That he sigh Acis well at ese.
 Till atte last he him bethoughte
 As he which all Envie soughte,
 And torneth to the banke ayein
 Where he with Galathe hath sein
 That Acis, whom he thoughte
 greve,

Though he him self may nought
 releve.

This geaunt with his rude might
 Part of the banke he shof down
 right,

The whiche even upon Acis fille,¹
 So that with falling of this hille
 This Poliphemus Acis slough,
 Wherof she made sorwe inough.
 And as she fledde from the londe,
 Neptunus toke her by the honde
 And kept her in so faste a place
 Fro Polipheme and his manacc,
 That he with al his false Envie
 Ne might atteigne her compaignie.
 This Galathe", of whom I spcke,
 That of her self may nought be
 wreke,²

Withouten any semblaunt feigned
 She hath her loves deth com-
 pleigned,

And with her sorwe and with her
 wo

She hath the goddes moved so,
 That they of pite and of grace
 Have Acis in the same place,
 There he lay dede, into a welle
 Transformed, as the bokes telle,
 With fresshe stremes and with clere,
 As he whilom with lusty chere
 Was fressh his love for to queme.³
 And with this rude Polipheme
 For his Envie and for his hate
 They were wroth. And thus
 algate,

1 Fille, fell 2 Wreke, avenged.
 3 Queme, please.

" My sone, thou might under-
 stonde,
 That if thou wolt in grace stonde
 With Love, thou must leve Envie:
 And as thou wolt for thy partie
 Toward thy love stonde fre
 So must thou suffre another be,
 What so befall upon thy chaunce.
 For it is an unwise vengeance
 Which to none other man is lefe
 And is unto him selve grefe."¹ -
 " My fader, this ensample is
 good,

But how so ever that it stood
 With Poliphemus love as tho,²
 It shall nought stonde with me so
 To worchen any felonie
 In love for no suche envie.
 Forthy if there ought elles be,
 Now axeth forth, in what degre
 It is, and I me shall confesse
 With shrifte unto your holinesse.

" ~~Thou~~ sone, yet there is
 A Vice revers unto this,
 Whiche envious taketh his glad-
 nesse

Of that he seeth the hevinesse
 Of other men. For his welfare
 Is, whan he wote another care
 Of that an other hath a falle,³
 He thinketh him selfe arist³ with
 alle.

Suche is the gladship of Envie
 In worldes thing and in partie
 Full ofte times eke also
 In Loves cause it stant right so.
 If thou, my sone, hast joie had,
 Whan thou an other sigh unglad,
 Shrive thee therof."—" My fader,
 yis.

I am beknowe⁴ unto you this

¹ Which pleases no other man and grieves oneself.

² *Tho*, then.

³ *Arist*, lifted up.

⁴ *Beknowe*, to confess.

Of these lovers that loven streite,¹
 And for that point which they
 coveite

Ben pursuauntes from yere to yere
 In Loves court, when I may here
 How that they climbe upon the
 whele,
 And whan they wene all shall be
 wele

They ben down throwen atte laste,
 Than am I fed of that they faste,
 And laugh of that I se hem loure.
 And thus of that they brewe soure
 I drinke swete, and am well esed
 Of that I wote they ben disesed.
 But this whiche I you telle here
 Is only for my lady dere,

That for none other that I knowe
 Me recheth nought who overthrowe
 Ne who that stonde in love upright;
 But be he squier, be he knight,
 Which to my lady warde² pursueth
 The more he lost of that he sueth,
 The more me thenketh that I winne,
 And am the more glad withinne
 Of that I wote him sorwe endue ;
 For ever upon suche aventure

It is a comfort, as men sain,
 To him the which is wo besein³
 To sene an other in his peine,
 So that they bothe may compleine.
 Where I myself may nought availle,
 To sene an other man travaile
 I am right glad if he be let.⁴

And though I fare nought the bet,
 His sorwe is to min herte a game,
 Whan that I knowe it is the same
 Which to my lady stant enclined,⁵
 And hath his love nought terminated,⁵
 I am right joyfull in my thought.
 If such Envie greveth ought,

¹ *Streite*, strictly, intensely.

² *To my lady werde*, toward my lady.

³ *Wo besein*, clothed in sorrow.

⁴ *Let*, hindered.

⁵ *Termined*, brought to the desired end.

As I beknowe me coupable,
Ye that be wise and resonable,
My fader, telleth your avise."—

"My sone, Envie in to no prise
Of such a forme I understonde
Ne mighte by no reson stonde.
For this Envie hath such a kinde,
That he woll set himself behinde
To hinder with another wight,
And gladly lese¹ his owne right
To make another lesd his.
And for to knowen how so it is
A tald lich to his matere
I thenke telle, if thou wolte here,
To shewe properly the Vice
Of this Envie and the malice.

"Of Jupiter thus I finde iwrite,
How whilom that he wolde wite -
Upon the pleinte³ whiche he herde
Among the men, how that it ferde,
As of her wrong condicion
To do justificaciō.
And for that cause down he sent
An aungel, which aboute went
That he the sothe knowe may.
So it befell upon a day
This aungel which him shuld en-
forme

Was clothed in a mannes forme
And overtoke, I understonde,
Two men that wenten over londe,
Through which he thoughte to
aspie

His cause and goth in compaignie.
This aungel with his wordes wise
Opposeth hem in sondry wise,
Now loude wordes and now softe,
That made hem to desputen ofte.
And eche of hem his reson hadde,
And thus with tales he hem ladde
With good examinaciō
Till he knew the condicion
What men they were bothe two;

1 Lese, lose. 2 Wite, know,
3 Pleinte, complaint.

And sigh wel atte laste tho,
That one of hem was coveitous,
And his felaw was envious.
And thus, whan he hath knoulech-
ing,

Anone he feigned departing
And said he mote algate wende.
But herken now what fell at ende,
For than he made hem understonde,
That he was there of Goddes
sonde ;¹

And said hem for the kindeship
That they have done him felaship
He wolde do some grace ayein,
And bad that one of hem shuld sain
What thinge him is levest to crave,
And he it shall of yifte have.
And over that² eke forth with all
He saith that other have shall
The double of that his felawe axeth:
And thus to hem his grace he taxeth.
The coveitous was wonder glad,
And to that other man he bad
And saith, that he first axe sholde ;
For he supposeth that he wolde
Make his axing of worldes good ;
For than he knewe well howe it
stood,

That he him self by double weight
Shall efte take ; and thus by sleight
By cause that he wolde winne
He badde his felaw first beginne.
This envious, though it be late
Whan that he sigh³ he mote algate
Make his axinge first, he thought
If he worship or profit sought,
It shall be doubled to his fere:⁴
That wold he chese in no manere.
But than he sheweth what he was
Towarde Envie, and in this cas
Unto this aungel thus he saide
And for his yifte this he praide,

1 Sonde, sending.
2 Over that, beyond that.
3 Sigh, saw.
4 Fere, companion.

To make him blinde on his one eye,
 So that his felaw no thing sigh.
 This word was nought so sone spoke,
 That his one eye anon was loke,
 And his felaw forth with also
 Was blinde on both his eyen two.
 Tho was that other gladde inough,
 That one wept, that other lough,
 He set his one eye at no cost
 Whereof that other two hath lost.
 Of thilke ensample, which fell tho,
 Men tellen now full ofte so.
 The worlde empeireth¹ comunly
 And yet wot none the cause why;
 For it accordeth nought to kinde²
 Min owne harme to seche and
 finde,

Of that I shall my brother greve
 I mighte never wel acheve.

What saist thou, sone, of this
 folie? "—

"My fader, but³ I shulde lie
 Upon the point which ye have
 saide,

Yet was min herte never laide
 But in the wise as I you tolde.
 But evermore if that ye wolde
 Ought elles to my shrifte saie
 Touchend Envie, I wolde praie."—
 "My sone, that shall well be do.
 Now herken and lay thin ere to.

"**Touchend as of envious brood**

I wot nought one of alle good,
 But netheles suche as they be
 Yet there is one, and that is he,
 Which cleped is Detraction.
 And to conferme his action
 He hath witholde Malebouche,⁴
 Whose tunge nouthur pill ne
 crouche⁵

May hire so that he pronounce

¹ Empeireth, grows worse.

² Kinde, nature. ³ But, unless.

⁴ Witholde Malebouche, held with Evil Mouth.

⁵ Pill ne crouche, plunder nor coin.

A plein good word withouten
 frounce,¹

Where behinde a mannes backe;
 For though he preise he find some
 lacke,

Whiche of his tale is ay the laste
 That all the prise shall overcaste.

And though there be no cause why,
 Yet woll he jangle nought forthy,
 As he whiche hath the heraldic
 Of hem that usen for to lie.

For as the nettle whiche up renneth
 The fresshe rede roses brenneth
 And maketh hem fade and pale of
 hewe,

Right so this fals envious hewe -
 In every place where he dwelleth

With false wordes where he telleth
 He torneth preising into blame

And worship into worldes shame.
 Of such lesinge as he compdsseth

Is none so good that he ne passeth
 Betwene his tethe and is backbited
 And through his false tunge endited.

Lich to the sharnebudes³ kinde,
 Of whose nature this I finde,

That in the hottest of the day,
 Whan comen is the mery May,

He spret his winge and up he fleeth
 And under all aboute he seeth

The faire lusty floures springe.
 But therof hath he no likinge.

But where he seeth of any beste
 The filthe, there he maketh his feste

And there upon he woll alighte,
 There liketh him none other siglue

Right so this jangler envious,
 Though he a man se vertuoua

And full of good condition,
 Therof maketh he no mention.

But elles, be it nought so lite,⁴
 Whereof that he may set a wite.⁵

¹ Frounce, frown. ² Hewe, servant.

³ Sharnebudes, shard-beetles

⁴ Lite, little. ⁵ Wite, blame.

There renneth he with open mouth
Behinde a man and maketh it
couth.¹

But all the vertue whiche he can
That woll he hide, of every man,
And openly the vice telle,
As he which of the scole of helle
Is taught, and fostred with Envie
Of housholde and of compaignie,
Where that he hath his propre office
To sette on every man a vice.
How so his mouth be comely,
His worde sit eermore awry
And saith the worste that he may.
And in this wise now a daye
In Loves court a man may here
Full ofte pleine of this matere ;
That many envious tale is stered,²
Where that it may nought be answered

But yet full ofte it is beleved;
And many a worthy love is greved
Through backbitinge of false Envie.
" If thou have made suche janglerie

In Loves court, my sone, er this,
Shrive thee therof."—" My fader,
yis.

But wite ye how, nought openly
But otherwhile prively,
Whan I my dere lady mete
And thenke how that I am nought
mete

Unto her highe worthinesse,
And eke I se the besinesse
Of all this yonge lusty route
Which all day pursue her aboute,
And eche of hem his time awaiteth,³
And eche of hem his tale aflfaiteth,³
All to deceive an innocent
Which woll nought be of her⁴ as-
sent.

¹ *Couth*, known.

² *Stered*, stirred up.

³ *Affarteth*, submitteth.

⁴ *Her*, their.

And for men sain ' unknowen un-
kiste,'

Her thombe she holt in her fiste
So close within her owne honde
That there 'vinneth no man londe ;
She leveth nought all that she
hereth

And thus ful ofte her self she
skiereth¹

And is all ware of *had I wist*.—
But for all that min hert ariste
Whan I these comun lovers see
That wol nought holden hem to thre
But well nigh loven over al,
Min hert is envious with all,
And ever I am adrad of guile,
In aunter if with any wile
They might her innocence en-
chaunte.

Forthy my words full ofte I haunte
Behinde hem so as I dare,
Wherof my lady may beware.
I say what ever cometh to mouth,
And wers I wolde if that I couth.
For whan I come unto her speche
All that I may enquire and seche
Of such deceipte I telle it all,
And ay the worst in special!
So faine I wolde that she wist
How litel they ben for to trist,
And what they wold and what they
mente

So as they be of double entente,
Thus toward hem that wicke mene "
My wicked word was ever grene.
And netheles the soth to telle
In certain if it so befelle
That althertrewest man ibore⁴
To chese amonge a thousand score,
Which were all fully for to triste,
My lady loved, and I it wiste,

⁵ *Skiereth*, secureth.

² *Had I known*. Old phrase to express a
repentance come too late.

³ Those who mean wickedly.

⁴ The truest of all men born.

Yet rather than he shulde spede
 I wolde suche tales sprede
 To my lady, if that I might,
 That I shuld all his love unright,
 And therto wolde I do my peine.
 For certes though I shulde feigne
 And telle that was never thought,
 For all this worlde I mighte nought
 To suffre an other fully winne
 There as I am yet to beginne;
 For be they good or be they bad
 I wolde none my lady had.
 And that me maketh full ofte asprie
 And usen wordes of Envie,
 And for to make hem bere a
 blame—

And that is but of thilke same—
 The whiche unto my lady drawe,
 For ever on them I rounge and
 gnawe

And hinder hem all that ever I
 maie.

And that is, sothly for to saie,
 But only to my lady selve;
 I telle it nought to ten ne twelve,
 Therof I wol me well avise
 To speke or jangle in any wise
 That toucheth to my ladies name,
 The whiche in earnest and in game
 I wolde save, in to my deth;
 For me were lever to lacke breth
 Than speken of her name amis.
 Now have ye herd touchend of this,
 My fader, in Confession
 And therfore of Detraction
 In Love, of that I have mispoke,
 Tell how ye will it shall be wroke.
 I am all redy for to bere
 My peine, and also to forbere
 What thing that ye woll nought
 allowe;

For who is bounden, he must bowe.
 So woli I bowe unto your hest,
 For I dare make this behest,

¹ Rounge, nip.

That I to you have nothing hid,
 But told right as it is betid,
 And otherwise of no misspeche
 My conscience for to seche.
 I can nought of Envie finde
 That I misspoke have ought be
 hinde,

Wherof love oughte be mispaide.
 Now have ye herde and I have,
 saide,

What woll ye fader, that I do?"—

" My sone, do no morè so,
 But ever kepe thy tunge still,
 Thou might the more have thy will.
 For as thou saist thy selven here,
 Thy lady is of such manere,
 So wise so ware in *allè* thinges,
 It nedeth of no bakbitinges,
 That thou thy lady misenforme:
 For whan she knoweth all the
 forme,

How that thy self art envious,
 Thou shalt nought be so gracious,
 As thou paraunter¹ shuldest be
 elles.

There wol no man drinke of the
 welles,

Whiche as he wote² is poison inne,
 And ofte suche as men beginne
 Towardes other, such they finde,
 That set hem ofte fer behinde
 Whan that they wenen be before.
 My gode sone, and thou therfore
 Be ware and leve thy wicked speche,
 Wherof hath fallen ofte wreche³
 To many a man before this time.
 For who so wol his hondes lime,⁴
 They musten be the more unclene.
 For many a mote shall be sene,
 That wolde nought cleve elles there;
 And that shulde every wise man fere.
 For who so woll another blame,
 He seketh ofte his owne shame,

¹ Paraunter, peradventure.

² Wote, knows.

³ Wreche, revenge.

⁴ Take birdlime in his hands.

Which elles mighte be right stille.
 Forthy if that it be thy wille
 To stonde upon amendement,
 A tale of great entendement
 I thenke telle for thy sake,
 Wherof thou might ensample take.

" A worthy knight in Cristes
 lawe

Of greate Rome, as is the sawe,
 The sceptre hadde for to right,
 Tibery Constantin he hight,
 .Vhos wife was cleped Italie.
 But they to-gider of progenie
 No children hadde but a maide,
 And she the God so wel apaide¹
 That al the wide worldes fame
 Spake worship of her godè name.
 Constance, as the cronique saith,
 She hight, and was so full of faith
 That the greatest of Barbaric,
 Of hem whiche usen marchandie,
 She hath converted, as they come
 To her upon a time in Rome
 To shewen such thing as they
 brought

Which worthely of hem she bought.
 And over that- in suche a wise
 She hath hem with her wordes wise
 Of Cristes feith so full enformed,
 That they therto ben all conformed,
 So that baptisme they receiven
 And all her³ false goddes weiven.

"Whan they ben of the feith
 certain,

They gone to Barbaric ayein,
 And there the Souldan for hem scnte
 And axeth hem to what entente
 They have her firste feith forsake.
 And they, whiche hadden undertake
 The righte feith to kepe and holde,
 The mater of her tale tolde
 With all the hole circumstaunce.

¹ *Apaide*, pleased.

² *Over that*, beyond that.

³ *her*, their.

And whan the Souldan of Con-
 staunce,

Upon the point that they answerde,
 The beaute and the grace herde,
 As he which thanne was to wedde,
 In alle haste his cause spedde
 To sende for the manage.

And furthermore with good conige
 He saith, be so¹ he may her have,
 That Crist, that came this world
 to save,

He woll beleve, and thus recorded
 They ben on either side accorded.
 And there upon to make an ende
 The Souldan his hostàges sende
 To Rome, of princes sonès twelve.
 Wherof the fader in him selve
 Was glad, and with the Pope avised.
 Two Cardinales he hath assised
 With other lordes many mo,
 That with his daughter shulden go
 To se the Souldan be converted.

" But that which never was wel
 herted

Envid tho gan to travatte
 In disturbaiince of this spousaile
 So prively that none was ware.
 The Moder which the Souldan bare
 Was than alive, and thoughtc this
 Unto her selfe : if it so is,
 My sone him wedde in this manere,
 Than have I lost my joies here,
 For min estate shall so be lassed.
 Thenkend thus, she hath compassed
 By sleight how that she may beguile
 Her sonc, and fell within a while,
 Betwene hem two whan that they
 were,

She feigned wordes in his ere
 And in this wise gan to say :

' My sone, I am by double way
 With all min herte glad and blithe,
 For that my selfe have ofte sithe -

¹ *Be so*, if so be.

- *Oftesithe*, oftentimes.

Desired thou wolte, as men saith,
Receive and take a newè feith,
Which shall be forthringe of thy
life.

And eke so worshipfull a wife
The doughter of an emperour
To wedde, it shall be great honour.
Forthy¹ my sone, I you beseche,
That I such grace might areche,
Whan that my doughter come shall,
That I may than in special!,
So as me thenketh it is honeste,
Be thilke which the firste feste
Shall make unto her welcominge.'

"The Souldan graunteth her
axfng.

And she therof was gladd enough,
For under that anone she drough
With false wordes that she spake
Covin² of dethe behinde his backe.
And therupon her oidinaunce
She made so, that whan Constance
Was comen forth with the Remains,
Of clerkes and of citezeins
A riche feste she hem made.
And moste whan they weren glade
With false covin, which she hadde,
Her close Envie tho she spraddc.
And alle tho, that hadden be
Or in appert or in prive
Of counseil to the maridge,
She slough hem in a sodein rage
Endlong the borde as they be set,
So that it mighte nought be let.
Her owne sone was nought quite,³
But died upon the same plite.
But what the highe God woll spare
It may for no peri'll misfare.
This worthy maiden which was
there
Stode than as who saith dede for
fere

To se the fest how that it stood.
Whiche all was torned into blood.
The dissh forth with the cuppe and
all

Bebled¹ they weren over all;
She sigh hem die on every side,
No wonder though she wepte and
cride

Makend many a wofull mone.
When all was slain but she al one,
This olde fend, this Sarazin
Let take anone this Constantin
With all the good she thiderbrought
And hath ordeigned as she thought
A naked ship withoutè stere,
In which the good and her in fere,
Vittled full for yerds five,
Where that the winde it woldè
drive,

She put upon the wawes wilde.

"But he, which alte thinges may
shilde

Thre yere til that she cam to londe
Her ship to stere hath take on
honcle,

And in Northumberlond arriveth;²
And happeth thanne that she
driveth

Under a castell with the flood,
Whiche upon Humber banke stood.
And was the kinges owne also
The whiche Alice was cleped tho;
A Saxon, and a worthy knight,
But he beleveth nought aright.
Of this castell was castellaine
Elda the kinges chamberlaine,
A knightly man after his lawe.
And whan he sigh upon the wawe³
The ship drivnd alone so,
He badde anone men shulden go
To se what it betoken may.
This was upon a somer day

¹ Forthy, therefore.

² Covin, secret contrivance.

³ Quite, acquitted.

¹ Bebled, covered with blood.

² Arriveth, touches shore.

³ Saw upon the waves.

The ship was loked and she founde.
Elda within a litel stounde¹

It wist, and with his wife anone
Toward this yonge lady gone,
Where that they founde great
richesse.

But she her wolde nought cofesse,
Whan they her axen what she was.
And netheles upon the cas
Out of the ship with great worship
They toke her into felaship
As they that weren of her glade.
Hut she no maner joie made,
But sorweth sore of that she fonde
No christendome in thilkè-londe;
But elles she hath all her will,
And thus with hem she dwelleth
still.

Dame Hermegild, which was the
wife

Of Elda, liche her owne life
Constance loveth; and fell so
Spekend all day betwene hem two
Through grace of Goddes purvei-
aunce

This maiden taughte the creaiince
Unto this wife so parfitly,
Upon a day that fastè by
In presence of her husdbonde,
Where they go walkend on the
stronde,

A blindè man which cam ther ladde
Unto this wife criend he badde
With bothe his hondès up and
praide

To her, and in this wise he saide :
' O Hermegilde, which Cristes feith
Enformed as Constance saith
Received hast: yif me my sight!'

" Upon this worde her herte
aflight

Thenkend what was beste to done,
But netheles she herde his bone-
And saide: ' Intrust of Cristes lawe,

1 Stounde, interval, hour. 2 Bone, petition.

Which done was on the crosse and
slawe,¹

Thou blinde man beholde and se !
With that, to God upon his kne
Thonkend, he toke his sight anone,
Wherof they merveil everychone,
But Elda wondreth most of alle;
This open thing whiche is befallè
Concludeth² him by suche a way
That he the feith mo nede obey.

" Now list what fell upon this
thinge.

This Elda forth unto the kinge
A morwé toke his way and rode,
And Hermegild at home abode
Forth with Constance well at cse.
Elda, which thought his king to
plese,

As he that than unwedded was,
Of Constemce all the pleiné cas,
As godélich as he couth, tolde.
The king was glad, and said he
wolde

Come thider in suche a wise,
That he him might of her avise.-"
The time appointed forth withall
This Elda truste in speciall
Upon a knight which fro childhode
He had updrawe into manhode,
To him he tolde all that he thought;
Wherof that after him forthought.⁴

And netheles at thilke tide
Unto his wife he bad him ride
To make redy alle thinge
Ayeinst the cominge of the kinge ;
And saith that he him self to-fore
Thenketh for to come, and bad
therefore

That he him kepe." and tolde him
whan.

1 The law of Christ who was put upon the
closs and slain.

2 Concludeth, decides.

3 Him avise, take note.

4 Him forthought, it repented him.

5 Him kepe, have care for him, look for him.

This knight rode forth his waié than,
 And soth was, that of time passed
 He had in all his wit compassed,
 Howe he Constance mighte winne.
 But he sigh tho no spede¹ therinne.
 Wherof his lust began to abate,
 And that was love is thanne hate.
 Of her honour he had Envie,
 So that upon his trecherie
 A lesinge² in his herte he cast.
 Til he come home he hieth fast,
 And doth his lady to understonde
 The message of her husebonde.
 And therupon the longe daie
 They setten thingtes in arraie,
 That all was as it shulde be
 Of every thinge in his degre.
 And whan it came into the night,
 This wife with her hath to beddc
 dight

Where that this maiden with her
 lay.

This false knight upon delay,
 Hath taried till they were aslepc,
 As he that woll his time kepe
 His dedly werkes to fulfille.
 And to the bed he stalketh stille,
 Where that he wiste was the wife,
 And in his honde a rasour knife
 He bar, with whiche her throte he
 cut

And prively the knife he put
 Under that other beddes side,
 Where that Constance lay beside.
 Elda come horn the same night
 And stille with a prive light,
 As he that wolde nought awake
 His wife, he hath his waie take
 Into the chambre, and there lig-
 gend

He fonde his dede wife bledend,
 Wheie that Constance faste by
 Was falle aslepe ; and sodeinly

He cried aloude, and she awoke.
 And forth with all she cast a loke
 And sigh this lady blede there,
 Wherof swoununde dede for fere
 She was, and stille as any stone
 She laie, and Elda therupon
 Into the castell clepeth out,
 And up sterte every man about;
 Into the chambre forth they went.
 But he whiche all untrouthe ment
 This false knight among hem all
 Upon this thing whiche is befall
 Saith that Constance hath don this
 dede.

And to the bed with that he yede
 After the falsehed of his speche
 And made him there for to sechc,¹
 And fond the knife where he it laid.
 And than he cried and than he
 said:

' Lo, se the knife all bloody here,
 What nedeth more in this matere
 To axe ?' and thus her innocSnce
 He sclandreth there in audience
 With false wordes, whiche he
 feigneth.

But yet for al that ever he pleineth.

" Elda no full credence toke.
 And happed that there lay a boke,
 Upon the which, whan he it sighc,
 This knight hath swore, and said
 on highe

That alle men it mighten wite,²—
 ' Now by this boke which here is
 write,

Constance is gultif well I wote.'
 With that the honde of Heven him
 smote

In token of that he was forswore,
 That he has bothe his even lore,
 Out of his hed the same stounde
 They stert, and so they were
 founde.

¹ *Sigh tho no spede*, saw then no success..
 - *Lesingc*, falsehood.

¹ *Seche*, seek. ² *Wite*, know.
³ *Lore*, lost.

A vois was herd whan that they fel,
Which saide: ' O dampned man
to helle,
Lo, thus hath God thy sclaunder
wroke,
That thou ayein Constance hath
spoke :
Beknowe the sothe¹ er that thou
deie.'

And he tolde out his felonie
And starf forth with his tale anone.
Into the grounde where alle gone,
This dede lady was begrave.
Elda, which thought his honour
save

All that he may, restreigneth sorwe.
" For by the second day a
morwe

The king came, as they were ac-
corded,

And whan it was to him recorded,
What God hath wrought upon this
chaunce,

He toke it into remembraunce
And thoughte more than he saide;
For all his hote herte he laide
Upon Constáncé, and saide he
shulde

For love of her, if that she wolde,
Baptisme take and Cristes feith
Beleve, and over that he saith
He wol her wedde, and upon this
Assured eche til other is.

And for to make shorte tales
There came a bisshop out of Wales
Fro Bangor, and Lucie he hight,
Which through the grace of God
almight

The king with many an other mo
He cristned, and betwene hem two
He hath fulfilled the maridge.
But for no lust ne for no rage
She tolde hem never what she was.
And netheles upon this cas

1 Confess the truth.

The king was glad, how so it stood,
For well he wist and understood
She was a noble creature.
The highd Maker of Nature
Her hath visited in a throwe,
That it was openliche knowe
She was with childè by the kinge,
Wherof above all other thinge
He thonketh God and was right
glad.

And fell that time he was bestad
Upon a werre, and muste ride.
And while he shulde there abide
He left at home to kepe his wife
Suche as he knewe of holy life,
Elda forth with the bisshop eke.
And he with power go to seke
Ayein the Scottes for to fondc¹,
The werre whiche he toke on
honde.

The time set of kinde is come,
This lady hath her chambre nome²
And of a sone bore fulle,
Wherof that she was joiefull,
She was delivered sauf and sone.³
The bisshop, as it was to done,
Yaf him baptisme and Moris calleth.
And therupon as it befalleth
With letters writen of recdrde
They send unto her lege lorde
That kepers weren⁴ of the quene.
And he, that shulde go betwene,
The messenger to Knaresburgh
(Which town he shulde passe
thurgh)

Ridende cam the firste daie;
The kinges moder there lay,
Whose righte name was Domilde,
Whiche after all the cause spilde.
For he, which thonk deserve wolde,
Unto this lady goth and tolde

¹ *Fonde*, try issues in.

² *Nome*, taken.

³ Safe and sound.

⁴ They that were keepers of the queen sent
to their liege lord

Of his message al how it ferde.
 And she with feigned joie it herde
 And yaf him yeftes largely,
 But in the night al prively
 She toke the letters whiche he had,
 Fro point to point and overrad¹
 As she that was through out un-

trewe,
 And let do writen other newe
 In stede of hem, and thus they speke.

' Our lege lord, we thee beseke,
 That thou with us ne be nought
 wroth,

Though we such thing as is thee
 loth

Upon our trouthe certifie.

Thy wife, whiche is of fairie,
 Of suche a child delivered is,
 Fro kinde,² which stant all amis.
 But for it shulde nought be saie
 We have it kept out of the waie
 For drede of pure worides shame,
 A pouer childe, and in the name
 Of thilke whiche is so misbore,
 We toke and therto we be swore,
 That none but only you and we
 Shall knowen of this privete.
 Morice it hat, and thus men wene
 That it was boren of the queue
 And of thine owne bodie gete.
 But this thing may nought be for-
 yete,

That thou ne sende us worde anone,
 What is thy wille therupon.'

" This letter, as thou hast herd
 devise,

Was counterfet in suche a wise,
 That no man shulde it apperceive.
 And she which thought to deceive
 It laith where she that other toke.
 This messenger, whan he awoke,
 And wist nothing how it was,
 Arose and rode the greate pas

And toke his letter to the kinge.
 And whan he sigh¹ this wonder
 thinge,

He maketh the messenger no chere,
 But netheles in wise manere
 He wrote ayein, and yaf him charge
 That they ne suffre nought at large
 His wife to go but kepe her still,
 Till they have herd more of his
 will.

' This messenger was yefteles,
 But with his letter netheles,
 Or be him lefe or be him loth,
 In alle haste ayeine he goth
 By Knaresburgh, and as he went,
 Unto the moder his entent

Of that he fond toward the kinge
 He tolde, and she upon this thinge
 Saith, that he shulde abide all night
 And made him feste and chere
 aright,

Feignend as though she couthe him
 thonke.²

But he with strong wine which he
 dronke

Forth with the travaile of the day
 Was drunke aslepe, and while he lay
 She hath his letters oversay,
 And formed in an other way
 There was a newé letter write,

" Which saith : ' I do you for to
 wite,

That through the counseil of you two
 I stonde in point to ben undo,
 As he whiche is a king deposed,
 For every man it hath supposed
 How that my wife Constance is fay.
 And if that I, they sain, delay
 To put her out of compaignie,
 The worship of my regalie
 Is lore, and over this they telle
 Her child shal nought among hem
 dwelle

¹ And read them over from point to point.
 - Fro kinde?, contrary to nature.

¹ Sigh, saw.

² Couthe him thonke, paid him thanks.

To claimen any heritáge.
 So can I se none avauntáge,
 But all is lost, if she abide.
 Forth to loke on every side
 Toward the mischeffe as it is
 I charge you and bidde this,
 That ye the same ship vittaile,
 In which that she toke arrivaile,
 Therin and putteth¹ bothé two
 Her self forth with her childe also,
 And so forth brought into the depe
 Betaketh her the see² to kepe.
 Of foure dalés time I set
 That ye this thing no lenger let,
 So that your life be nought forfete.'

"And thus this letter counterfete
 The messenger, which was unware,
 Upon the lunges halvé bare
 And where he shulde it hath betake.
 But whan that they have hede take
 And rad that writen is withinnc,
 So great a sorwe they beginne,
 As they her⁴ owné moder sighen
 Brent in a fire before her⁴ eyen.
 There was wepinge and there was
 wo,

But finally the thinge is do.
 Upon the see they have her
 brought,

But she the cause wiste nought,
 And thus upon the flood they
 wone⁵

This lady with her yonge sone.
 And than her hondes to the heven
 She straught, and with a milde
 Steven⁶

Knelend upon her bare kne
 She saide : ' O highe mageste,
 Which seest the point of every
 trouth,
 Take of thy wofull woman routh

¹ *Therin, and putteth, and put therein.*

² *Betaketh her the see, commit her to the*

⁴ *Let, delay.* ⁵ *Her, their.*

⁵ *Wone dwell.* ⁶ *Steven, voice,*

And of this child that I shal
 kepe! ¹

And with that word she gan to
 wepe

Swounéd as dede, and there she
 lay.

But he, whiche alle thingés may,
 Conforteth her, and atte laste
 She loketh, and her eyen caste
 Upon her childe, and sayde this :

' Of me no maner charge it is
 What sorwe I suffre, but of thee
 Me thenketh it is great pitee,
 For if I sterve thou shalt deie,
 So mote I nedes by that weie
 For moderhed and for tendernesse
 With all min hole besinesse
 Ordeigne me for thilke office
 As she which shall be thy nonce.'
 Thus was she strengthened for to
 stonde.

And tho she loke her childe in
 honde

And yaf it souke and ever amonge
 She wepte and otherwhile songe
 To rocke with her childe aslepe ;
 And thus her owne childe to kepe
 She hath under the Goddes cure.

"And so fell upon aventiire,
 Whan thilke yere hath made his
 ende,

Her ship, so as it moste wende,
 By strength of wind which God
 hath yive

Estward was into Spaine diive
 Right fast under a castell walle
 Where that an hethen admiralte
 Was lorde, and he a steward had
 One Thelous, whiche al was bad,
 A fals knight and a renegade.

He goth to loke in what estate
 The ship was comen, and there he
 fonde

¹ *Shal kepe, have to take care of (shall, with the sense of obligation).*

Forth with a childe upon her honde
 This lady where she was alone.
 He toke good hede of the pers6ne
 And sigh she was a worthy wight,
 And thought he wolde upon the
 night

Demene her at his owne wille ;
 And let her be therinne stille,
 That no man sigh she nought¹
 that day.

At Goddes wille and thus she lay
 Unknowe what her shall betide.
 And fell so that by nightes tide
 This knight without felaship
 Hath take a boot and cam to ship
 And thought of her his lust to take,
 And swore, if she him daunger
 make,

That certainly she shulde deie.
 She sigh there was none other weie
 And saide he shulde her well con-
 f6rte,

That he first loked out at porte,
 That no man were nigh the stede
 Which mighte knowe what they
 dede,

And than he may do what he wolde.
 He was right glad that she so tolde,
 And to the port anone he ferde.

"She praieth God, and he her
 herde.

And sodeynlich he was out throwe
 And dreint,² and tho began to
 blowe

Winde mevable fro the londe,
 And thus the mighty Goddes honde
 Her hath conveied and defended.
 And whan thre yere ben full de-
 spended,

Her ship was drive upon a daie,
 Where that a great navie laie
 Of shippes, all the worlde at ones.
 And as God wolde for the nones

Her ship goth in amonge hem alle
 And stint nought er it be befallē
 And hath that vessel under gete
 Which maister was of all the flete;
 But there it resteth and abode.
 This grete ship on anker rode,
 The lord come forth, and whan he
 sigh

That other ligge on bord so nigh
 He wondreth what it mighte be,
 And bad men to go in and se.
 This lady tho was crope a side
 As she that wolde her selven hide,
 For she ne wiste what they were.
 They sought about and fond her
 there

And broughten up her childe and her.
 And therupon this lord to spire
 Began fro whenne that she came
 And what she was. Quod she :
 'I am

A woman wofully bestad.
 Ihad a lorde and thus he bad,
 That I forth with my litel sonc
 Upon the wawes shulde wone.
 But why the cause was I not,
 But he whiche alle thinges wot
 Yet hath, I thonk him, of his might
 My childe and me so kepte upright,
 That we be saufe bothe two.⁷—

This lorde her axeth evermo
 How she beleveth, and she sailh :
 'I leve and trust in Cristes feith,
 Which died upon the rode tre.'—

'What is thy name?' tho quod he.
 'My name is Custey she him saide.
 But furthermore for nought he
 praide

Of her estate to knowe pleine,
 She wolde him nothing dies saine
 But of her name, which she feigned,
 All other thinges she restreigned,
 That o word more she ne tolde.
 This lord than axeth if she wolde

¹ She saw not any man.

- Dreint drowned. 3 Tho, then.

¹. Spire, enquire, 'speir.' -² Not, know not.

With him abide in compaignie,
And saide, he came from Barbaric
To Romé ward and home he went.
Tho she supposeth what it ment
And saith, she wolde with him wende
And dwelle unto her lives ende,
If it so be to his plesaunce.

And thus upon her acquaintance
He tolde her plainly as it stood,
Of Rome how that the gentil blood
In Barbarie was betrayed
And therupon he hath assaied
By werre, and taken such ven-
geaunce

That none of thilke euil alliaimce,
By whom the treson was compassed,
Is from the swerd alive passed.

But of Constance how it was
That couthe he knowe by no cas
Where she becam, so as he said;
Her ere unto his word she laid,
But furthermore made she no chere.
And netheles in this matere

It happed that ilke time so
This lord with whom she shulde go
Of Rome was the senatour

And of her fader themperoir
His brother doughter hath to wive,²
Which hath her fader eke on live,²
And was Salustes clepéd tho,
His wife Heleind hight also,

To whom Constdnce was cousine.
Thus to the sike a medicine
Hath God ordeigndd of his grace,
That forthwith in the same place
This senatour his trouthe plight
For ever while he livd might

To kepe her in worship and in wele,
Be so that God woll yive her hele,
This lady, which Fortune him sende.
And thus by shippe forth sailende
Her and her childe to Rome be
brought,

And to his wife tho he besought

¶ *Couthe, could.* ¶ *On livei alive.*

To take her into compaignfe.

And she, which couth of curtesie
All that a good wife shulde conne,¹
Was inly glad, that she hath wonne
The felaship of so good one.

This emperoures doughter Custe
Forth with the doughter of Saluste
Was kept, but no man redely
Knew what she was, and nought
forthy

They thoughten .v'ell she hadde be
In her estate of high degre,
And every life her loveth wele.

" Now herken : thilke unstable
whele

Whiche ever torneth went aboute.
The king Alice, while he was oute,
As thou to-fore hast herd this cas,
Deceived through his moder was.

But whan that he come home ayein,
He axeth of his chamberlain
And of the bissshop eke also,

Where they the quene hadden do.
And they answerdd there he bad
And have him thilke letter rad
Whiche he hem sende for warrdnt,
And tolde him plainly as it stant,
And sain, it thought hem great pite
To se a worthy one as she
With suche a childe as there was
bore

So sodeinly to be forlore.
He axeth hem, what child that
were.

And they him saide, that no where
In all the world, though men it
sought,

Was never woman that forth
brought

A fairer child than it was one.
And than he axeth hem anone, ,
Why they ne hadden written so. '
They tolden, so they hadden do.

¹ Who knew all that a good .v'ife should
know of courtesy.

He saide, nay. They saiden, yis.
The letter shewed, rad¹ it is,
Which they forsoken every dele.²
Tho was it understonde wele
That there is treson in the thinge.
The messenger to-fore the kinge
Was brought and, sodeinlich op-
posed

As he which no thinge hath sup-
posed

But alle wel, began to saie,
That he no where upon the waie
Abode but only in a stede,³
And causé why that he so dede,
Was, as he wente to and fro,
At Knaresburgh by nightes two
The kinges moder made him
dwelle.

And when the king it herde telle,
Within his hert he wiste als faste
The treson whiche his moder caste;
And thought he wolde nought
abide

But forth right in the same tide
He toke his hors and rode anone,
With him there riden many one,
To Knaresburgh, and forth they
wente

And lich the fire which thonder
hente⁴

In suche a rage, as saith the boke,
His moder sodeinlich he toke
And saide unto her in this wise :
' O beste of helle, in what juise •"
Hast thou deserved for to deie,
That hast so falsely put aweie
With treson of thy backbitfng
The trewest at my knouelching
Of wives and the most honest ?
But I wol make this behest,

¹ Rod, read.

² Forsaken, denied in every part.

³ A stede, one place.

⁴ Hente, pursued and sei'ed, if, lightning;
the fire on which the thunder pounced
ufse, judgment.

I shall be venged or¹ I go.'
And let a fire do make tho
And bad men for to caste her inne.
But first she tolde out all the sinne,
And did hem alle for to wite
How she the letters hadde write,
Fro point to point as it was
wrought.

And tho she was to dethe brought
And brent to-fore her sonds eye,
Wherof these other, whiche it sighe
And herden how the cause stood,
Sain, that the jugement was good
Of that her sone her hath so served;
For she it hadde wel deserved
Through treson of her false tunge,
Which through the lond was after
songe,

Constance and every wight com-
pleineth.

But he, whom alle wo distreigneth,
This sorwefull king, was so bestad
That he shall never more be glad,
He saith, eftsone for to wedde
Till that he wist how that she spedde
Which hadd ben his firste wife;
And thus his yonge unlusty life
He driveth forth so as he may.

" Till it befel upon a day,
Whan he his werrés hadde acheved
And thought he wolde be releved
Of soule hele upon the feith
Whiche he hath take, than he saith,
That he to Rome in pelrindge
Wol go, where Pope was Pelage,
To take his absoluci6n.

And upon this condicion
He made Edwin his lieutenaiint,
Whiche heir to him was apparaunt,
That he the lond in his absence
Shall reule. And thus by providence
Of alle thinges well begonne
He toke his leve and forth is gone.

¹ Or, ere.

- And every one laments for Constance.

" Elda, which was with him tho
there,
Er they fulliche at Rome were,
Was sent to-fore to purveie,
And he his guide upon the weie,
In helpe to ben herbergeour¹
Hath axed who was senatour,
That he his name! mighte kenne.
Of Capadoce, he saide, Arcenne
He hight and was a worthy knyght.
To him goth Elda tho forth right
And tolde him of his lord tiding
And praide, that for his cominge
He wolde assigne him herbergege.
And he so did of good cora"ge.

" Whan all is do that was to done,
The kinge him self cam after sone.
This senatour whan that he come
To Custe and to his wife at home,
Hath tolde howsuche a Kinge Alice
Of great army to the citcc
Was come, and Cust upon his tale
With herte close and colour pale
A swoune² felle, and he merveileth
So sodeinly what thinge her eileth,
And caught her up, and whan she
woke

She siketh with a pitous loke
And feigneth sikennesse of the see,
But it was for the kinge Allee,
For joid which fell in her thought,
That God him hath to towne
brought.

This King hath spoke with the
Pope

And tolde all that he couthe grope
What greveth in his conscience,
And than he thought in reverence
Of his estate, er that he went
To make a feste, and thus he sent
Unto the senatour to come
Upon the morwe and other some

¹ Herbergeour, one sent before to provide lodgings for a stately company,
- A *sivounf*, in swoon.

To sitte with him at the mete.
This tale hath Custe nought for-
yete,

But to Morice her sone tolde
That he upon the morwe sholde
In all that ever he couth and
might

Be present in the Kinges sight,
So that the Kinge him ofte sigh.
Morice to-fore the Kinges eye
Upon the morwe, where he sat,
Full ofte stood, and upon that
The King his chere upon him
caste

And in his face him thought als
faste

He sigh his ownt' wife Constndce,
For Nature, as in resemblaunce
Of face, him liketh so to clothe
That they were of a suite bothe.
The King was moved in his thought
Of that he sigh, and knew it nought;
This childe he loveth kindly,
And yet he wot no caus⁶ why;
But wel he sigh and understodc,
That he toward Arcenne stode,
And axeth him anone right there
If that this childe his sone were.

He saide : 'ye,¹ so I him calle,
And wolde it were so befalle,
But it is, all in other wise.'
And tho² began he to devise,
How he the childes moder fonde
Upon the see, from³ every londe,
Within a ship was stereles;
And how this lady helpeles
Forth with her childe he hath forth
drawe.

The Kinge hath understood his
sawe

The childes name and axeth tho,
And what the moder hight also,
That he him wolde telle he praide.

¹ Ye, yep. ² Tho, them.
³ From, away from.

' Morice this childe is hote,¹ he
saide,

' His moder hatte Custe, and this
I not² what maner name it is.'

But Allee wiste wel inough,
Wherof somdele smilend he lough.
For Custe in Saxon is to saine
Constance upon the word Romaine.
But who that couthe specific,
What tho fell in his fantastic,
And how his witte aboutd renneth
Upon the love in which he bren-
neth

It were a wonder for to here.
For he was nouthere there ne here,
But clene out of him selfe away,
That he not what to thenke or say,
So faine he wolde it were she;
Wherof his hertes privete
Began the werre of ye and nay,
The whiche in such balaunce lay
That contenaunce for a throwe³
He loste, till he mighte knowe
The soth. But in his memorie
The man which lieth in purgatorie,
Desireth nought the Heaven more
That he ne longeth also sore
To wite what him shall betide.

And whan the bordes were aside
And every man was rise aboute,
The Kinge hath weivéd all the route
And with the senatour alone
He spake and praid him of a bone,⁴
To se this Custe where she dwelleth
At home with him, so as he telleth.
The senatour was wel apaide;
This thing no lenger was delaide.
To se this Custé goth the Kinge,
And she was warnéd of the thinge,
And with Heleine forth she came
Ayein the Kinge, and he tho name⁵

Good hede, and whan he sigh his
wife,

Anone with all his hertès life
He caught her in his armes and
kiste.

Was never wight that sigh ne wiste¹
A man that more joie made,
Wherof they weren alld glade
Which herde tellen of this chaunce.
This King tho with his wife Con-
stance,

Whiche had a great part of his will,
In Rome for a time still

Abode and made him well at ese.
But so yet couth he never plesse
His wife, that she him wolde saine
Of her estate the trouthe pleine,
Of what centre that she was bore
Ne what she was, and yet therfore
With all his wit he hath done seke.
Thus as they ligh in bedde and
speke,

She praiht him and counselled!
both,

That for the worship of hem both
So that her thought it were hondste
He wolde an honourable feste
Make er he went in that citee,
Where themperour him self shall
be.

He graunteth all that she him
praide.

But as men in that time saide,
This emperour, fro thilke day
That first his doughter went away,
He was than after never gladde,
But what that any man him badcle
Of gracd for his doughter sake
That grace wolde he nought for-
sake,²

And thus ful great almdsse he dede,
Wherof he haddd many a bede.³

¹ *Hote*, called.

² *Not*, know not.

³ *Throive*, space of time

Bone, petition

⁵ *Name*, took.

¹ *Sighnewiste*, saw work new.

^a *Forsake*, refuse.

³ *Bede*, prayer.

"This Emperour outof the towne,
Within a ten mile enviroiine,
Where as it thought him for the
beste

Hath sondry places for to reste,
And as fortune wolde tho
He was dwellend at one of tho.
The kinge Allee forth with thassent
Of Custe his wife hath thider sent
Morfce his sone, as he was taught,
To themperour, and he goth
straught

And in his fader halve¹ he sought
As hewhiche of his lordship sought,
That of his highe worthinesse
He wolde do so great mekenesse
His owne town to come and se
And yive a time in the citee,
So that his fader might him gete
That he wolde ones with him ete.
This lorde hath graunted his re-
queste.

And whan the day was of the feste,
In worship of her² Emperour
The kinge and eke the senatour
Forth with her wives bothe two,
With many a lorde and lady mo,
On hors gan riden him ayeine,
Till it befell upon a pleine
They sigh where as he was comend.
With that Constance anone praiend
Spake to her lord that he abide,
' So that I may to-fore ride
To ben upon his bienvenue³
The firste which shall him salue.'
And thus after her lordes graunte
Upon a mule white amblaunte
Forth with a fewe rode this quene.
They wondred what she wolde
mene,

And riden after softè pas.
But whan this lady comen was
To themperour, in his presence

¹ On his father's behalf. ² Her, their.
³ Bienvenue, welcome.

She saide aloude in audience :
My lord, my fader, wel you be !
And of this time that I se
Your honour and your godè hele,
Whiche is the helpe of my quarele,
I thonke unto the goddes might.'
For joie his herte was aflight
Of that she tolde in remembraunce.
And whan he wiste, it was Con-
stndnce,

Was never fader half so blithe.
Wepend he kiste her often sithe,
So was his hert all overcome,
For though his moder were come
Fro deth to life out of the grave,
He might no more wonder have
Than he hath whan that he her
sigh.

With that her owne lord come nigh
And is to themperour obeied.
And whan the fortune is bewreied,¹
How that Constance is come
about,

So harde an herte was none oute
That he for pitd tho ne wepte.
Arcennus which her fonde and
kepte

Was thanne glad of that is falle,
So that with joie among hem alle
They riden in at Rome gate.
This Emperour thought all to late,
Till that the Pope were come
And of the lordes sende some
To pray him that he wolde haste.
And he cam forth in alle haste,
And whan that he this tale herde,
How wondeiiy this chaunce ferde,
He thonketh god of his miracle,
To whos might may be none ob-
stidle.

The King a noble feste hem made,
And thus they weren allè glad.
A parldment er that they went
They setten, unto this entent,

¹ Bewreied, disclosed.

To putten Rome in full espeire,¹
That Morice was apparant heire
And shulde abide with hem stille,
For such was all the londes wille.

"Whan every thing was fully
spoke

Of sorwe and queint² was all the
smoke,

Tho toke his leve Alice the Kinge
And with full many a richd thinge
Which themperour him hadde
yive

He goth a gladdde life to live.
For he Constance hath in his honde,
Which was the comfort of the londe.
For whan that he cam home ayein,
There is no tunge that might sain,
What joie was that ilke stounde
Of that he hath his quene founde,
Which first was sent of Goddes
sonde³

Whan she was driven upon the
stronde,

By whom the misbeleve of sinne
Was lefte and Cristes feith came
inne

To hem that whilome were blinde.
But he, which hindreth every kinde
And for no gold may be forbought,
The Deth, comend er he besought
Toke with this king such acquein-
taunce

That he with all his retenaunce
Ne mighte nought defend his life;
And thus he parteth from his wife
Which thanne made sorwe enough.
And therupon her hertè drough
To leven Engeland for ever
And go where that she hadde lever,
To Rome whannè⁴ that she came.
And thus of all the lond she nam⁵

¹ Espeire, hope.

² Queint, quenched; and all the smoke of
sorrow was quenched.

³ Sonde, sending.

⁵ Nam, took.

⁴ Whanne, whence.

Her leve, and goth to Rome ayein.
And after that the bokès sain
She was nought there but a throwe
Whan Deth, of kinde,¹ hath over-
throwe

Her worthy fader, which men saide
That he betwene her armes deide.
And afterward the yere suènde
Tho God hath made of her an ende,
And fro this worldes fairie²
Hath take her into compaignie.

"Morice her sone was coroned,
Which so ferforth was abandouned
To Cristes feith that men him
calle

Moice the Christenest of alle.
And thus the whel meving of Love
Was atte laste set above.
And so, as thoti hast herd to-fore,
The false tungen weren lore³
Whiche upon lovè wolden lie.
Forthy touchend of this Envie,
Which longeth unto Bakbitfng,
Be ward thou make no lesfng
In hindring of another wight.
And if thou wolt be taught aright,
What mischefe Bakbitingè doth,
By other waie a tale soth
Now might thou here next suende,
Which to this Vice is accordndde.

"In a cronique as thou shalt
wite

A great ensample I finde write,
Whiche I shall telle upon this
thinge.

Philip of Macedoind Kinge
Two sones hadde by his wife,
Whose fame yet in Grece is rife.
Demetrius the firste brother
Was hote⁴ and Perseus that other.
Demetrius men saiden tho⁵
The better knight was of the two,

¹ Of kinde in the course of Nature.

² Fairif, changes and illusions.

³ Lore, lost.

⁵ Tho, then.

⁴ Hote, called.

To whom the lond was attendant
As he, whiche heir was apparent
To regne after his faders day.
But that thing which no water may
Quenche in this world, but ever
brenneth,

Into his brothers hert it renneth,
The proud Envie of that he sighe¹
His brother shulde climbe on highe
And he to him mot than obeie;
That may he suffre by no waie,
With strengths' durst he no thing
fonde,²

So toke he lesinge upon honde
When he sigh time, and spake
therto.

For it befell that time so
His fader grete werreds hadde
With Romd, whiche he streite ladde
Through mighty hond of his man-
h6d,

As he whichhath inoughknighthod,
And ofte hem haddè fore greved.
But er the werdd were acheved,
As he was upon ordonaunce
At home in Grece, it fell par
chaunce

Demetrius, whiche ofte aboute
Ridend was, stode that time out,
So that this Perse in his absence,
Which bar the tunge of pestilence
With falsè wordes whiche he
feigneth

Upon his owne brother pleineth
In private behinde his bake,
And to his fader thus he spake:
'My derd fader, I am holde
By way of kinde, as reson wolde,
That I fro you shall nothing hide
Which mightd torne in any side
Of youre estate into grevaiince.
Forth min hertès obeisaiince
As toward you I thanckè kepe.

¹ Sighe, saw.

² Fonde, try.

For it is good ye take kepe¹
Upon a thing whiche is me tolde.
My brother hath us alle solde
To hem of Rome, and you also,
For thanne they behote² him so
That he with hem shall regne in
pees.

Thus hath he cast, for his ences
That your estate shall go to nought.
And this to prove shall be brought
So ferforth that I undertake
It shall nought wel mow be for-
sake.³

"The kinge upon this talc
answerd

And said, 'If this thing which he
herd

Be soth and may be brought to
prove,

It shall nought be to his behove⁴
Which so has shapen us the werste,
For he him self shall be the ferste
That shall be dede, if that I may.'
Thus afterwarde upon a day,
Whan that Demetrius was come,
Anone his fader hath him nome⁵
And bad unto his brother Perse,
That he his tale shall reherse
Of thilke treson whiche he tolde.
And he whiche all untrouthè woldè
Counseileth that so high a nede
Be treted where as it may spede,
In comun place of jugement.
The King therto yaf his assent.

"Demetrius was put in holde,
Wherof that Perseus was bolde.
Thus stood the trouth under the
charge

And the falsehede goth at large,
Which through behest hath ovei-
come

The greatest of the lordes some,

¹ Take kepe, take heed.

² Behote, promised.

³ Forsake denied.

⁴ Behove, advantage. ⁵ Nome, taken.

That priveliche of his accorde
 They stonde as wisse of recorde,
 The juge was made favourdble;
 Thus was the lawe deceivdble
 So ferforth that the trouthe! fonde
 Rescouse¹ none, and thus the
 londe

Forth with the King deceived were :
 The gilteles was dampned there
 And deide upon accusement.
 But suche a fals conspirement,
 Though it be prive for a throwe,²
 God wolde nought it were unknowe,
 And that was afterward wel proved
 In him which hath the deth con-
 troved

Of that his brother was so slaine. •
 This Perseus was wonder faine
 As he that tho was apparent
 Upon the regne³ and expectant,
 Wherof he wax so proude and veine
 That he his fader in disdeigne
 Hath take, and sette at none ac-
 compte,

As he which thought him to sur-
 mounte,
 That where he was first debonaire
 He was tho rebell and contraire,
 And nought as heir but as a kinge
 He toke upon him alle thinge
 Of malice and of tirannie
 In contempte of regالية
 Livend his fader, and so wrought
 That whan the fader him bethought
 And sighe to whether side itdrough,
 Anonc he wiste well inough
 How Perse after his false tonge
 Hath so thenvious belle ronge,
 That he hath slain hisownebrother;
 Wherof as thanne he knew none
 other

But sodeinly the juge he nome⁴

¹ Resfousst, jescue.

- Throwe, space of time.

³ Heir apparent to the kingéom.

⁴ Nome, took.

Which corrupt sat upon the dome,¹
 In suche a wise and² hath him
 pressed

That he the soth him hath con-
 fessed

Of all that hath ben spoke and do.
 More sory than the king was tho
 Was never man upon this molde,
 And thought in certain that he
 wolde

Vengeauncè take upon this wronge.
 But thother partie was so stronge,
 That for the lawe of no statute
 There may no right ben execute.
 And upon this division

The lond was torned up so downe,
 Wherof his herte is so distraught
 That he for pure sorwe hath caught
 The maladie of which nature
 Is queint³ in every creature.

"And whan this King was passed
 thus,

This false tunged Perseus
 The regiment⁴ hath underfonge.
 But there may nothing stonde longe
 Whiche is nought upon trouthe
 grounded.

For God, which hath al thinge
 bounded

And sigh⁵ the falsehed of his guile,
 Hath set him but a litel while
 That he shall regne upon depose,
 For sodeinlich right as a rose
 So sodeinliche down he felle.

" In thilke time, so it befelle,
 This newe King of newe pride
 With strength shope him for to
 ride⁶

And saide he wolde Rome waste ;
 Wherof he made a besy haste,

¹ Upon the dome, 'w judgment.

² And in such a wise.

³ Of which nature is queint, by which natme
 is extinguished (caught his death).

⁴ Regiment, rule.

⁵ Sigh, saw.

⁶ Ride make raid.

And hath assembled him an host
In all that ever he might most,
What man that mighte wepen here
Of all he wolde none forbere.

So that it mighte nought benombred
The folke which was after encom-
bred

Through him that God wolde over-
throw.

" Anon it was at Rome know
The pompe, which that Perse lad,
And the Romaines that time had
A consul which was cleped thus
By name Paul Emilius,
A noble, a worthy knight withalle,
And he which chef was of hem alle
This werre on honde hath under-
take.

And whan he shulde his leve take
Of a yong doughter which was his,
She wepte, and he what cause it is
Her axeth, and she him answerde,
⁴ That Perse is dede ;' and he it
herde

And wondreth what she mene
wolde.

And she upon childehod him tolde,
That Perse, her litel hounde, is
dede.

With that he pulleth up his hecle
And made right a glad visdge
And said, how it was a presage
Touchend unto that other Perse,
Of that Fortune him shulde adverse.
He saith for suche a prnostfke
Most of an hound was to him like,
For as it is an houndes kinde
To berke upon a man behinde,
Right so behinde his brothers bake
With false words whiche he spake
He hath do slaine, and that is routh.
But he whiche hateth all untrouth
The high God it shall redresse,
For so my doughter prophetesse
Forth with her litel houndes dethe

Betokeneth; and thus forth he geth
Comforted of this evidence
With the Romaines in his defence
Ayein the Grekes that ben comende.
This Perseus, as nought seende
This mischef which that him
abode,

With all his multitude rode
And prided him upon this thinge,
Of that he was become a Kinge,
And howe he had his regne gete.
But he hath all the right foryete
Which longeth unto governaunce,
Wherof through Goddes orde-
naunce

It felle upon the winter tide
That with his hoste he shulde ride
Over Danubie thilke flood,
Whiche all befroze thanne stood
So harde, that he wende wele
To passe. But the blinde whele,
Which torneth ofte er men be
ware

Thilke ice which that the horsmen
bare

To-brake, so that a great partie
Was dreint¹ of the chivalerie;
The rerewarde it toke aweie,
Came none of hem to londe drey.²

" Paulus, this worthy knight
Remain,

By his asprie it herde sain,
And hasteth him all that he may,
So that upon that other day³
He came where he this host behelde,
And that was in a large felde,
Wherein the banners ben displaied.
He hath anone his men arraied,
And whan that he was embataffled
He goth and hath the felde assailed
And slough and toke all that he
fonde,

Wherof the Macedonie londe

¹ Dreint, drowned. ² Dry land.
³ That other day, the second day.

Which, through king Alisaundre
honoured

Long time stood, tho was devoured;

To Perse and all that infortune

They wite,¹ so that the comüne

Of all the londe his heire exile :

And he dispeired² for the while

Desguised in a pouer wede

To Rome goth; and there, for nede,

The craft which thilke time was

To worche in laton³ and in bras

He lerneth for his sustenaunce.

Such was the sonès purveiaunce.

And of his fader it is saide,

In strong pris6n that he was laide

In Albe, where that he was dede

For hunger and defaulte of brede.

The hounde was token and pro-
phecie

That liche an hounde he shulde deie

Which lich was of condition

Whan he with his detraction

Barke on his brother so behinde.

" Lo, whatprofft a man may finde,

Which hinder woll an other wight.

Forthy with all thin hold might,

My sone, escheue thilke vice."—

" My fader, ells were I nice.

For ye therfore so well have spoke,

That it is in min herte loke

And ever shall; but of Envie,⁴

If there be more in his bailie⁵

Towards Love, say me what."—

" My sone, as guile under the hat

With sleightes of a tregetour⁵

Is hid, Envie of such colour

Hath yet the fourth deceivaunt,

The whiche is cleped Fals Sem-
blaunt,

Wherof the mater and the forme

Nowe herken, and I thee shall en-
forme.

" of fals **semblaunt** if I shall
telle

Above all other it is the welle

Out of the which deceptè floweth.

There is no man so wise that
knoweth

Of thilkee flood whiche is the tide,

Nehowe he shulde him selven guide

To take sauf passàge there.

And yet the wind to mannes ere

Is softe, and as it semeth oute

It maketh clere weder all aboute.

But though it seme, it is nought so.

For Fals Semblaunt hath ever mo

Of his counseil in compaignie

The derke untrewè Ypocrisie

Whose word discordeth to his
thought.

Forthy- they ben to-gider brought

Of one covine, of one housholde,

As it shall after this be tolde.

Of Fals Semblaunt it nedeth
nought

To telle of olde ensamples ough.

For all day in experience

A man may see thilke evidence

Of fairè wordes, whiche he hereth.

But yet the barge Envie stereth

And halt¹ it ever fro the londe,

Where Fals Semblaunt with ore in
honde

It roweth and will nought arrive

But let it on the waws drive

In great tempest and great debate,

Wherof that Love and his estate

Empeireth.- And therfore I rede,

My sond, that thou fle and drede

This Vice and, what that other sain,

Let thy semblaunt be trewe and
plein.

For Fals Semblaunt is thilke Vice,

Which never was without office,

¹ Halt, holds. ² Ewpcireth, are impaired.

¹ And to Perseus they give the blame for all that misfortune.

² Dispeired, in despair.

³ Laton, latten, brass with an alloy of tin.

⁴ Bailie, government.

⁵ Tregetour, sleight-of-hand man.

Where that Envie thenketh to guile
He shall be for that like while
Of privé counseil messagere.
For whan his semblaunt is most
clere

Than is he most derke in his
thought;

Though men him se, they knowe
him nought.

But as it sheweth in the glas
Thing which therinne never was,
So sheweth it in his visage
That never was in his corage.¹

Thus doth he all his thing by
sleighte.

Now lith thy conscience in weighte,
My gode sone, and shrive thee
here

If thou were ever cnslumerc
To Fals Semblaunt in anywise."—

"For ought I can me yet avise,
My gode fader, certes no ;

If I for love have ought don so,

Now axcth, I wolde pray you.

For elles I wot never how

Of Fals Semblaunt that I have
gilt."—

"My sone, and sithen³ that
thou wilt

That I shall axe, gabbe nought,

But telle if ever was thy thought

With Fals Semblaunt and Cover-
ture

To wite of any creature

How that he was with love ladde,

So were he sory, were he gladre.

Whan than thou wistest howe it
were,

All that he rouned⁴ in thin ere

Thou toldest forth in other place

¹ That which never was in the thought of his heart. *Courage* was any feeling from the heart. When the small buds make melody, says Chaucer, 'so picketh hem Nature in her enragés,' that is, they sing with all their hearts.

Gilt, been guilty.

³ *Sithen*, since.

⁴ *Rounded*, whispered.

To setten him fro Loves grace
Of what woman that thee best liste,
There as no man his counseil wiste
But thou, by whom he was deceived
Of love, and from his purpose
weived,¹

And thoughtest that his disturb-
aunce

Thin ownè cause shuld avaiunce,

As who saith I am so sely²

There may no mannès privcte

Ben heled³ half so well as min.

Art thou, my sone, of suche engin ?

Tell on."—"My godè fader, nay,

As for the more part, I saie.

But of somedele I am beknowe⁴

That I may stonde in thilke rowe

Amonges hem that saundes⁵ use.

I woll nought me therof excuse,

That I with such colour ne steine,

Whan I my beste semblant feigne

To my fellow, till that I wote

All hiscounseil both colde and hote.

For by that cause I make him chere

Till I his lovè knowe and here.

And if so be min herte soucheth¹⁵

That ought unto my lady toucheth

Of love that he woll me telle,

Anon I renne unto the welle

And caste water in the fire,

So that his cart amid the mile

By that I have his counseil knows

Full ofte sith⁷ I overthrowe

Whan that hewenethbest to stonde.

But this I do you understonde,⁸

If that a man love elles where,

So that my lady be nought there,

And he me tell, I will it hide,

There shall no worde escape aside.

For with deceit of no semblaunt

¹ Weived, put aside.

- *Sely*, Dimple.

³ Heled, concealed

⁴ I confess as to some pait.

⁵ *Saundes*, sandal wood (as a dye).

⁶ *Soucheth*, suspects.

⁷ *Ofte sith*, oftentimes,

⁸ *Do you*, make you to understand.

To him breke I no covenant.
 Me liketh nought in other place
 To lette no man of his grace,
 Ne for to ben inquisitive
 To knowe an other mannes life,
 Where that he love or love nought
 That toucheth nothing to my
 thought,

But all it passeth through min ere
 Right as a thing that never were
 And is foryete and laid beside.
 But if it toucheth any side
 My lady, as I have er spoken,
 Min eres ben nought thanne loken.
 For certes whanne that betit,¹
 My will, min herte and all my wit
 Ben fully set to herken and spire -
 What any man woll speke of hire.
 Thus have I feigned compaignie
 Full ofte for³ I wolde aspie
 What thinge it is that any man
 Tell of my worthy lady can.
 And for two causes I do this.

The firste¹ cause wherof is,
 If that I might of herken and seke
 That any man of her misspeke,
 I woll excuse her so fully
 That whan she wist it inderly, '
 Min hope shulde be the more
 To have her thank for evermore.
 That other cause, I you assure,
 Is, why that I by coveiture
 Have feigned semblaunt oftē time
 To hem that passen all day by me
 And ben lovers als well as I,
 For this I wenē truely,
 That there is of hem alle none,
 That they ne loven everychorie
 My lady. For sothlich I leve⁵
 And durste setten it in preve,
 Is none so wise that shulde as-
 terte,⁶

¹ Betit, betides

² Spire, speir, seek narrowly.

³ For, because. ⁴ Inderly, thoroughly.

⁶ Leve, believe. ⁶ Asterte, escape.

But¹ he were lusties in his herte,
 For why and he my lady sigh,²
 Her visage and her goodlich eye,
 But he her loved er he went.
 And for that suche is min entent,
 That is the cause of min aspie,
 Why that I feigne compaignie
 And make felowe over all.
 For gladly wolde I knowen all
 And holdd me covert alway,
 That I full ofte ye or nay
 Ne list answer in any wise,
 But feignen semblaunt as the wise
 And herken tales, till I knowe
 My ladies lovers all arowe.
 And whan I here how they have
 wrought,

I fare as though I herd it nought
 And as I no worde understood.
 But that is nothing for her good,
 For leveth well, the soth is this,
 That whan I knowe all how it is,
 I woll nought furthuren hem a lite •
 But all the werste I can endite
 I tell it unto my lady plat
 For furthering of min own estate
 And hinder hem all that I may.
 But for all that yet dare I say
 I finde unto my self no bote,
 All though min herte nedes mote,
 Through strength of love, all that
 I here

Discover unto my lady clere.
 For in good feith I have no might
 To hele¹ fro that swete wight
 If that it toucheth her any thinge.
 But this wote wel the heven kinye,
 That sithen first the world began
 Unto none other straunge man
 Ne feigned I semblaunt ne chera
 To wite or axe of his matere,
 Though that he loved ten or twelve
 Whan it was nought my ladies selve.

¹ But, unless. ² If he saw my lady.
⁸ Hele, conceal.

But if he wold axe any rede
 Alonlich of his owne hede,
 How he with other love ferde,
 His tales with min eres I herde
 But to min herte came it nought
 Ne sank no deper in my thought,
 But held counseil as I was bede,
 And tolde it never in other stede,¹
 But let it passen as it come.
 Now fader, say, what is thy dome,
 And how thou wolt that I be
 peined²
 For such semblaunt as I have
 feigned."—

"My sone, if reson woll be
 peised,³

There may no Vertue ben un-
 preised

Ne Vice none be set in prise.

Forthy, my sone, if thou be wise

Do no visen upon thy face

Which wolde nought thin hert
 embrace.

For if thou do, within a throwe

To other men it shall be knowe,

So might thou lightly fall in blame

And lese a great part of thy name.

And netheles in this degre

Full oftè time thou might se

Of suche men as now a day

This Vied setten in assay,

I speke it for no mannes blame.

But for to warne thee the same.

My sone, as I may here talke

In every place where I walke,

I not⁴ if it be so or none

But it is many dales gone

That I first herde told this,

How Fals Semblaunt hath be and is

Most comunly from yere to yeie

With hem that dwelle among us
 here

Of suche as we Lumbardes calle.

For they ben the sliest of alle
 So as men sain in towne about
 To feigne and sheue thing without
 Whiche is revers to that withinne,
 Wherof that they full ofte winne
 Whan they by reson shulde lese.
 They ben the last, and yet they
 chese,

And we the firste, and yet behinde
 We gone there as we shulden finde
 The profit of our owne londe,
 Thus gone they free withouten
 bonde

To done her profit all at large,
 And other men bere all the charge.
 Of Lumbardes unto this covine
 Whiche alle londes conne engine¹
 May Fals Semblaunt in especiall
 Be likened, for they over all
 Where that they thenken for to
 dwelle,

Among hem self, so as they telle,
 First ben enformed for to lere²

A craft which cleped is Facrere³

For if Facrere come about

Than afterward hem stant no doubt

To voide with a subtil honde

The bestc goodes of the londe,

And bringe chafife and take corne.

Where as Facrere goth beforene

In all his waie he fint no lette,

That dore can none ussher shette,

In whiche he list to take entre.

And thus the counseil most secre

Of every thing Facrere knoweth

Whiche into straunge place he
 bloweth

Where as he wote⁴ it may most
 greve.

And thus Facrere maketh belevc.

So that full ofte he hath deceived

Er that he may ben apperceived.

¹ To this secret contrivance of the Lombards,
 who can outwit all nations

²Lere, learn. ³ Facrere dissimulation.

⁴ Wote, knows.

¹ Stede, place. ³ Peintd, put to penance.

³ Peised, weighed. Not, know not.

Thus is this Vice for to drede,
 For who these olde bokes rede
 Of suche ensamples as were er,
 Him oughte be the more ware
 Of alte tho that feigne chere,
 Wherof thou shalte a tald here.

"Of fate semblant whiche is
 beleved,

Ful many a worthy wight is greved
 And was long time or¹ we were
 bore.

To thee, my sone, I will therfore
 A tale tell of Fals Semblaunt
 Which falseth many a covenaut
 And many a fraude of fals counseil
 There ben hangend upon his sail.
 And that abouten gilteles
 Both Deianire and Hercules,
 The whiche in great disese fell
 Through Fals Semblaunt, as I shall
 tell.

"Whan Hercules within a throwe
 All only hath his herte throwe
 Upon this faire Deianire,
 It fell him on a day desire,
 Upon a river as he stood,
 That passe he wolde over the flood
 Withoute bote and with him lede
 His love, but he was in drede
 For tendresse of that swete wight,
 For he knewe nought the foide
 aright.

There was a gaunt thanne nigh,
 Which Nessus hight, and whan he
 sigh

This Hercules and Deianire,
 Within his herte he gan conspire
 As he which through his trecherie
 Hath Hercules in great envie,
 Whiche he bare in his herte loke,
 And than he thought it shall be
 wroke.

But he ne durste netheles
 Ayein this worthie Hercules

1 Or, ere.

Fall in debate as for to feight,
 But feigned semblaunt all by sleight
 Of frendship and of alle good,
 And cometh where as they both
 stood

And makethemallthecherehe can
 And saith, that as her¹ owne man
 He is all redy for to do

What thinge he may ; and it fel so,
 That they upon this semblaunt
 triste2

And axen him, if that he wiste
 What thinge hem were best to done,
 So that they mighten sauf and sone
 The water passe, he and she.
 And whan Nessus the private
 Knew of her herte what it ment,
 As he that was of double entent
 He made hem right a glad vivilge.
 And whan he herde of the passdge
 Of him and her, he thought guile
 And feigneth semblant for a while
 Todone hem plesaunce and servfse,
 But he thought all an other wise.

"This Nessus with his wordes
 sligh

Yaf such counseil to-foie her eye,
 Which semeth outward profitable
 And was withinne deceivdble.
 He bad hem of the stremes depe
 That they beware and take kepe,
 So as they knowe nought the pas.
 But for to helpe in suche a cas
 He saith him self, that for her ese
 He wolde, if that it mighte hem
 plese,

The passage of the water take
 And for this lady undertake
 To bere her to that other stronde
 And sauf to set her up a londe,
 And Hercules may than also
 The waie knowe, how he shall go.
 And herto they accorden all.
 But what as after shall befall

1 Her, their. 2 Triste, trust.

Well paid was Hercules of this.
 And this geaunt also glad is
 And toke this lady up alofte
 And set her on his shulder softe
 And in the flood began to wade
 As he which no grucching made,
 And bare her over sauf and sounde.
 But whan he stood on drie grounde
 And Hercules was fer behinde,
 He set his trouth all out of minde,
 Who so therof be lefe or loth
 With Deianire forth he goth,
 As he that thoughte to dissever
 The compaignie of hem for ever.
 Whan Hercules therof toke hede,
 As faste as ever he might him spede
 He hieth after in a throwe.
 And hapneth that he had a bowe,
 The whiche in alle hast he bende,
 As he that wolde an arwé sende,
 Whiche he to-fore had envenimed.
 He hath so well his shotted timed,
 That he him through the body
 smette

And thus the false wight he Iette.¹
 But list now, suche a felonie.
 Whan Nessus wist he shulde deid,
 He toke to Deianire his sherte,
 Which with the blood was of his
 herte

Through out disteigned over all,
 And tolde how she it kepe shall
 And prively to this entent,
 That if her lorde his herte went
 To love in any other place,
 This shert, he saith, hath such a
 grace,

That if she may so mochel make
 That he the sherte upon him take,
 He shall all other lette in veine
 And torne unto her love ayeine.

"Who was so glad but Deianire?
 Her thought her herte was on a
 fire,

¹ *Lette*, delayed, stopped.

Till it was in her cofre loke,
 So that no word therof was spoke.

"The daies gone, the yerespasse,
 The hertes waxen lasse and lasse
 Of hem that ben to love untrewre.
 This Hercules with herte newe
 His love hath set on Eolen,
 And therof speken alle men.
 This Eolen, this fain' maide
 Was as men thilke time saide
 The kingés doughter of Eurice.
 And she made Hercules so nice
 Upon her love and so assote,¹
 That he him clotheth in her cote,
 And she in his was clothed ofte,
 And thus feblesse is set alofte
 And strength was put under fote.
 There can no man therof do bote.
 Whan Deianire hath herd this
 speche,

There was no sorwe for to seche,
 Of other helpd wot she none
 But goth unto her cofre anone,
 With wepend eye and wofull herte
 She toke out thiike unhappy sherte,
 As she that wende wel to do,
 And brought her werke aboutd so,
 That Hercules this shert on dede
 To suche entent as she was
 bede

Of Nessus, so as I said er.
 But therof was she nought the ner,
 As no fortune may be weived,
 With Fals Semblant she was de-
 ceived.

But whan she wendd best have
 wonne,

She lost all that she hath begonne.
 For thilke shert unto the bone
 His body sette a fire anone
 And cleveith so it may nought
 twinne²

For the venom, that was therinne.

¹ *Assote*, made to dote

² *Twinne*, be separated.

And he than as a wilde man
Unto the highe wode he ran,
And as the clerke Ovide telleth,
The grete trees to grounde he
felleth

With strengthe al of his owne might
And made an hughe fire upright
And lepte therm him self at ones
And brent him self both flessch and
bones ;

Which thinge cam through Fals
Semblaunt

That false Nessus the geautit
Made unto him and to his wife,
Wherof that he hath lost his life,
And she sory for evermo.

"Forthy my sone, er thee be wo
I rede be wel ware therfore.
For whan so great a man was lore,¹
It ought to yive a great conceipt
To warne all other of such cle-
cept."—

"Graunt mercy, fader; I am ware
So fer, that I no. more dare
Of Fals Semblaunt take acqueint-
aunce,

But rather I wol do penaunce,
That I have feigned chere er this.
Now axeth forth, what so there is
Of that belongeth to my shrifte." -

"My sone, yet there is the fifte,
Whiche is conceived of envie
And cleped is supplantarie,
Through whos compassement and
guile

Ful many a man hath lost his while
In love as wel as other wise,
Here after as I shall devise.

The pice of Supplantacion
With many a fals collacion
Whiche he conspireth all unknowe,
Full ofte time hath overthrowe
The worship of another man.

So wel no life awaite can

¹ Lore, lost.

Ayein his sleightd for to caste,
That he his purpose atte laste
Ne hath, er that it be withset.¹

But most of all his hert is set
In court upon these great offices
Of dignites and benefices.

Thus goth he with his sleighte
about

To hinder and shove another out
And stonden with his sligh compds
In stede there another was,
And so to set him selven inne.

He recheth nought be so he winne
Of that another man shall lese,
And thus full ofte chalk for chese
He chaungeth with full litel coste,
Wherof another hath the loste
And he the profit shall receive.

For his Fortune is to deceive
And for to chaunge upon the whele
His wo with other mennes wele;
Of that another man availeth

His own estate thus he up hailleth
And taketh the brid to his beyete,-
Where other men the bussches bete.
My sone, and in the same wise

There ben lovers of suche emprise,
That shapen hem to be relieved
Where it is wronge to ben acheved,
For it is other mannes right

Whiche he hath taken, day and
night,

To kepe for his owne store,
Toward him self for evermore
And is his proper³ by the lawe,
Which thing that axeth no felawe,
If Love holde his covenaut.

But they that worchen by supplant,
Yet wolden they a man supplant
And take a part of thilke plant,
Whiche he hath for him selve set.
And so ful ofte is all unknet

¹ Withset, upset.

² Takes the bird for his own profit.

³ Proper, property.

That some man weneth be right
faste.

For Supplaunt with his slit' caste
Full ofte happeneth for to mowe
Thing which another man hath
sowe,

And maketh comun of proprete
With sleighte and with subtilite,
As men may sen from yere to yere.
Thus claimeth he the bote to stere
Of whiche another maister is.

"Forth my sone, if thou er this
Hast ben of such professidn,
Discover thy confession.

Hast thou supplanted anyman?"—

"For ought that I you telld can,
Min holy fader, as of dede
I am withouten any drede
And gilteles but of my thought,
My conscience excuse I nought.
For were it wronge or were it right,
Me lacketh no thinge but might
That I rie wolde longe er this
Of other mannes love iwis¹

By way of supplantation
Have made appropriatirin
And holde that I never bought,
Though it another man forthought.²
And all this speke I but of one,
For whom I let all other gone.
But her I may nought overpasse
That I ne mote ahway compasse,
Me rought nought by what quern-
tise,³

So that I might in any wise
Fro suche that my lady serve,
Her herte make for to swerve
Withouten any part of love.
For by the goddes alle above
I wolde it might so befalle,
That I alone shuld hem alle
Supplant and welde her at my wille.
And that thing may I nought fulfille,

But if I shulde strengthe make.
And that I dare nought undertake
Though I were as was Alisaunder,
For therof might arise a sclauder.
And certes that shall I do never,
For in good feith yet had I level-
In my simplesse for to deie,
Than worche such supplantarie.
Of other wise I woll nought say
That, if I founde a siker way,
I wolde as for conclusion
Worche after supplantacion
So highe a love for to winne.
Now fader, if that this be sinne,
I am all redy to redresse
The gilt, of whiche I me confesse."—

"My gode sone, as of Supplant
Thee there nought drede *tant ne
quant*

As for no thing that I have herde,
But only that thou haste misferde
Thenkend, and that me liketh
nought,

For God beholt¹ a mannes thought.
And if thou understood in soth
In Loves cause what it doth
A man to ben a supplantour,
Thou woldest for thin own honour
By double waie take kepe.

"First for thin own estate to kepe,
To be thy self so well bethought
That thou supplanted were nought.
And eke for worship of thy name
Towarded other do the same
And suffre every man have his.
But netheles it was and is
That in awaite² at all assaies
Supplant of love is in our waies ;
The lief full ofte for the lever
Forsaketh,³ and so it hath done
ever.

Ensampler I finde therupon,
At Troie how that Agémemnon

¹ Iwis, certainly. ² Forthought, grieved

³ I should not care by what ingenious device

¹ Beholt, beholds, ² Awaite, watch.

³ Leaves the loved for the more loved.

Supplanted hath the worthy knight
 Achilles for that swete wight,
 Which named was Brisseida;
 And also of Criseida,
 Whom Troilus to love ches,¹
 Supplanted hath Diomedes.

Of Geta and Amphitrione,
 That whilom were both as one
 Of frendship and of compaignie,
 I rede how that Supplantarie
 In Love, as it betide tho,
 Beguiled hath one of hem two.
 For this Geta', that I of mene,
 To whom the lusty faire Alcmene
 Assured was by way of love,
 Whan he best wende have ben above
 And sikerest of that he hadde,
 Cupido so the causd ladde,
 That while he was out of the way,
 Amphitriion her love away
 Hath take, and in this forme he
 wrought.

By night unto the chambre he
 sought

Where that she lay, and with a wile
 He counterfeteth for the while
 The vois of Get in suche a wise,
 That made her of her bedde arise
 Wenende, that it were he,
 She wende, that it were soth.
 Lo, what supplant of Love doth.
 This Geta forth bejaped went,
 And yet ne wist he what it ment.
 Amphitriion him hath supplanted
 With sleight of love and her en-
 chaunted,

And thus put every man out other.
 The ship of Love hath lost his rother,
 So that he can no reson stere.
 And for to speke of this matere
 Touchende Love and his supplaunt
 A tale, whiche is accordaunt,
 Unto thin ere I thanke enforme.
 Now herken, for this is the forme.

¹ Ches, chose.

“**Of thiske citee chefe** of alle,
 Which men the noble Rome calle,
 Er it was set to Cristes feith,
 There was, as the cronique saith,
 An emperour, the whiche it ladde
 In pees, that he no werres hadde.
 There was no thing disobeisaunt,
 Which was to Rome appertenaunt,
 But all was torned into lest.
 To some it thought hem for the
 best,

To some it thought nothfng so.
 And that was only unto tho
 Whose hert stood upon knighthode.
 But most of alle his manhode
 The worthy sone of themperour,
 Which wolde ben a werriour,
 As he that was chivalerotis,
 Of worldes fame and desirous,
 Began his fader to beseche,
 That he the werres mighte seche
 In straunge marches for to ride.
 His fader saide he shulde abide
 And wolde graunte him no leve.
 But he, which wolde nought be-
 leve,¹

A knight of his to whom he tribt,
 So that his fader nothing wist,
 He toke and tolde him his corage,²
 That he purposeth a viage,
 If that Fortune with him stonde.³
 He said how that he wolde fonde³
 The Crete See⁴ to passe unknowe
 And there abide for a throwe⁵
 Upon the werres to travaile.
 And to this point without faille
 This knight, whan he hath herde
 his lorde,

Is swore and stant of his accorde.
 And they that bothe yonge were,
 So that in prive counseil there

¹ Beleve, remain.

² His corage, the thought of his heart.

³ frotuie, try.

⁴ Crete See, Mediterranean.

⁵ For ' throwe, for a time

They ben assented for to wende;
And therupon to make an ende
Tresure inough with hem they
token.

And whan the time is best they
loken

That sodeinlich in a galeie
Fro Romd-lond they went their waie
And lond upon that other side.

" The worlde fell so thilke tide,
Whiche ever his happes hath
diverse,

The grete Souldan than of Perse
Ayein the Caliphe of Egfppte
A werre, which that him beclipte,¹
Hath in a marche costeaunt.²

And he, which was a pursuivaunt
Worship of armes to atteigne,
This Romain, let anon ordeigne
That he was redy every dele.

And whan he was arraied wele
Of every thing which him be-
longeth,

Straight unto Kaire his wey lie
longeth,³

Wher he the Souldan thanne fonde
And axeth that within his londe
He might him for the werre serve
As he which woll his thank deserve.
The Souldan was right glad withall
And well the more in specidll,
Whan that he wist he was Romain.
But what was dies incertain
That might he wite by no way.
And thus the knight of Whom I say
Toward the Souldan is belefte
And in the marches now and eftc.
Where that the dedly werreds were,
He wrought such knighthode
there,

That every man spake of him good.

" And thilke time so it stood,

¹ *Beclipte* surrounded.
² *Marche costeaunt* border country.
³ *longeth,* takes.

This mighty Souldan by his wife
A doughter hath, that in this life
Men saide there was none so faire ;
She shulde ben her faderd heire,
And was of yeres ripe inough,
Her beaute many an herte drough
To bowen to that ilke lawe,
Fro which no life may be with-
drawe.

And that is Love, whose nature
Set life and deth in a venture
Of hem that knighthode undertake.

This lusty peine hath overtake
The hert of this Romain so sore,
That to knighthode more and more
i Prowesse avaunteth his corgie.

Lich to the Icon in his rage,
Fro whom that alle bestes fle;
Such was this knight in his degre.
Where he was armed in the felde,
Ther durste none abide his shelde.
Great price¹ upon the werre he
hadde.

" But she, whiche all the chaunce
ladde,

Fortune shope the marches so,
That by thassentl of bothe two
The Souldan and the Caliphe eke
Bataile upon a day they seke,
Which was in suche a wise set,
That lenger shulde it nought be let.
They made hem stronge on every
side,

And whan it drough toward the tide,
That the bataile shulde be,
The Souldan in great privete
A gold ringe of his doughter toke
And made her swere upon a boke
And eke upon the godded all,
That if foitune so befall

In the bataile that he deie,—
That she shall thilke man obeie
And take him to her husebonde,
Which thilke same ring to honde

¹ *Price*, praise.

Her shulde bringe after his deth.
 " This hath she swore, and forth
 he geth
 With all the power of his londe
 Unto the marche, where he fonde
 His enemy full embatailed.
 The Souldan hath the feld assailed.
 They that ben hardy sone assem-
 blen,
 Wherof the dfedfull hertes trem-
 blen.
 That one sleeth, and that other
 sterveth,¹
 But above all his prise deserveth
 This knightly Romaiti; where he
 rode
 His dedly swerd no man abode,
 Ayein the which was no defence,
 Egipte fledde in his presence,
 And they of Perse upon the chace
 Pursuen, but I not² what grace
 Befell, an arwe out of a bowe
 All sodcinly within a throwe
 The Souldan smote, and there he
 lay.
 The chas is left for thilke day,
 And he was bore into a tent.
 The Souldan sigh how that it went,
 And that he shulde algate deie.
 And to this knight of Romainie,
 As unto him whome he most triste,
 His daughters ring, that none it
 wiste,
 He toke and tolde him all the cas,
 Upon her othe what token it wah
 Of that she shulde ben his .wife.
 Whan this was said, the hertes life
 Of this Souldan departeth sone.
 And therupon. as was to done,
 The dcde body well and faire
 They carry till they come at Kaire,
 There he was worthely begrave.
 " The lordes, whiche as wolden
 save

The regne, which was desolate,
 To bringe it into good estate
 A parlement they set anone.
 Now herken what fell therupon.
 This youge lord, this worthy knight
 Of Rome upon the same night
 That they a morwe trete sholde,
 Unto his bacheler he tolde
 His counseil, and the ring With al
 He sheweth, through which that he
 shall,
 He saith, the kinges doughter
 wedde,
 For so the ring was leid to wedde,¹
 He tolde, into her faders honde,
 That with what man that she it
 fonde
 She shulde him take unto her lordc.
 'And thus,' he saith, 'stant of le-
 cordc.
 But no man wot who hath this
 rin.'
 This bacheler upon this thing
 His ere and his entente laid
 And thoughte more than he said .'
 And feigneth with a fals visage,
 That he was glad, but his corage
 Was all set in another wise.
 These oldt5 philosophres wise
 They writen upon thilke while,
 That he may best a man beguile
 In whom the man hath most
 credence.
 And this befell in evidence
 Toward this yonge lord of Rome.
 His bacheler, which hadde come
 Whan that his lord by nighte
 slepte,
 This ring, the which his inaister
 kepte, ,
 Out of his purs away he dede
 And put another in the stede.
 " A morwe whan the court is set
 The yonge lady was forth fet,

1 Sterveth, dies ² Not, know not (ne vot).

¹ To wedde, as pledge.

To whom the lordes done homage,
 And after that of maridge
 They treten and axen of her wille.
 But she, which thoughte to fulfille
 Her faders hest in this mature,
 Said openly, that men may here,
 The charge whiche her fader bad.
 Tho was this lorde of Rome glad
 And drough toward his purs anone,
 But all for nought, it was agone.
 His bacheler it hath forth drawe
 And axeth therupon the lawe,
 That she him holde covaunant.
 The token was so suffisaunt,
 That it ne mighte be forsake.
 And netheles his lorde hath take
 Quardle ayein his owne man,
 But for no thing that ever he can
 He might as thanne nought be
 herde,

So that his claime is unanswerde,
 And he hath of his purpos failed.

"This bacheler was tho coun-
 seiled

And wedded and of thilke empire
 He was corouned lord and sire,
 And all the lond him hath re-
 ceived ;

Wherof his lord, which was de-
 ceived,

A siknesse er the thridde morwc
 Conceived hath of dedly sorwe.
 And as he lay upon his deth,
 There while him lasteth speche
 and breth

He sende for the worthiest
 Of all the londe and eke the best
 And tolde hem all the sothe tho,
 That he was sone and heire also
 Of thempour of grete Rome,
 And how that they to-gider come,
 This knight and he, right as it was
 He tolde hem all the pleine cas.
 And for that he his counseil tolde,
 That other hath all that he wolde

And he hath failed of his mede.
 As for the good he taketh none hede
 He saith, but only of the love,
 Of which he wend have ben above.
 And therupon by letter write
 He doth his fader for to wite
 Of all the mater how it stode.
 And thanne with an hertely mode
 Unto the lordes he besought
 To tell his lady howe he bought
 Her love, of whiche another glad-
 deth.

And with that worde his hewefadeth
 And saide: ' a dieu my lady swete.'
 The life hath lost his kindly hete,
 And he lay dede as any stone,
 Wherof was sory many one,
 But none of alle so as she.

" This false knight in his degre
 Arested was and put in holde.
 For openly whan it was tolde
 Of the treson, whiche is befaller.
 Throughout the lond they saiden
 alle,

If it be soth that men suppose
 His owne untrouth him shall depose.
 And for to seche an evidence
 With honour and great reverence,
 Wherof they might knowe an ende,
 To thempour anon they sende
 The letter whiche his sone wrote.
 And whan that he the soth wote,
 To tell his sorwe is endeles ;
 But yet in haste netheles
 Upon the tale whiche he herde,
 His steward into Perse ferde
 With many a worthy Romain eke
 His *legé tretour*¹ for to seke.
 And whan they thider come were,
 This knight him hath confessed
 there,

How falsly that he hath him bore,
 Wherof his worthy lord was lore.²

¹ *His lege tretour*, his traitorous liegeman.
 - *Lore*, lost.

" Tho saiden some he shulde
deie,

But yet they founden such a .weie,
That he shall nought be dede in
Perse,

And thus the skilles ben diverse.
By cause that he was coroned,
Of that the lond was abandoned
To him, all though it were unright,
There is no peine for him dight,
But to this point and to this ende
They graunten wel, that he shall
wende

With the Remains to Rome ayein.
And thus accorded full and plein
The quicke body with the dede
With leve take forth they lede,
Where that supplant hath his juisse.²
Wherof that thou thee might avise
Upon this enformacion

Touchend of Supplantacion,
That thou, my sond, do nought so
And for to take hede also
What Supplant doth in other halve,
There is no man can finde a salve
Plainly to helen suche a sore.
It hath and shall ben evermore,
Whan Pride is with Envie joint,
He suffreth no man in good point,
Where that he may his honour let.
And therupon if I shall set
Ensample, in holy chirche I finde
How that Supplant is nought be-
hinde.

God wote, if that it now be so.
For in cronique of time ago
I finde a tale concbrddble
Of Supplant, which that is no fable,
In the maner as I shall telle
So as whilom the thinges felle.

At Rome as it hath ofte falle
The Viker Generall of alle
Of hem that leven Cristes feith

¹ *Leve take*, leave taken.

² *Juisse* (judicium), judgment.

His laste day,—which none with-
saith,—

Hath shette as to the worldes eye :
Whos name, if I shall specifie.

He highte Pope Nicholas.
And thus whan that he passdd was,
The Cardinals, that wolden save
The forme of lawe in the conclave,
Con for to chese a newe Pope,
And after that they couthe agrope
Hath eche of hem said his entent.
Til atte laste they assent

Upon an holy clerk recluse,
Which full was of gostly vertuse.
His patience and his simplesse
Hath set him into highe noblesse.
Thus was he Pope canonised
With great honour and intronised.
And upon chaunce, as it is falle,
His name Celestin men calle ;
Which notified was by bulle
To holy chirche, and to the fulle
In alle londes magnified.

But every worship is envied,
And that was thilke time sene.
For whan this Pope, of whome I
mene,

Was chose and other set beside,
A Cardinal was thilke tide,
Which the papate long hath desired
And therupon gretely conspired,
liut whan he sigh fortune is failed,
For which long time he hath tra-
vailed,

That ilke fire whiche Ethna bren-
neth

Throughout his wofull herterenneth,
Whiche is resembled to Envie,
Wherof Supplant and Trecheie
Ehgendred is. And netheles
He feigneth love, he feigneth pees.
Outward he doth the reverence,
But all within his conscience
Through fals ymaginacion
He thoughte Supplantacion.

And therupon a wonder wile
 He wroughte. For at thilke while
 It fel so, that of his ligrijde
 He hadde a clergeon of yonge age,
 Whom he hath in his chambre
 affaited.¹

"This Cardinal his time hath
 waited

And with his wordes sly and queint,
 The whiche he couthe wisely peint,
 He shope this clerke, of whiche I
 telle,

Toward the Pope for to dwelle,
 So that within his chamber a night
 He lay, and was a privé wight
 Toward the Pope on nightes tide;
 May no man fle that shall betide.

"This Cardinal, which thought
 guile,

Upon a day, whan he hath while,
 This yongé clerke unto him toke
 And made him swere upon a boke
 And tolde him what his wille was.
 And forth with al a trompe of bras
 He hath him take and bad him
 this:

'Thou shall.' he saide, 'whan
 time is

Awaite and take right good kepe,
 Whan that the Pope is fast aslepe
 And that none other man be nigh.
 And thanne that thou be so sligh
 Through out the trompe into his
 ere,

Fro heven as though a vois it were,
 To soun of such prolacion,
 That he his meditation

Therof may take, and understonde
 As though it were of Goddes sonde.
 And in this wise thou shalt say,'

That he do thilk estate away
 Of Pope, of whiche he stant hon-
 oured,

So shall his soule be socoured

Of thilke worship atte last
 In heven which shall ever last,'

"This clerk, whan he hath herd
 the form,

How he the Pope shuld enform,
 Toke of the Cardinal his leve
 And goth him home, till it was eve.
 And prively the trompe he hedde,
 Til that the Pope was a bedde.

And at the midnight, whan he
 knewe

The Pope slepte, than he blcwe
 Within his trompe through the wall
 And tolde, in what maner he shall
 His Papacfe leve, and take
 His firste estate. And thus awake
 This holy Pope he made thrjes,
 Wherof diverse fantasies

Upon his grete holinesse
 Within his hert he gan irnpresse.

The Pope full of innocence
 Conceiveth in his conscience

That it is Goddes wil he cesse.¹

But in what wise he may relese
 His highe estate, that wote he
 nought.

And thus within him selfe be
 thought,

He bare it stille in his memoire,
 Till he cam to the consistoire,

And there in presence of hem alle
 He axeth if it so befallé,

That any Pope cesse wolde,
 How that the lawe it suffre sholde.

They seten alle stille and herde,
 Was none, which to the point
 answerde

For to what purpos that it ment
 There was no man knew his en-
 tent

But only he which shope the guile.

"This Cardinal the same while
 All openly with wordes pleine
 Saith if the Pope woll ordeigne,

¹ *Affaited*, adapted to his purpose.

¹ *Cesse*, abdicate.

That there be suche a lawe wrought,
Than might he cesse, and elles
nought.

" And as he saide, done it was.
The Pope anone upon the cas
Of his papall auctorite
Hath made and yovd the decre.
And whan the lawe was confermed
In *duè* forme and all affermed,
This innocent which was deceived
His papacie anone hath weived,¹
Renounced and resigned eke.
That other was no thing to seke,
But underneth the suche a jape
He hath so for him selfe shape,
That how as ever it him beseme
The mitre with the diademe
He hath through Supplantacion
And in his confirmacion,
Upon the fortune of his grace,
His name was cleped Boneface.

" Under the viser of Envie,
Lo, thus was hid the trecherie
Whiche hath beguiled many one.
But such counseil theremaybe none
Which treson, whan it is conspired,
That it nis lich the sparke fired
Up in the roof, which for a throwe
Lith hid til, whan the windes blowe,
It blaseth out on every side.
This Boneface, which can nought
hide

The trecherie of his supplaiuit,
Hath openly made his avaunt,
How he the papacie hath wonne.
But thing which is with wrong be-
gonne

May never stonde wel at ende.
Where Pride shall the bqwe bende,
He shet² ful oft put of the way.
And thus the Pope, of whom I say,
Whan that he stood on high the
whele,

¹ Weived put aside.

² Stiff, shoots.

He can nought suffre himself be
wele.

Envie, whiche is Iovèles,
And Pride, whiche is laweles,
With such tempdstd made him erre,
That charite goth out of herre.¹

So that upon misgovernaunce
Ayein Lewn's the King of Fraunce
He tokè quarell of his oultrage
And said, he shulde don homage
Unto the chirche bodely.

But he, that wist no thinge why
He shulde do so great service
After the worlde in suche a wise,
Withstood the wrong of that
demaunde,

For nought the Pope may com-
maunde

The King woll nought the Pope
obeie.

This Pope tho by alle weie
That he may worche of violence,
Hath sent the bulle of his sentence
With cursinge and with enterdite.
The king upon this wrongfull plite
To kepe his regnè from servage,
Counselled was of his barnage,
That might with might shall be
withstand.

Thus was the cause tak on hond,
And saiden, that the papacie
They wolden honour and magnifie
In all that ever is spiritudll,
But thilke Pride temponill
Of Boneface in his persone
Ayein that ilke wronge aldne
They wolde stonden in debate,
And thus the man and nought the
state

The Frensshe shopen by her might
To greve. And fel there was a
knight

Sire Guilliam de Langhret,
Which was upon this cause set.

¹ Goes off its hinges. ² Barnage baronage.

And therupon he toke a route
 Of men of armes and rode oute,
 So longe and¹ in awaite he lay,
 That he aspiend upon a day
 The Pope was at Avinon
 And shulde ride out of the town
 Unto Pontsorge, the whiche is
 A castell in Provence of his.
 Upon the way and as he rode,
 This knight, whiche hoved and
 abode
 Embuissched upon horsdbake,
 All sodeinlich upon him brake
 And hath him by the bridell sesed
 And said: 'O thou, which hast
 disised
 The courte of Fraunce by thy
 wronge,
 Now shalt thou singe an other
 songe.
 Thin enterdite and thy sentence
 Ayein thin owne conscience
 Hereafter thou shalt fele and grope.
 We pleigne nought ayein the Pope,
 For thilkd name is honourable,
 But thou, whiche hast be deceivable
 And trecherous in all thy werke,
 Thou Boneface, and proude clerke,
 Misleder of the papacie,²
 Thy false body shall able²
 And suffre, that it hath deserved.'
 "Lo, thus this supplantor was
 served.
 For they him ladden into Fraunce
 And setten him to his pendunce
 Within a toure in harde bondes,
 Where he for hunger both his
 hondes
 Ete of and die.i, God wote how.

¹ *So longe and*, and so long. This way of placing "and" occurs frequently throughout the poem. Here it recurs six lines lower-down.

² *Abie*. "Abye" means buy, that is, "pay for." "Abide" would mean "wait for," as this knight "hoved" (hovered about a spot) and abode, waited for, Pope Boniface.

Of whome the writinge is yet now
 Registered as a man may here,
 Which speketh and saith in this
 maner :

' Thin entre lich a fox was sligh,
 Thy regne also with pride on high
 Was lich the leon in his rage,
 But atte laste of thy passage
 Thy deth was to the houndes like.'

" Suche is the letter of his cro-
 nique

Proclamed in the court of Rome,
 Wherof the wise ensample nome.¹
 And yet as ferforth as I dare,
 I rede all other men beware
 And that they loke well algate,
 That none his owne estate translate
 Of holy chirche in no degre
 By fraude ne by subtilte.

For thilke honour whiche Aaron
 toke

Shall none receive as saith theboke,
 But he be cleped,² as he was.
 What shall I thenken in this cas
 Of that I here nowe a day ?
 I not,³ but he which can and may
 By reson both and by nature
 The helpe of every mannes cure
 He kepe Simon fro the folde.

" For Joachim, thilke abbot tolde,
 How suche daies shulden falle,
 That comunlich in places alle
 The chapmen of such mercerie
 With fraude and with supplantaiie
 So many shulden beie and selle,
 That he ne may for shamd telle
 So foule a sinne in mannes ere.
 But God forbede that it were
 In ourè daies, that he saith.
 For if the clerk beware⁴ his faith
 In chapmanhode at suche a faire
 The remenaunt mot nede empeire⁵

¹ *Nome*, took.

² *But he be cleped*, unless he be called.

³ *Not*, know not.

⁴ *Beware*, barter.

⁵ *Empeire* grow worse.

Of all that to the world belongeth.
For whan that holy chirche wrong-
eth,

I not what other thing shall righte.
And netheles at mannes sighte
Envfe for to be preferred
Hath conscience so differred,
That no man loketh to the Vice
Whiche is the moder of malice,
And that is thilke fals Envie,
Which causeth many a trecherie.
For where he may another se
That is more gracious than he,
It shall nought stonden in his might
But if he hinder suche a wight.
And that is well nigh over all
This Vice is now so general!

"Envie thilke unhap indrough,
Whan Joab by decepte slough
Abner, for drede he shuldè be
With king David such as was he.

"And through Envie also it felle
Of thilke fals Achitofelle,
For his counseil was nought
acheved

But that he sigh Cusy beleved
With Absolon and him forsake,
He henge him selfe upon a stake.

"Senec witnsseth openly,
How that Envie properly
Is of the Court the comunwenche,
And halt taverne for to schenche¹
That drink which maketh the herte
brenne,

And doth² the wit abouttJ renne
By every waie to compose
How that he might all other passe,
As he which through unkindeship
Envfeth every felaship.
So that thou might well knowe and
se,

There is no Vice suche as lie
First toward God abhominable
And to mankinde unprofitable.

And that by wordes but a fewe
I shall by reson prove and shewe.

"Envie if that I shall describe,
He is nought shaply for to wive
In erth among the women here.
For there is in him no matere
Wherof he might⁵ do plesaunce.
First for his hevvy contenance
Of that he semeth ever unglad
He is nought able to be hadde.
And eke he brenneth so withinne,
That kindd may no profit whine,
Wherof he shulde his lovè plesè.
For thilke blood, which shuld have
ese

To regne among the moiste veines,
Is drie of thilke unkindly peines
Through which Envie is fired ay.
And this by reson prove I may,
That toward Love Envie is nought;
And other wise if it be sought,
Upon what side as ever it falle
It is the werst! Vice of alle,
Which of him self hath most malice.
For understand that every Vice
Some cause hath wherof it groweth.
But of Envie no man knoweth
Fro whenne he cam, but out of
helle.

For thus the wise clerkes telle,
That no spirit but of malice
By way of kinde upon a Vice
Is tempted, and by such a way
Envie hath kindd¹ put away
And of malice hath his sterfng,
Wherof he maketh his bakbiting,
And is him self therof disesed;
So may there be no kinde plesed.
For ay the more that he envieth,
The more ayein him self he plieth.
Thus stant Envie in good espeire
To ben him self the divels heire
As he whiche is his nexte liche
And furthest from the heven riche.

¹ Schenche, pour out. ² Doth, causes.

¹ Kinde, nature.

or there may he never wone.¹
 A" Forthy my gode derd sone,
 If them wolt finde a siker way
 To lovē, put Envie away."—

" Min holy fader, reson wolde,
 That I this Vice escheud sholde,
 Hut yet to strengthen my codge
 If that ye wolde in avaunderge
 Therof set a recoverir,
 It were to me a great desir,
 That I this Vied mightd flee."—

" Now understand, my sone, and
 see,

There is phisiqud for the seke
 And Vertues for the Vices eke.
 Who that the Vices wolde escheue,
 He mot by reson thannd sue²
 The Vertues. For by thilkd way
 He may the Vices done away;
 Fortheyto-gidermay nought dwelle.
 For as the water of the welle
 Of fire abateth the malice,
 Right so Vertu fordeth the Vice.

" Ayein Envfe is Charite,
 Whiche is the moder of pite,
 That maketh amannshertd tender,
 That it may no malice engender
 In him that is inclined thereto.
 For his codge is tempred so,
 That though he might him self
 releve

Yet wolde he nought another greve,
 But rather for to do plesaiunce
 He bereth him selven. the gre-
 vaunce,

So fain he wolde another ese.
 Wherof, my sone, for thin ese
 Now herken a tal5, whiche I rede,³
 And understonde it well I rede.⁴

" **Among** the bokes of Latin
 I finde it writ of Constantfn,
 The worthy emperour of Rome,
 Such infortunes to him come

¹ Wone, dwell.
 Rede, read,

² Sue, follow.
⁴ Rede advice.

Whan he was in his lusty age,
 The lepre caught in his visdge
 And so forth over all aboute
 That he ne mighte riden. oute.
 So left he bothd shield and spere,
 As he that might him nought be-
 stere,
 And heldehim in his chamber close.
 Through all the world the fame
 arose.

The grete clerkes ben assent
 And com at his commaundement
 To tret upon this lordes hele.
 So longē they to-gider dele,
 That they upon this medicine
 Appointen hem and determine,
 That in the maner as it stood
 They wolde him bath in childes
 blood

Withinnd seven winter age.
 Foras they sain, that shulde assuage
 The leper and all the violence,
 Which that theyknewe of accidence
 And nought by way of kinde is falle.
 And therto they accorden alle
 As for findll conclusion,
 And tolden her opinion
 To themperour. And he anone
 His counseil toke, and therupon
 With letters and with seales out
 They send in every londe about
 The yongē children for to seche,
 Whose blood, they said, shulde be
 leche

For themperourds maladie.

" There was inough to wepe and
 crie

Among the moders, whan they herde
 How wofully this causd ferde.
 Butnethēles they moten bowe,
 And thus womdn there come inowe,
 With children soukend on the tete;
 Tho was there many terēs lete.

" But were hem liefē or were hem
 loth,

The women and the children both
 Into the paleis forth be brought
 With many a sory hertès thought
 Of hem whiche of her¹ body bore
 The children hadde, and so forlore
 Within a while shulden se.

The moders wepe in her degre
 And many of hem a swoune falle,
 The yonge babies crieden alle.

This noise arose, this lorde it herde
 And loked out, and how it ferde
 He sigh, and as who saith abraide
 Out of his slepe and thus he saide :

' O thou divine purveaiine,
 Which every man in the balaunce
 Of kinde hast formdd to be liche,—

The pouer is bore as is the riche
 And dieth in the same wise ;

Upon the fole, upon the wise,
 Sikndsse and hele enter comune ;
 May none escheue that fortune
 Which kinde hath in her lawe sette;
 Her strengthe and beaultd ben be-
 sette

To every man alichè free ;
 That she preferreth no degre
 As in the disposition
 Of bodely complexion.

And eke, of soule resonble,
 The pouer childe is bore as able
 To vertue as the kinges sone.

For every man his owne wone²
 After the lust of his assay

The Vice or Vertue chesè may.
 Thus stonden alle men fraunchised,
 But in estate they ben devised ;

To some worship and richesse,
 To some poudrte and distresse ;
 One lordeth and an other serveth :
 But yet as every man deserveth
 The world yeveth nought his yeftès
 here.

And certès he hath great matere

To ben of good condition,
 Whiche hath in his subjection
 The men that ben of his sem-
 blaunce.'

And eke he tokehis remembraunce,
 How he that made lawe of kinde
 Wolde every man to lawe binde,
 And bad a man, suche as he wolde
 Toward him self, right such he
 sholde

Toward an other done also.

"And thus this worthy lord as tho¹
 Set in balaunce his owne estate
 And with him self stood in debate
 And thoughte, howe it was nought
 good

To se so mochel manna's blood
 Be spilt by cause of him alone.

" He sigh also the grete mone
 Of that the moders were unglad,
 And of the wo the children made
 Wherof that all his herte tendreth,
 And such pite within engendreth
 That him was lever for to chese
 His owne body for to lese,
 Than se so great a mordre wrought
 Upon the blood which gilteth
 nought,

Thus for the pite whiche he toko,
 All other leches he forsoke
 And put him out of aventiire
 Al only into Godcles cure
 And saith : ' Who that woll maister
 be

He mot be servaunt to piteV
 So ferforth he was overcome
 With charite, that he hath nome
 His counseil and his officers,
 And badde unto his tresorers,
 That they his tresour all about
 Depart² among the pouer route
 Of women and of children bothe,
 Wherof they might hem fede and
 clothe

¹ Her, their.

² His owne wone, according to his own usage.

¹ As tho, as then. '- Defarte, part out, cli.' nlj,

And saufly tornen home ayein
 Withoute loss of any grein.
 Through Charitd thus hedispendeth
 His good, wherof that he amendeth
 The pouer people and countrevaileth
 The harm that he hem sotravaieth.
 And thus the wofull nightes sorwe
 To joie is torned on the monve.
 All was thanking, all was blessing,
 Whiche erst was wepinge and cursing.

These women gone home glad
 inough,

Echone for joie on other lough
 And praiden for this lordes hele,
 Whiche hath relesdd the quarele
 And hath his owne will forsake
 In Charite for Goddes sake.

But now hereafter thou shalte here
 What God hath wrought in this
 mature,

As he that doth all equite.
 To him that wroughtd Charite
 He was ayeinward charitoiis
 And to pitd he was pitoiis.
 For it was never knowe yit,
 That Charitd goth unaquit.

The night whan he was laid to
 slepe,

The highd God, which wold him
 kepe,

Saint Peter and saint Poule him
 sende,

By whom he wolde his lepre
 amende.

They two to him slepdnd appei e
 Fro God, and said in this manere:
 ' O Constantin, for thou hast
 served

Pitd, thou hast pitd deserved.
 Forth)' thou shalt such pite have,
 That God through pitd wold the save.
 So shalt thou double hele fmde,
 First for thy bodeliche kinde,
 And for thy wofull soule also.

Thou shalt ben hole of bothd two.
 And for thou shalt the nought de-
 speire,

Thy leprd shall no more empeire.
 Till thou wolt sende therupon
 Unto the mount of Celion,
 Where that Silvester and his clergie
 To-gider dwelle in compaignie
 For drede of the, which many a day
 Hast ben a fo to Cristes lay¹
 And hast destruied tomochel shame
 The prechours of his holy name.
 But now thou hast somdele appesed
 Thy God and with good dede
 plesed,

That thou thy pitd hast bewared
 Upon the blood which thou hast
 spared.

Forthy to thy salvacion
 Thou shalt have informacion,
 Such as Silvdster shall the teche,
 The nedeth of none other leche.'
 This emperour, whiche all this
 herde :

' Graunt mercy Lorde, he answerde,
 I wold do so as ye me say.

But of o thing I woldè pray,
 What shall I telle unto Silvestre
 Or of your name or of your estre ?"²
 And they him tolden what they
 hight

And forth with all oute of his sight
 They passen up into the heven.

And he awoke out of his sweven³
 And clepeth, and men come anone
 And tolde his dreame, and therupon
 In suche a wise as he hem telleth
 The mount wher that Silvester
 dwelleth

They have in alle haste sought,
 And founde he was, and with hem
 brought

To themperour, which to him tolde

1 Lay, law, faith. 2 Estre being.
 3 Sweven, dream.

His sweven and dies what he wolde.
And whan Silvester hath herd the
king

He was right joyfull of this thing,
And him began with all his wit
To techen upon Holy Writ.
First how mankinde was forlore,
And how the highe God therfore
His Sone sende from above,
Which bore was for mannes love;
And after of his owne chois
He toke his deth upon the crois;
And how in grave he was beloke,
And how that he hath helld broke
And toke hem out that were him
leve.¹

And for to make us full beleve
That he was verray Goddes Sone
Ayein the kinde of mannes wone
Fro deth he rose the thridd clay.
And whan he wolde, as he well
may,

He stigh up to his Father even
With flessch and blood into the
heven;

And right so in the sam⁵ forme,
In flessch and blood, he shall re-
torne,

Whan time cometh, to quicke and
dede

At thilkd wofull Day of Drede,
Where every man shall take his
dome

Als well the maister as the grome.
The mighty kingés retenue
That Day may stonde of no value
With worldes strengthd to defende;
For every man mot than entende
To stond upon his own⁵ dedes
And leve all other mennes nedes.
That Day may no counsell availe,
The pledour and the plee shall faile;
The sentence of that ilke day
May none appele sette in delay;

¹ Leve, dear.

There may no gold the juge plie
That he ne shall the sothe trie
And setten every man upright,
As well the plowman as the knight.
The leude man, the gret clerke
Shall stonde upon his owne werke;
And suche as he is foundd tho,
Such shall he be for evermo,
There may no peine be relested,
There may no joie ben encresed,
But endeles as they have do
He shall receive one of two.

" And thus Silvester with hib
sawe

The ground of all the newd lawe
With great devotion he precheth
Fro point to point and plainly
techeth

Unto this hethen emperour
And saith: ' The highe Creatour
Hath underfonge his Charite
Of that he wroughte suche pite,
Whan he the children had on honde.

" Thus whan this lord hath un-
derstonde

Of all this thing how that it ferde,
Unto Silvester he than answerde
With all his hole herte and saith,
That he is redy to the feith.

And so the vessell, which for blood
Was made, Silvester, there¹ it stood
With clene water of the welle
In alle haste he let do felle
And sette Constantin therinne
All naked up unto the chinne.
And in the while it was begunnc,
A light, as though it were a sunne,
Fro heven into the place come
Where that he toke his christen-
dome,

And ever amonge the holy tales
Lich as they weren fisshes scales
They fellen from him now and efte,
Till that there was nothing beleftc

¹ There, where.

Of all this grete maladie.
 For he that wolde him purifie
 The highe God hath made him
 clerle,
 So that there lefth nothing sene.
 He hath him clensed bothe two
 The body and the soule also.
 Tho¹ knew this emperoiir in dede,
 That Cristes feith was for to drede,
 And sende anone his letters out
 And let do ctien all aboute
 Up peyn of deth, that no man
 weive,
 That he baptisme ne receive.
 After his moder queue Eleine
 He sende, and so betwene hem
 twene
 They treten, that the citee all
 Was christned, and she forth with
 all.
 This emperoiir, Which hele hath
 found,
 Withinne Rome anone let founde
 Two churches, which that he did
 make²
 For Peter and for Poules sake,
 Of whom he hadde a vision
 And yaf therto possession
 Of lordship and of worldes good.
 And how so that his will was good
 Toward the Pope and his fraunchisc,
 Yet hath it provdd otherwise
 To se the worching of the dede.
 For in cronique thus I rede
 Anone as he hath made the yefte
 A vois was herde on high the lefte,^a
 Of which all Romd was adradde
 And said: 'This day is venim
 shadde
 In Holy Chirche, of temporall

¹ *Tho*, then,² *Did make*, caused to be made.³ *Lefte* air.

Which medleth¹ with the spirituell.
 And how it stant of that degre
 Yet a man may the sothe se,
 God may amende it, whan he wille.
 I can therto none other skille.
 But for to go there I began,
 How Charite may helpe a man
 To bothe worldes, I have saide.
 And if thou have an erd laide,
 My sone, thou might understonde,
 If Charitè be take on honde,
 There folweth after mochel grace.
 Forthr if that thou wolt purchase
 How that thou might Envid flee,
 Acqueintè the with Charite,
 Whiche is the Vertue Sovereine." - -
 " My fader, I shall do my peine.
 For this ensample whiche ye tolde
 With all min herte I have witholde,
 So that I shall for evermore
 Escheue Envfe well the more.
 And that I have er this misdo
 Yive me my penaunce er I go.
 And over that to my matere
 Of shrifte, why we sitten here
 In privet betwene us twey,
 Now axeth what there is I prey." - —
 " My godd sone, and for thy lore
 I woll the telle what is more,
 So that thou shalt the Vices knowe.
 For whan they be to thee full
 knowe,
 Thou might hem wel the better
 eschue.
 And for this cause I thenke sue
 The forme bothe arid the matere,
 As now suende thou shalt here,
 Which Vice stant nexte after this.
 And whan thou wost how that it is,
 As thou shalt here my devise,
 Thou might thy self the better avise.

¹ *Medleth*, miugleth.

Book III.

OF WRATH.

If thou the Vices list to knowe,
My sone, it hath nought be
 unknowe
Fro first that men theif swerdes
 grounde,
That there nis one upon this
 grounde
A Vice foreine fro the lawe,
Wherof that many a good felawe
Hath be distraught by sodein
 chaunce.
And yet to kinde no plesaunce
It doth, but where he most acheveth
His purpose, most to kinde he
 greveth,
As he whiche out of conscience
Is enemy unto patience.
And is by name one of the Seven,
Whiche oft hath set the world un-
 even,
And clepdd is the cruel Ire,
Whose herte is evermore on fire
To speke amis, and to do, bothe,
For his servaunts ben ever wrothe."
"My god£ fader, tell me this
What thinge is Ire?"—"Sone, it is
That in our englissh Wrath is hote,
Whiche hath his worde's ay so hote,
That all a mannes pacfence
Is fired of the violence.
For he with him hath ever five
Servaunts, that helpen him to strive.
The first of hem Malencoly

Is cleped, whiche in compaignie
An hundred time's in an houre
Woll as an angry beste loure,
And no man wot the cause why.
My sone', shrive the now forth),
Hast thou be Malencolien?"—"—
"Ye fader, by saint Julien.
But ¹ I untrewed worde's use
I may me nought therof excuse.
And all maketh Lovè, well I wote,
Of which min herte is ever hote,
So that I brenne as dothe a glede
For wrathe that t may nought
 spede.
And thus full oft a day for nought
Saufe onlich of min ownd thought
I am so with my selven wroth,
That how so that the game goth
With other men, I am nought glad
But I am well the more unglad;
For that is other mennes game
It torneth me to purè game.²
Thus am I with my self oppressed
Of thought the whiche I have im-
 pressed,
That all wakdnd I dretrie and mete,³
That I with her alone mete⁴
And pray her of some good answer.
But for she wol nought gladly swere.
She saith me 'Nay' withouten othe.
And thus waxe I withinnè wrothe

¹ But, unless.
³ Mete, dream.

² Grame, vexation.
⁴ Mete, meet

That outward I am all affraied
 And so distempred and so esmaied,
 A thousand times on a day
 There souneth in min eres ' Nay,'
 The which she saidd me to-fore.
 Thus be my wittes all forlore.
 And namely¹ whan I beginne
 To reken with my self withinne,
 How many yores ben agone,
 Sith I have truely lovéd one
 And never toke of her other hede,
 And ever a lichd for to spede
 I am, the more I with her dele,
 So that min hap and all min hele
 Me thenketh is ay the lenger the
 ferre.²

That bringeth my gladship out of
 herre,

Wherof my wittes ben empeired
 And I, as who saith, all dispeired,
 For finally whan that I muse
 And thenke, how she woll me re-
 fuse,

I am with Anger so bestad,
 For al this world might I be glad.
 And for the white that it lasteth
 All up so down my joie it casteth,
 And ay the further that I be
 Whan I ne may my lady se,
 The more I am redy to Wrathe,
 That for the touching of a lath
 Or for the torning of a stre³
 I wode⁴ as doth the wildè see
 And am so malencolious,
 That there nis servaunt in min
 house

Ne none of tho that be aboute,
 That eche of hem ne stant in doute
 And wenen that I shuldd rave,
 For anger that they se me have.
 And so they wonder more and lasse,
 Til that they seen it overpasse.
 But fader, if it so betide,

That I approche at any tide
 The place where my lady is,
 And thannd that her like iwis
 To speke a goodly word unto me,
 For all the gold that is in Romd
 Ne couth I after that be wroth,
 But all min anger overgoth.
 So glad I am of the presence
 Of hire, that I all offence
 Foryete, as though it were nought
 So over glad is than my thought.
 And netheles, the soth to telle,
 Ayeinward if it so befelle,
 That I at thilke time sigh
 On me that she miscaste her eye,
 Or that she liste nought to loke,
 And I therof good hede toke,
 Anone into my first estate
 I torne and am with that so mate,¹
 That ever it is alichè wicke.
 And thus min honde ayein the
 pricke

I hurte and have don many a day,
 And go so forth as I go may
 Full ofte biting on my lippe
 And make unto rny self a whippe
 With whiche in many a chele and
 hete

My wofull herte is so tobete,
 That all my wittes ben unsofte,
 And I am wrothe I not³ how ofte.
 And all it is malencolfe,
 Which groweth on the fantasie
 Of Love that me woll nought
 loute.⁴

So bere I forth an angry snoute
 Full many times in a yere.
 But fader, now ye sitten here
 In Loves stede, I you beseche,
 That some ensample ye me teche,
 Wherof I may my self appese."—

" My sonè, for thin hertes ese

¹ *Mate*, deadened in spirit.

² *Tobete*, to is an intensive prefix.

³ *Not*, know not.

⁴ Love that will not bow to me.

¹ *Namely*, especially. ² *Ferre*, farther.
³ *Stre*, straw. ⁴ *Wode*, rage madly.

I shall fulfille thy praier,
So that thou might the better lere,
What mischeffe that this Vice stereth,
Whiche in his anger nought for-
bereth,

Wherof that after him forthenketh,
Whan he is sobre, and that he
thenketh

Upon the folie of his dede.

But if thou ever in cause of Love
Shalt deme, and thou be so above
That thou might lede it at thy wille,
Let never through thy Wrathe spille
Whiche every kinde shulde save.
For it sit every man to have
Reward to love and to his might,
Ayein whos strength may no wight.
What Nature hath set in her lawe,
Ther may no manna's might with-
drawe,

And who that worcheth thereayein,
Full oftd time it hath be sein,
There hath befalld great ven-
geaunce,

Wherof I finde a remembraunce.

"Om6e after the time tho
Tolde an ensample and saide so,
How that whilom Tiresias,
As he walkdnde goth par cas,
Upon an high mountein he sigh
Two serpentes in his waie nigh.
And they so, as nature hem taught,
Assembled were, and he tho cought
A yerde, which he bare on honde,
And thoughte, that he wolde fonde¹
To letten hem, and smote hem bothe,
Wherof the goddes weren wrothe.
And for he hath destourbed kinde
And was so to Nature unkinde,
Unkindelich he was transformed,
That he, which erst a man was
formed,

Into a woman was forshape ;
That was to him an angry jape.

¹ *Fonde*, try.

But for that he with anger wrought
His anger angerliche he bought.

"Lo, thus my sone, Ovide hath
write,

Wherof thou might by reson wite
More is a man than suche a beste,
So might it never ben honeste
A man to wrathen him to sore
Of that another doth the lore
Of kinde, in whiche is no malice,
But only that it is a Vice.

And though a man be resondble,
Yet after kinde he is mevdble
To love where¹ he woll or none.
Thenk thou, my sone, therupon
And do Matencolfe away,-
For love hath ever his lust to pley
As he which wold no life greve." —

"My fader, that I may well leve²
All that ye tellen it is skille,³

Let every man love as he wille,
Be so it be nought my lady,
For I shall nought be wroth thereby.
But that I wrath and fare amis
Alone upon my self it is,
That I with bothe love and kinde
Am so bestad, that I can finde
No wey howe I it may astert,
Which stant upon min ownd hert
And toucheth to none other life
Sauf onely to that swetd wife,
For whom, but if it be amended,
My gladd dales ben dispended,
That I my self shall nought forbere
The Wrath the whiche now I bere,
For therof is none other liche.
Nowe axeth forth I you besече
Of Wrathe, if there ought elles is,
Wherof to shrive." — "Sone yis.

Of Wrathe the second is Chest,⁴
Which hath the windes of tempest
To kepe, and many a sodein blast
He bloweth, wherof ben agast

¹ *Where*, whether.

³ *Skille*, reason.

² *Leve*, believe.

⁴ *Chest*, strife.

They that desiren pees and rest.
 He is that like ungoodliest,
 Which many a lusty love hath
 twinned,
 For he bereth ever his mouth un-
 pinned,
 So that hiſ lippes ben unloke
 And his corgie is all to-broke,
 That every thing whiche he can telle,
 It springeth up as doth a welle,
 Which may none of his stremes hide,
 But renneth out on every side.
 So boilen up the foule sawes,
 That Cheste wote¹ of his felawes.
 For as a sive² kepeth ale,
 Right so can cheste kepe a tale;
 All that he wote he woll disclose
 And speke er any man oppose.
 As a citee withoute a walle,
 Where men may gon out overalle
 Withouten any resistance,
 So with his croked eloquence
 He speketh all that he wot withinne,
 Wherof men lese more than winne.
 For often time of his chiding
 He bringeth to house such tiding
 That maketh werre at beddès hede.
 He is the levein of the brede
 Which soureth all the past³ about.
 Men ought well suche one to doute.⁴
 For ever his bowe is redy bent,
 Andwhome he hit I tell him shent,⁵
 If he may perce him with his tonge.
 And eke so loude his belle is ronge,
 That of the noise and of the sounne
 Men feren him in all the towne
 Well more than they done of
 thunder;
 For that is cause of more wonder.
 For with the winded, which he
 bloweth,

¹ Wote, knows.² Sive, sieve.³ The leaven of the bread that turns all the
paste sour.⁴ Doute fear.⁵ I tell him shent, I count him put to shame.

Full oftè sith he overthroweth
 The citees and the polecie,
 That I have herd the people crie
 And echone saide in his degre:
 Ha, wicke tunge, wo thou be !
 For men sain, that the hardebone—
 All though him selve have none—
 A tunge braketh it all to pieces.
 He hath so many sondry spieces¹
 Of Vice, that I may nought wele
 Describe hem by a thousand dele.-
 But whan that he to Cheste falleth,
 Full many a wonder thing befallerh,
 For he ne can no thing forbere.
 Now tell, my sone, thin answer,
 If it hath ever so betid,
 That thou at any time hast chid
 Toward thy love"—" Fader, nay.
 Such Cheste yet unto this day
 Ne made I never, God forbede.
 For er I singé suche a crede,
 I hadde lever to be lewed,
 For thanne were I all beshrewed
 And worthy to be put abacke
 With all the sorwe upon my backe,
 That any man ordeigne couthe.
 But I spake never yet by mouthe
 That unto Cheste might touche.
 And that I durst right wel avouche
 Upon her selfe as for witnessse.
 For I wote of her gentillesse,
 That she me wolde wel excuse,
 That I no suchd things use.
 And if it shulde so betid,
 That I algates must chid,
 It mightd nought be to my Love.
 For so yet was I never above
 For all this wide world to winne,
 That I durst any word beginne,
 By which she might have ben
 amoved,
 And I of Cheste also reproved.
 But rather if it might her like,

¹ Spieces, species, kinds.² By a thousandth part.

The bestè wordes wolde I pike¹
 Whiche I couthe in min herte chese
 And serve hem forth in stede of chese,
 For that is helpelich to defie;²
 And so I wolde my wordes plie,
 That mighten Wrath and Chestre
 avale³

With telling of my softs' tale.
 Thus dar I maken a forward,
 That never unto my lady ward
 Yet spake I word in suche a wise,
 Wherof that Chests' shulde arise.
 Thus say I nought that I full ofte
 Ne have, whan I spake most softe,
 Par cas said more than inough;
 But so well halt no man the plough,
 That he ne balketh other while;
 Ne so wel can no man affile
 His tunge, that sometime in rape⁴
 Himmaysomeligh word overscape,
 And yet ne meneth he no cheste.
 But that I have ayein her heste
 Full ofte spoke, I am beknowe.⁵
 And how, my wille is that ye knowe;
 For whan my time cometh about
 That I dar speke and say all out
 My longe love of which she wot,
 That ever in one aliche hot
 Me greveth, than all my dise
 I telle, and though it her disple
 I speke it forth and nought ne leve.
 And though it be beside her leve
 I hope and trews' netheles,
 That I do nought ayein the pees.
 For though I telle her all my thought,
 She wot well that I chide nought.
 Men may the highs' God beseche,
 And he wol here a mannes speche
 And be nought wroth of that he saith,
 So yiveth it me the more feith
 And maketh me hardy soth to say,

That I dar wel the better prey
 My lady, whiche a woman is.
 For though I telle her that er is
 Of love, which me greveth sore,
 Her oughts' nought be wroth the
 more,

For I withoute noise or cry
 My plaints' make all buxomly,
 To putten alle Wrath away,
 This dar I say unto this day
 Of Chestre, in earnest or in game,
 My lady shall me no thing blame.

" But ofte time it hath betid,
 That with my selven I have chid,
 That no man couthd better chide,
 And that hath ben at every tide,
 Whan I cam to my selve alone.
 For than I made a prive mone,
 And every tate by and by
 Whiche as I spake to my lad,
 I thenke and peise in my balauce
 And drawe into my remembraunce.
 And than, if that I finde a lacke
 Of any word that I misspake,
 Which was to moche in any wise,
 Anone my wittes I despise
 And make a chiding in min herte
 That any word me shulde asterte¹
 Whicheas I shulde have holden inne
 And so forth after I beginne
 And loke if there was dies ought
 To speke, and I ne spake it nought.
 And than if I may seche and finde,
 That any word ben left behinde,
 Whicheas I shulde more have spoke,
 I wold upon my self be wroke
 And chide with my selven so,
 That all my wit is over-go.
 For no man may his time lore
 Recover, and thus I am therefore
 So overwroth in all my thought,
 That I my self chide all to nought.
 Thus for to moche, or for to lite,
 Full ofte I am my self to wire.²

¹ Pike, pick.

² Defit' digest. This belief was the origin of the old custom of ending dinner with cheese.

³ Avale, bring down,

⁴ Rape, haste.

⁵ J confess.

¹ Asterte, escape. ² Wite, blame.

But all that may me nought availe,
 With Cheste though I me travaile,
 But oule on stoke and stoke on oule
 The more that a man defoule,
 Men witen wel which hath the werse.
 And so to me nis worth a kerse,¹
 But torneth unto min owne hede,
 Though I till that I werd dede
 Wolde ever chide in suche a wise
 Of Love, as I to you devise.
 But fader, now ye have all herd
 In this nianeV, howe I have ferd
 Of Cheste and of Dissension,
 Yif me your absolucion."—

"My sone, if that thou wistest all,
 What Chestd doth in speciaill
 To love and to his welwilling,
 Thou woldest fleen his knowleching
 And lerned to be debonaire.
 For who that most can speke faire
 Is most accordant unto love.
 Fair speche hath ofte brought above
 Full many a man, as it is knowe,
 Whiche ellds shuld have ben right
 lowe

And failed mochel of his wille.
Forth hold thou thy tunge stille
 And let thy wit thy will areste
 So that thou falle nought in cheste,
 Whiche is the source of great dis-
 taunce,

And take into thy rdmembraunce,
 If thou might gete pacience,
 Which is the leche of all offence,
 As tellen us these olde wise.
 For whan nought ellds may suffise
 By strengths' ne by mannds wit,
 Than pacience it over sit
 And over cometh it at laste.
 But he may never longe laste,
 Which woll nought bow er that he
 breke.

Take hede, sone, of that I speke."—

"My fader, of your goodly speche

¹ A'erse, cress.

And of the wit, whiche ye me teche,
 I thonkd you with all min hert.
 For that word shall me never astert,
 That I ne shall your wordes holde
 Of pacience, as ye me tolde,
 Als ferforth as min herdt thenketh
 And of my Wrath it me forthenketh.
 But fader, if ye forth with all
 Some good ensample in specidll,
 Me wolden teche of some cronfque,
 It shuldd well min herte like
 Of patience for to here,
 So that I might in my inatdre
 The more unto my love obey
 And putten my disese away."—

"Tp sone, a man to bye him
 pees

Behoveth suffre as Socrates
 Ensamble lefte, whiche is write,
 And for thou shalt the sothe wite
 Of this ensample, what I mene,
 All though it be now litel sene
 Among the men thilke evidence,
 Yet he was upon pacience
 So set, that he him self assay
 In thing, which might him most
 mispay,

Desireth and a wicked wife
 He weddeth, which is sorwe and
 strife

Ayein his ese was contraire.
 But he spake ever soft and faire,
 Till it befell, as it is tolde,
 In winter, whan the day is colde,
 This wife was fro the welle come,
 Where that a pot with water nome¹
 She hath and brought it into house,
 And sigh how that her sely spouse
 Was set and looked on a boke
 Nigh to the fire, as he which toke
 His ese as for a man of age.
 And she began the wode rage
 And axeth him, what divel he thought
 And bare on hond, that him nerought

¹ Nome, taken.

What labour that she tokeon honde,
And saith, that suche an husebonde
Was to a wife nought worth a stre.¹
He saide nouthur nay ne ye,
But helde him stille and lete her
chide.

And she, which may her self nought
hide,

Began withinne for to swelle
And that shebroughtin fro the welle,
The water pot, she hent a lofte
And bad him speke, and he all softe
Sat stille and nought a word answèrd.
And she was wroth that he so ferd,
And axeth him, if he be dede,
And all the water on his hede
She poured out and bad him awake.
But he, which ewoldenought forsake
His paciencè, thannè spake
And said, how that he fond no lake
In nothing which she hadde do,
For it was winter time tho,
And winter, as by wey of kinde,
Which stormy is as men it finde,
First maketh the winded for to blowe
And after that, within a throwe,
He reineth and the water gates
Undoth, and thus my wife algates,
Which is with reson well besein,
Hath made mebothe winde and rein
After the seson of the yere.
And than he set him ner the fire
And as he might his clothes dreide,²
That he nomore o word ne saide,
Wherof he gat him somdele rest,
For that him thought was for the
best.

"I not³ if thilke ensample yit
Accordeth with a mannes wit
To suffre as Socrates dede.
And if it fal in any stede
A man to lese so his galle,

¹ *Stre*, straw.

² Dried his clothes as well as he could.

³ *Not*, know not.

Him ought among the women alle
In Lovè court by jugèment
The name bere of pacient
To yive ensample to the good
Of pacience how that it stood,
That other men it mighte knowe.
And, sone, if thou at any throwe
Be tempted ayein pacience,
Take hede upon this evidence,
It shall par cas the lasse greve."—

"My fader, so as I believe
Of that shall be no maner nede,
For I woll take so good hede,
That er I fall in suche assay
I thinke escheue, if that I may.
But if there be ought elles more,
Wherof I mighte take lore
I prate you, so as I dare,
Now telleth, that I may beware,
Some other tale of this mater."—

"Sone, it is ever good to lere
Wherof thou might thy word re-
streigne

Er that thou falle in any peine.
P'or who that can no counseil hide,
He may nought faile of wo beside,
Which shall befall, er he it wite,
As I finde in the bokès write.

Yet cam therenever good of strie
To seche in all a mannes life,
Though it beginne on pure game
Full ofte it torneth into grame
And doth grevaunce on some side.
Wherof the gretè clerk Ovide
After the lawe which was tho,
Of Jupiter and of Juno
Maketh in his bokes mencion,
How they felle at dissencion,
In manner as it were a borde,¹
As they begunne for to worde
Among hem self in private.
And that was upon this degrè,
Whiche of the two more amorous is
Or man or wife. ; And upon this

¹ *Borde*, jest.

They mightennought accorde in one
 And toke a jugé therupon,
 Which cleped is Tiresias
 And bede him demen in this cas.
 And he withoute avisdment
 Ayein Juno yaf jugement.
 This Goddesse upon his answdre
 Was wroth and wolde nought for-
 bere,

But tok away for evermo
 The light from both his eyen two.
 Whan Jupiter this harm hath sein
 Another bienfait there ayein
 He yaf and suche a grace him doth
 That, for he wiste he saide soth,
 A soth-saier he was for ever.
 But yet that other were lever
 Have had the loking of his eye
 Than of his word the prophecie.
 But how so that the sothe went,
 Strife was the cause of that he hent
 So great a peine bodily.

"My sone, be thou ware thereby
 And hold thy tunge stille close,
 For who that hath his word disclose
 Er that he wite what he mene
 He is full ofte nigh his tene¹
 And leseth full many time grace,
 Wher that he wold his thank pur-
 cha'ce.

And over this, my sone dere,
 Of other men, if thou might here
 In privite what they have wrought,
 Holdcounseil and discover itnought,
 For Cheste can no counseil hele,²
 Or be it wo or be it wele,
 And take a tale into thy minde,
 The which of olde ensample I finde.

Thebus, which maketh the daies
 light,

A love he hadde, which tho hight
 Cornide, whom aboven alle
 He pleseth. But what shall befall
 Of love, there is no man knoweth.

¹ Tene, vexation. ² Hele conceal.

But as fortune her nappes throweth,
 So it befell upon a chaunce,
 A yong knight toke her acquaint-
 aunce

And had of her all that he wolde.
 But afals bird, which she hath holde
 And kept in chambre of pure youthe
 Discovereth all that ever he couthe.
 The briddes name was as tho
 Corvus, the which was than also
 Well more white than any swan,
 And he, the shrewe, al that he can
 Of his lady to Phebus saide.
 And lie for wrath his swerd out
 braidc,

With which Cornide anone he
 slough.

But after, him was wo inough
 And toke a full great repentaunce,
 Wherofin token andremembraunce
 Of hem whiche usen wicke speche,
 Upon this brid he toke his wreche,
 Thattherehewassnow-white-tofore
 Ever afterward cole black therfore
 He was transformed, as it sheweth.
 Andmanyamanyethimbeshreweth
 And clepen him into this day
 A raven, by whom yet men may
 Take evidence, whan he crieth,
 That some mishap it signifieth.
 Beware therfore and say the best,
 If thou wolt be thy self in rest,
 My gode sone, as I the rede.
 And suche a daies be now fele¹
 In Loves Courte, as it is saide,
 That let her tungè's gone unteide.
 My sone, be thou none of tho
 To jangle and telle tales so,
 And namely² that thou ne chide,
 For Cheste can no counseil hide,
 For Wrathe saide never wele."—

"My fader, sothe is every dele,
 That ye me teche, and I woll holde,
 The reule to whiche I am holde,

¹ Fele, many. ² Namely especially.

To fle the Cheste, as ye me bidic :
For well is him, that never chidde.
Now telle me forth if there be more,
As touchinge unto wrathès lore."—

"Of **Wrathe** yet there is another,
Whiche is to Cheste his ownè brother,
And is by name cleped Hate,
That suffreth nought within his gate,
That there come other love or pees,
For he woll make no relese
Of no debate whiche is befallé.
Now speke, if thou arte one of alle,
That with this Vice hath be .vit-
holde." i—

"As yet for ought that ye me tolde,
My fader, I not what it is."—

"In good feith, sone, I trowe
yis."—

"My fader, nay, but ye me
lere."—

"Now list, my sone, and thou
shalt here.

Hate is a Wrathe nought shewend,
But of long time gaderend,
And dwelleth in the herte loken
Till he se time to be wroken.
And than he showeth his tempest
More sodein than the wildd beste,
Which wot nothing, what mercy is.
My sone, art thou knowen of
this ?"—

"My gode fader, as I wene,
Now wote I somedele what ye mene,
But I dare sauflly make an othe,
My lady was me never lothe.
I woll nought swere netheles,
That I of Hate am gilteles.
For whan I to my lady ply
Fro day to day and mercy cry,
And she no mercy on me laith,
But shorte wordes to me saith,
Though I my lady love algate,
Tho wordes mote I nedes hate,
And wolde they were all dispent

1 *Witholde*, held with.

Or so fer out of londe went
That I never after shuld hem here :
And yet love I my lady dere.

Thus is there Hate, as ye may se,
Betwene my ladies word and me.
The worde I hate and her I love,
What so me shall betide of love.
But furthermore I woll me shrive,
That I have hated all my live
These jangleis, whiche of her envie
Ben ever redy for to lie.

For with her fals compassement
Full often they have made me shent
And hindred me full ofte time,
Whan they no causè wisten by me,
But onlich of her owne thought.
And thus have I full oftd bought
The lye and drank nought of the
wine.

I wolde her hap were such as mine.
For how so that I be now shrive,
To hem ne may I nought foryive,
Untill I se hem at debate
With Love, and thanne min estate
They mighten by her owne deme
And loke how wel it shuld hem
queme¹

To hinder a man, that loveth sore.
And thus I hate hem evermore,
Til Love on hem wold done his
wreche;

For that I shall alway beseche
Unto the mighty Cupido,
That he so mochel wolde do,
So as he is of Love a god,
To smite hem with the same lod,
With whiche I am of Love smiten,
So that they mighten know and
witen,

How hindring is a wofull peine
To him that lovè wold atteigne.
Thus ever on hem I wait and hope,
Till I may se hem lepe a lope²

¹ *Queme*, be pleasing.

² *Lepe a lope*, take a leap.

And halten on the same sore,
 Whiche I do now for evermore.
 I wolde thanne do my might
 So for to stonden in her light,
 That they ne shulden have a wey
 To that they wolden put away.
 I wolde hem put out of the stede
 Fro Love, right as they me dede
 With that they speke of me by
 mouthe,
 So wolde I do, if that I couthe
 Of hem, and thus so God me save
 Is all the Hate that I have
 Toward these janglers every dele,
 I wolde all other ferde wele.
 Thus have I, fader, said my wille.
 Say ye now forth, for I am stille."—

" My sone, of that thou hast me
 said

I holde me nought fully paid,¹
 That thou wold haten any man
 To that accorden I ne can,
 Though he have hindred thee to-
 fore.

But this I telle thee therfore,
 Thou might upon my benison
 Well haten the condicion
 Of tho janglers, as thou me toldest,
 But furthermore, of that thou
 woldest

Hem hinder in any other wise,
 Suche Hate is ever to despise.
 Forth my sone, I wold thee rede,
 That thou drawe in by frendly hede
 That thou ne might nought do by
 Hate,

So might thou gete love algate
 And sette thee, my sone, in rest.
 For thou shalt finde it for the best,
 And over this so as I dare
 I rede, that thou be right ware
 Of other mennes Hate about,
 Whiche every wise man shuldedout,
 For Hate is ever upon await.

¹ *Paid* satisfied.

And as the fissher on his bait
 Sleeth, whan he seeth the fisshes
 faste,

So whan he seeth time atte last
 That he may worche an other wo,
 Shall no man tornen him ther fro,
 That Hate nill his felonie
 Fulfill and feigne compaignie.
 Yet netheles for fals semblaunt
 Is toward him of covenaut
 Witholde, so that under bothe
 The prive wrathe can him clothe,
 That he shall seme a great beleve.
 But ware thee well, that thou nc
 leve

All that thou seest to-fore thin eye,
 So as the Gregois whilom sigh;
 The boke of Troie who so rede,
 There may he finde ensample in
 dede.

" Sone, after the destruction,
 Whan Troy was alle betd down
 And slain was Priamus the king,
 The Gregois, which of all this thing
 Ben cause, tornen home ayein.
 There may no man his hap withsain,
 It hath ben sene and felt full ofte,
 The harde time after the softe.
 Bysee as they forth homeward went,
 A rage of great tempest hem hent.¹
 Juno let bende her partie bow,
 The sky wax derke, the wind gan
 blow,
 The firy welken gan to thonder,
 As though the world shuld al
 asonder.

From heven out of the water gate
 The reiny storm fell down algates,
 And all her tackle made unwelde,
 That no man might him self be-
 welde.

There may men here shipmen crie
 That stood in aunter for to die.
 He that behinde sat to stere

¹ *Hent*, seized.

Maynoughttthe fore stempne¹ here;
 The ship arose ayein the wawes,
 The lodesman hath lost his lawes,
 The see bet in on every side,
 They nisten what fortune abide,
 But setten hem all in goddes will,
 Where² he wolde hem save or spill.
 And it fell thilke time thus,
 There was a kinge, which Nauplus
 Was hote, and he a sone hadde
 At Troid, which the Gregois ladde
 As he that was made prince of alle,
 Till that Fortune let him falle.
 His name was Paldmides,
 But through an Hatene théles
 Of som of hem his deth was caste
 And he by treson overcaste.
 His fader, whan he herde it telle,
 He swore, if ever his time felle,
 Hewoldehimvengeifthat hemight,
 And therto his avow he right.
 And thus this king through prive
 Hate

Abode upon a waite algate,
 For he was nought of suche emprise,
 To vengen him in open wise.

"The fame, which goth wide
 where,

Maketh knowe, how that the Gre-
 gois were

Homwdrd with al the felaship
 Fro Troy upon the see by ship.
 Nauplub, whan he this understood
 And knew the tides of the flood
 And sigh the wind blow to the londe,
 A great deceipt anone he fonde
 Of privé Hate, as thou shalte here,
 Wherof I telle all this mature.

"This king the wedergan beholde
 And wistd well, they moten holde
 Her coursendlonge his marchè right,
 And made upon the derke night
 Of gret d shides³ and of blockes

Great fire ayeine the grete rockes,
 To shew upon the hilles high,
 So that the flete of Grece it sigh.
 And so it fell right as he thought,
 This flete, which an haven sought,
 The brightd fires sighe a fer,
 And they ben drawen ner and ner
 And wendd well and understood
 How all that fire was made for good
 To shewe where men shulde arrive.¹
 And thiderward they hasten blive.-
 In semblaunt as men sain is guile,
 And that was provdd thilke while.
 The ship, which wend his helpe
 accroche,³

Drof all to pieces on the roche.
 And so there deden ten or twelve
 There no man mighte helpe him
 selve,

For there they wenden⁴ deth escape
 Withouten helpe her deth was shape.
 Thus they that comen first to-fore
 Upon the rockes ben forlore.
 But through the noise and through
 the cry

The other weren ware therby,
 And whan the day began to rowe,⁵
 Tho mighten they the sothd knowe,
 That where they wenden frendes
 finde,

They fonde frendship all behinde.
 The londe than was sond weived,
 Where that they hadden be deceived,
 And toke hem to the highd see,
 Therto they saiden alle ye,
 Fro that day forthe and ware they
 were

Of that they had assaidd there.

"Mysone, herof thou might advise,
 How fraudè stant in many wise
 Amongés hem that guild thinke.
 There is no scrivener with his inke,

¹ Fort stew fine, voice in the bows.

² Where, whether. ³ Shides, logs.

¹ Arrive come to the shore.

² Blive, quickly.

⁴ Weutfcn, hoped.

³ Accroche increase.

⁵ Rowe, dawn.

Whiche half the fraude write can,
That stant in suche a maner man.
Forthy the wise men ne demen
The thinges after that they semen,
But after that they knowe and finde.
The mirroure sheweth in his kinde
As he had all the world withinne,
And is in soth nothing therinne.
And so fareth Hate for a throwe,¹
Till he a man hath overthrowe;
Shall no man knowe by his chere,
Whiche is avaunt ne whiche arere.
Forthy my sonè, thenke on this,"—

"My fader, so I woll iwis,^y
And if there more of Wrathe be,
Nowe axeth forth pour charitd,
As ye by your boko's knowe,
And I the sothe shall beknowe."—

" **In sone**, thou shalt under-
sonde,

That yet towardè Wrathe stonde
Of dedly Vices other two.
And for to telle her names so
It is Contek and Homicide,
That ben to drede on every side.
Contek so as the bokds sain
Foolhast hath to his chamberlain,
By whose counsel! all unavised
Is patience most despised,
Till Homicide with him mete.
Fro mercy they ben all unmete
And thus ben they the worst of alle
Of hem whiche unto Wrathe falle
In dede both and eke in thought.
For they accompte her Wrath at
nought

But if there be shedding of blood.
And thus liche to a beste wode
They knowen nought the god of life,
Be so they have swerde or knife
Her dedly wrathe for to wreke,
Of pite list hem nought to speke.
None other reson they ne fonge,
But that they ben of mightdsstronge.

1 *Throwe*, space of time. 2 *Iwis*, certainly.

But ware hem well in other place,
Where every man behoveth grace ;
For there I trowe it shall him faile,
To whom no mercy might availe,
But wroughten upon tirannie,
That no pite ne might hem plie.
Now tell, my sone."—" My fader,
what ?"—

"Ifthou hastbecoupledbleofthat?"

"Myfader, nay, Crist meforbede;
I onliche spcke of the dede
Of which I never was coupdble
Withouten cause resonndble.
But this is nought to my matere
Of shrifte, why we sitten here.
P"or we ben set to shrive of Love,
As we beganne first above.
And netheles I am beknowe,
That as touchend of loves throwe,
Whan I my wittes overwende,
Mia hertes Contek hath none endc,
But ever stant upon debate
To great disease of min estate,
As for the time that it lasteth.
For whan my fortune overcasteth
Her whele and is to me so straunge,
And that I se she woll nought
chaunge,

Than cast I all the worlde about
And thenk howe I at home in dout
Have all mytime in vein despended
And se nought how to be amended,
But rather for to be empeired,
As he that is well nigh despeired.
For I nc may no thank deserve,
And ever I love and ever I serve
And ever I am a liche nere,
Thus, for I stonde in suche a were,
I am as who saith out of herre.¹
And thus upon my self I werre,
I bringe and put out alle pees.
That I full ofte in such a rees -
Am wery of min owne life,

¹ *Out ofherre*, unhinged.
^a *Rees*, stir of battle.

So that of Contek and of Strife
I am beknowe and have answerde.
As ye, my fader, now have herde.
Min herte is wonderly begone
With counseil, wherof wit is one,
Whiche hath reson in compaignie
Ayein the whichd stant partie
Will, which hath Hope of his ac-
corde.

And thus they bringen up discorde,
Witte and Reson counseilen ofte,
That I min herte shulde softe
And that I shulde Will remue¹
And put him out of retenue
Or elles holde him under fote.
For as they sain, if that he mote
His owne reule have upon honde.
There shall no Witbenunderstonde
Of Hope ; also they tellen this,
That over all where that he is
He set the herte in jeopartie
With wishing and with fantasie,
And is nought trewe of that he saith,
So that there is on him no feith.
Thus with Reson and Witte avised
Is Will and Hope all day despised.
Reson saith, that I shulde leve
To love, where there is no leve
To spede, and Will saith there ayein
That such an herte is to vilain
Which dare nought love till that he
spede ;

Let Hope serve at suche nede.
He saith eke, where an herte sit
All hole governed upon Wit,
He hath this lives lust forlore.
And thus min herte is all to-tore
Of suche a Contek, as they make.
But yet I may nought Will foisake
That he nis maister of my thought,
Or that I spede, or spede" nought."

"Thou dost, my sone, ayein
the right,
But Love is of so great a might,

¹ *Remue, remove.*

His la'vd may no man refuse,
So might thou there the better
excuse.

And netheles thou shalt be lerned,
That thy Will shulde be governed
Of Reson more than of Kinde ;
Wherof a tale write I finde.

A Philosphre of which men
tolde

There was whilom by daies olde,
And Diogènes than he hight,
So olde he was that he ne might
The world travaile, and for the best
He shope him for to take his rest
And dwelle at home in suche a wise,
That nigh his house he let devise
Endlonge upon an axel tree
To set a tonne in suche degree
That he it mighte torne aboute ;
Wherof one heed was taken oute
For he therinne sitte shulde
And tornd him selve as he wolde
And take the eire and se the heven
And deme of the planetes seven
As he which couthe mochel what.¹
And thus full ofte there he sat
To muse in his philosophic
Sole withouten compaignie ;
So that upon a morwe tide
A thing which shuldd tho betide,
Whan he was sette here as him list
To loke upon the sonne arist,
Wherof the propertie he sigh,
It felld, there cam ridend nigh
King Alisaundre with a route.
And as he cast his eye aboute
He sigh this tonne, and what it ment
He woldd wite, and thider sent
A knight, by whom he might it
knowe.

And he him self that like throwe
Abode and hoveth there stille.
This knight after the kinges willc

¹ *Conthe mochel what*, knew a good deal, much what, a formation similar to somewhat.

With spore made his horse to gone
 And to the tonne he came anone,
 Where that he fonde a man of age,
 And he him tolde the message,
 Suche as the kinge him hadde bede,
 And axeth why in thilke stede¹
 The tonne stood and what it was.
 And he, which understood the cas,
 Sat still and spake no worde ayein.
 The knight bad speke and saith :

'Vilain,

Thou shalt me telle, er that I go,
 It is thy king, whiche axeth so.'

' My king,' quod he, ' that were
 unright.'

'What is he thanne ?' saith the
 knight,

' Is he thy man?' 'That say I
 nought.'

Quod he, 'but this I am bethought,
 My mannes man how that he is.'

' Thou liest, false cherle, iwis.' -

The knight him said and was right
 wroth,

And to the kinge ayein he goth
 And told him, how this man
 answerde.

The king whan he this tale herde
 Bad that they shulden all abide,
 For he him self wold thider ride.

And whan he came to-fore the tonne,
 He hath his tale thus begonne :

' Al heil.' he saith, ' what man art
 thou ?'

Quod he : ' Such one as thou seest
 now.'

The king, which hadde worries wise,
 His age wolde nought despise

But saith : ' My fader, I thee pray,
 That thou me wolt the cause say,

How that I am thy mannes man ?'
 'Sire king,' quod he, ' and that I can,

If thou wilt.'—' Yea.' saith the
 king.—

1 Stede, place.

2 Iwis, certainly.

Quod he: ' This is the sothe thing:
 Sith I first reson understood
 And knew what thing was evil and
 good,

The Will, whiche of my body
 moveth,

Whos werkes that the god re-
 proveth,

I have restreigned evermore
 Of him which stant under the lore

Of Reson, whos subject he is,
 So that he may nought done amis.

And thus by wey of covenant
 Will is my Man and my Servaunt

And ever hath be and ever shall.
 And thy Will is thy Principal

And hath the lordship of thy wit,
 So that thou coutheest never yit

Take a day rest of thy labour.
 But for to be a conqueriour

Of worldes good, which may nought
 laste,

Thou hiest ever a liche faste,
 Where thou no Reson hast towinne.

And thus thy Will is cause of sinne
 And is thy Lord to whom thou

servest,
 Wherof thou litel thank deservest.'

The king, of that he thus answerd,
 Was nothing wroth, but when he

herd
 The high wisdom, whiche he saide,

With goodly wordes this he praide,
 That he him wolde tell his name.

' I am,' quod he, ' that ilke same,
 Which that men Diogenes calle.'

Tho was the king right glad with
 alle,

For he had herd ofte to-fore
 What man he was, so that therfore

He saide: ' O wise Diogeie,
 Now shall thy grete wit be sene,

For thou shalt of my yifte have,
 What worldes thinge thou wolt

crave.'

Quod he: 'Than hove out of my
sonne
And lete it shine into my tonne,
For thou benimst me¹ thilke yifte,
Which lith nought in thy might to
shifte:

None other good of thee menedeth.'
"The king, whom every contid
dredeth,

Lo, thus he was enformed there;
Wherof, my sone, thou might lere,
How that thy Wil shal nought be
leved,

Where it is nought of Wit releved.
And thoti hast said thy self er this,
How that thy Wii thy maister is,
Through which thin hertes thought
withinne

Is ever of kontek to beginne,
So that it greatly is to drede,
That it no homicide brede.
For Love is of a wonder kinde
And hath his wittes ofte blinde,
That they fro manna's Reson falle.
But whan that it is so befallé,
That Will shall his coragé lede
In Loves cause, it is to drede;
Wherof I finde ensample write,
Whiche is behovely for to wite.

"*I rebe a tale*, and telleth this,
The citee which Semiramis
Enclosed hath with walle about
Of worthy folk with many a rout
Was inhabited here and there.
Amongé the which two there were
Above all other noble and great,
Dwellend tho within a strete
So nigh to-gider, as it was sene,
That there was nothing hem be-
twene

But wowe- to wowe and walle to
walle.

¹ Benimst me, takest away from me.

² Wowe, wall. "Wowe" and "wall" are equivalent, like "follow" and "sue" fourteen lines later.

This o lord hath in specialle
A sone, a lusty bacheler,
In all the towne was none his pere.
That other had a doughter eke
In all the lond that for to seke
Men wisten none so faire as she.
And fell so, as it shulde be,
This faire doughter nigh this sone,
As they to-gider thanne wone,¹
Cupid hath so the thinges shape,
That they ne might his honds escape
That he his fire on hem ne caste,
Wherof her herts he overcaste
To folwe thilke lore and sue,
Which neverman yet might escheue.
And that was Love, as it is happed,
Whiche hath her hertes so be-
trapped,

That they by allewaiés seche,
How that they mighten winne a
speche

Her wofull peine for to lesse.
Who loveth wel, it may nought
misse,

And namely² whan there ben two
Of one accord, how so it go,
But if that they some waie finde,
For Love is ever of suche a kinde
And hath his folk so wel affaited,
That how so that it be awaited,
There may no man the purpos let³
And thus betwene hem two they set
An hole upon a wal to make
Through which they have her coun-
seil take

At alte times, whan they might.
This faire maiden Tisbe night
And he, whom that she loved hote,
Was Piramus by name hote.
So longe her lesson they recorden,
Til atte lastd they accorden
By nightés time for to wende
Alone out fro the townes ende,

¹ Wone, dwell ² Namely. especially.
³ Let, hinder.

Where was a welle under a tree,
 And who cam first, or she or he,
 He shulde stille there abide.
 So it befell the nightés tide
 This maiden which disguised was,
 All prively the softe pas
 Goth through the large town un-
 knowe,

Till that she cam within a throwe
 Where that she liked for to dwelle
 At thilke unhappy freshe welle,
 Which was also the forest nigh;
 Where she comend a leon sigh
 Into the feld to take his pray
 In haste. And she tho fledde away,
 So as Fortune shulde falle,
 For fere, and let her wimpel¹ falle
 Nigh to the wel upon therbage.
 This wilde leon in his rage
 A beste whiche he found there out
 Hathslain, and with his bloody snout
 Whan he hath eten what he wolde,
 To drinke of thilke stremes colde
 Come to the welle, where he fonde
 The wimpel, whiche out of her honde
 Was falle, and he it hath to-drawe,
 Bebledde aboute and all forgnawe.
 And than he straught² him for to
 drinke

Upon the fresshe welles brinke,
 And after that out of the plein
 He torneth to the wode ayein.
 And Tisbe durste nought remewe,³
 But as a brid which were in mewe,³
 Within a bussh she kept her close
 So stille that she nought arose
 Unto her self and pleigneth ay.
 And fell, while that she there lay,
 This Piramus cam after sone
 Unto the welle and by the mone
 He found her wimpel bloody there.
 Cam never yet to mannes ere

¹ *Wimpe*, neck-covering.

² *Straught*, stretched.

³ *Mewe*, cage for moulting birds.

Tidinge ne to mannes sight
 Merveille which so sore aflight¹
 A mannes herte, as it tho dede
 To him, whiche in the same stede
 With many a woful cdmpleigm'ng
 Began his hondes for to wringe
 As he which deemeth sikerly
 That she be dede. And sodeinly
 His swerd all naked out he braicle
 In his Foolhaste and thus he saide :
 'I am cause of this felonie,
 So it is reson that I deie,
 And she is dede by cause of me.'
 And with that worde upon his kne
 He fell, and to the goddes alle
 Up to the heven he gan to calle
 And praie, sithen² it was so
 That he may nought his love as tho³
 Have in this world, that of her grace
 He might her have in other place,
 For here wolde he nought abide,
 He saith. But as it shall betide,
 The pomel of his swerd to ground
 He set and through his hert a wound
 He made up to the bard hilde,
 And in this wise him self spilte
 With his Foolhaste, and deth he
 nam.⁴

For she within a while cam,
 Where he lay dede upon his knife,
 So woful yet was never life
 As Tisbe was. Whan she him sigh,
 She mighte nought one worde on
 high

Out speke, for her herte shette,
 That of her life no pris she sette
 But dede swounend down she felle ;
 Till after whan it so befelle,
 That she out of her traunce awoke,
 With many a wofull pitous loke
 Her eye alway among she caste
 Upon her love and atte laste
 She caught herbrethand saide thus:

¹ *Aflight*, afflicted.

³ *Tho*, then.

² *Stohen*, since.

⁴ *Nom*, took.

' O thou, which cleped art Venus,
 Goddess of Love, and thou Cupide,
 Which Loves cause hast for to guide,
 I wot now wel that ye be blinde,
 Of thilke unhap whichel nowe finde
 Only betwene my love and me.
 This Piramus, whiche here I se
 Bledend, O, what hath he deserved?
 For he your hest hath kept and
 served,

And was yonge and I both also,
 Alas, why do ye with us so?
 Ye set our heries both on fire
 And made us suchd thing desire
 Whereof that we no skille couthe.
 But thus our freshe lusty youthe
 Withouten joy is all despended,
 Which thing may never ben
 amended.

For as for me this woll I say,
 That me is lever for to deie
 Than live after this sorwefull day.
 And with this word where as he lay
 Her love in armes she embraseth
 Her owne deth and so purchaseth,
 That now she wepte and now she
 kiste,

Till atte laste, ere she it wiste,
 So great a sorwe is to her falle
 Whiche overgoth her wittes alle,
 And she, which mightd nought
 asterte,

The swerdes pointe ayein her herte
 She set and fell down therupon,
 Whereof that she was dede anone.
 And thus both on a¹ swerd bledend
 They were founden dede liggend.

" No.v thou, my sone, hast herd
 this tale

Beware that of thin owne bale
 Thou be nought cause in thy Fool-
 haste,

Andkepe that thou thy Wit newaste
 Upon thy thought in aventure,

Whereof thy lives forfeiture
 May falle. And if thou have so
 thought

Erthis, tell onandhideitnought."—

" My fader, upon Loves side
 My conscience I wol nought hide,
 How that for love of pure wo
 I have ben ofte moved so
 That with my wishes if I might
 A thousand times, I you plight,
 I hadde storven¹ in a day.
 And therof I me shrive may,
 Though Love fully me ne slough,
 My will to deie was enough.
 So am I of my Will coupable,
 And yet is she nought merciable
 Which may me yive life and hele,
 But that herlist nought with me dele
 I wot by whos conseil it is

And him wolde I long time er this,
 And yet I wolde and ever shall,
 Sleen and destruye in speciall.
 The golde of nine kinges londres
 Ne shulde him save fro min hondres,
 In my power if that he were.
 But yet him stant of me no fere,
 For nought that ever I can manage
 He is the hinderer of my grace,
 Til he be dede I may nought spede.
 So mote I nedes taken hede
 And shape how that he were away,
 If I therto may finde a wey."—

" My sone, tell me now forthy
 Whiche is that mortal enemy,
 That thou manacest to be dede."—

" My fader, it is suche a quede -
 That where I come, he is to-fore
 And doth so that my cause is lore "

"What is his name?" " It is
 Daunger,

Whiche is my ladies counseiler,
 For I was never yet so sligh
 To come in any place nigh

¹ Storven, died.

² Quede, foul one

¹ A, one.

Where as she was, by night or day,
That Daunger ne was redy ay,
With whom for speche ne for mede
Yet might I never of Love spede.
For ever I this findd soth,
All that my lady saith or doth
To me Daunger shall make an ende.
And that maketh al my world mis-
wende,

And ever I axe his helpe, but he
May be wel cleped sauns pite.
For ay the more I to him bowe,
The lasse he woll my tale allowe.
He hath my lady so engleued¹
She woll nought, that he be re-
meued.

For ever he hongeth on her saile
And is so prive of counseile,
That ever whan I have ought bede,
I finde Daunger in her stede
And min answer of him I have.
But for no mercy that I crave,
Of mercy never a point I hadde.
I find his answer ay so badde,
That worse might it never be.
And thus between Daunger and me
Is ever werre til he deie.

But might I ben of such maistrie,
That I Daunger had overcome,
With that were all my joie come.
Thus wolde I wonde for no sinne
Ne yet for all this world to winne,
If that I mighte finde a sleight
To lay all min estate in weight
I wolde him fro the Court desever
So that he come ayeiaward never,
Therefore I wisshe and wolde fain
That he were in some wise slain,
For while he stant in thilke place
Ne gete I nought my ladies grace.
Thus hate I dedely thilke Vice
And wolde he stood in none office
In place where my lady is.
For if he do, I wot wel this,

1 Engleued, fastened to him.

That outhur he shall deie or I
Within a while, and nought forthy
On my lad full ofte I muse,
Now that she may her self excuse.
For if I deie in suche a plite
Me thenketh she might nought be
quite,¹

That she ne were an homicide.
And if it shulde so betide,
As god forbede it shulde be,
By double way it is pite.
For I, which all my Will and Wit
Have yove and served ever yit,
And than I shuld in suche a wise,
In rewarding of my service
Be dede, me thenketh it were routh.
And furthermore I telle trouth,
She that hath ever be wel named,
She were worthy than to be blamed
And of reson to ben appeled,
Whan with o word she might have
heled

A man, and suffreth him to deie.
Ha, who sigh ever such a way?
Ha, who sigh ever such destresse?
Withoute pite gentillesse,
Withoute mercy womanhede,
That woll so quite² a man his mede
Whiche ever hath be to lové trewe.

" My gode fader, if ye rewe
Upon my tale, tell me now,
And I wol stinte and herken
you."—

" My sone, attempre thy corege
Fro Wrath and let thin hert assuage,
For who so wol him underfonge,
He may his grace abide longe
Or he of Love be received
And eke also, but it be weived,³
There mighte mochel thing befall
That shulde make a man to falle
Fro Love, that never afterwarde
Ne durst he loke thiderwarde.

1 Quite acquitted. 2 So requite.

3 Unless it (Wrath) be put aside.

In harde waies men gon softe,
And er they climbe avise hem ofte,
And men seen all day, that rape¹
reweth.

And who so wicked ale breweth
Full ofte he mot the worse drinke;
Better it is to flete than sinke;
Better is upon the bridel chewe
Than if he fel and overthrewe
The hors and sticked in the mire;
To casten water in the fire
Better is than brenne upal the hous.
The man whiche is malicious
And foolhastif, full ofte he falleth.
And selden is whan Love him calleth,
Forthy better is to suffre a throwe²
Than to be wilde and overthiowe.
Suffraunce hath ever be the best
To wishen him that secheth rest.
And thus if thou wolt Love spede,
My sone, suffre, as I the rede.
What may the mous ayein the cat?
And for this cause I axe that,
Who may to lové make a werre,
That he ne hath him self the werre?
Love axeth pees and ever shall,
And who that fighteth most withall,
Shall lest conquere of his emprise.
For this they tellen that ben wise,
Whiche is to strive and have the
werse

To hasten, is nought worth a kerse.³
Thing that a man may nought
acheve,

That may nought wel be done at eve,
It mot abide till the morwe.
Ne haste nought thine owne sorwe,
My sone, and take this in thy witte,⁴
He hath nought lost that wel abitte.
Ensamble, that it falleth thus,

1 Rape haste. Icelandic "brapa," headlong hurry. It is the word used in the phrase "rap out an oath."

2 A throwe, for a time.

3 Kerse, cress.

4 Abitte, abides, waits (like our "everything comes to him who waits").

Thou might well take of Piramus,
Whan he in haste his swerd out
diough

And on the point him selven slough
For love of Tisbe pitously
For¹ he her wimpel fond bloody
And wende a beste her hadde slain,
Where as him ought have be right
fain,

For she was there al sauf beside.
But for he wolde nought abide,
This mischef fell. Forthy bewaie,
My sone, as I thee warne dare,
Do thou no thinge in suche a rees,²
For suffraunce is the well of pecs,
Though thou to Loves Court pursue,
Yet sit it wel that thou escheuc
That thou the Court nought over-
haste,

For so thou might thy time waste.
But if³ thin hap therto be shape,
It may nought helpe for to rape,
Therefore attemptre thy cpdrg,.
Foolhaste doth none avauntage,
But ofte it set a man behinde
In cause of love, and thus I finde
By olde ensample as thou shalt here
Touchend of love in this matere.

A maiden whilomtherewasone,
Which Daphne hight, and such was
none

Of beaute than, as it was saide.
Phebus his love hath on her laide,
And therupon to her he sought
In his Foolhaste and so besought
That she with him no reste hadde,
For ever upon her love he gradde,⁴
And she said ever unto him nay.
So it befelle upon a day
Cupide, whiche hath every chaunce
Of love under his governaunce,
Sigh Phebus hasten him so sore,
And for he shulde him haste more

1 For' because.

3 But if, unless.

2 Rces, rush.

4 Graade, cried out.

And yet nought speden atte laste
A dart throughout his hert he caste,
Which was of golde and all a fire,
That made him many fold desire
Of lové mord than he dede.

To Daphne eke in the same stede
A dart of led he caste and smote,
Which was all colde and no thing
hote.

And thus Phebus in love brenneth
And in his haste aboutd renneth
To loken if that he might winne.
But he was ever to beginne,
For ever away fro him she fled,
So that he never his lové sped.
And for to make him full beleve,
That no Foolhaste might acheve
To gete love in such degre,
This Daphne into a lorer tre
Was torned, whiche is ever grene
In token, as yet it may be sene,
That she shall dwelle a maiden stille
And Phebus failen of his wille.
By suche ensamples as they stonde,
My sone, thou might understonde
To hasten love is thing in vein
Whan that Fortune is there ayein,
To take where a man hath leve
Good is, and dies he mot leve.
For whan a mannes nappes failen,
There is none haste may availen,"—

" My fader, graunt mercy of this.
But while I se my lady is
No tree, but holde her owne forme,
There may me no man so enforme,
To whether part Fortune wende,
That I unto my lives ende
Ne wol her serven evermo."—

" My sond, sithen it is so,
I say no more, but in this cas
Beware, howe it with Phebus was.
Nought only upon Loves chaunce,
But upon every governaunce,
Which falleth unto mannas dede,
Foolhaste is ever for to drede,

And that a man good counseil take
Er he his purpose undertake,
For counseil put Foolhaste away."—

" Now gode fader, I you prey,
That for to wisse me the more,
Some good ensample upon this lore
Ye wold me telle, of that is writ,
That I the better mightd wit,
Howe I Foolhastd shulde escheue
And the wisddme of counseilsue."—

"My sone, that thou might
enforme

Thy pacience upon the forme
Of olde ensamples as they felle,
Nowe understand, what I shall telle.

" When noble Troie was belein
And overcome, and home ayein
The Gregois torned fro the siege,
The kinges found her owne liege
In many places, as men saide,
That hem forsoke and disobeide.
Among the whiche fell this case
To Demephon and Athemas,
That weren kinges bothe two
And bothe weren served so,
Her leges wolde hem nought re-
ceive,

So that they mote algates weive ¹
To scene londe in other place
For therd founde they no giace.
Wherof they token hem to rede
And soughten frendes atte nede,
And eche of hem assureth other
To helpe as to his owne brother
To vengen hem of thilke outrage
And winne ayein her heritage.
And thus they ride aboute faste
To geten hem helpe, and atte laste
They hadden power suffisaunt
And maden than a covenaut,
That they ne shulde no life save,
Ne prest, ne clerk, ne lord, ne
knave,

Ne wife, ne childe of that they finde

¹ Weive, turn aside.

Which bereth visage of mannds
kinde,
So that no life shall be socoured,
But with the dedelyswerd deuoured.
In such Foolhaste her ordinaunce
They shapen for to do vengeance.
Whan this purpose was wist and
knowe

Among here host, tho was there
blowe

Of wordes many a speche aboute.
Of yongé men the lusty route
Were of this tale glad enough,
There was no care for the plough;
As they that weren foolhastif
They ben accorded to the strife
And sain, it may nought ben to great
To vengen hem of such forfdt.
Thus saith the wilde unwise tonge
Of hem that there weren yonge.

"But Nestor, which was olde
here,

The salve sigh to-fore the sore
As he that was of counseil wise.
So that anone by his advise
There was a privé counseil nome,
The lordes ben to-gider come.

"This Demephon and Athemas
Her purpos tolden as it was.
They setten allé still and herde,
Was non but Nestor hem answerde.
Hebaddehem, if they wolden winne,
They shulden se, er they beginne,
Her ende and set her first entent
That they hem after ne repent.
And axeth hem this question,
To what finall conclusion
They wolde regne kingés there,
If that no people in londe were?
And saith, it were a wonder wierd¹
To seen a king become an hierd,
Where no life is but only beste
Under the legeaunce of his heste.²

¹ Wierd, destiny.

³ Only beasts under allegiance to his command.

For who that is of man no kinge
The remenaunt is as no thinge.
He saith eke, if they pourpose holde
Tosleethepeople, as theytwo wolde,
Whan they it might's nought restore,
All Grece it shulde abegge sore¹
To se the wilde beste wone²
Where whilom dwelt amannessone.
And for that cause he bad hem trete
And stint of tho manaces grete.
'Bet is to winne by faire speche.'
He saith, 'than such vengeance
seche.

For whan a man is most above,
Him nedeth most to gete him love.'

"Whan Nestor hath this tale
saide,

Ayein him was no word withsaide;
It thought hem all he saide wele;
And thus Fortune her dedly whele
Fro werre torneth into pees.

But forth they wenten netheles,
And whan the contrees herde sain,
How that her kingés be besein
Of suche a power as they ladde,
Was none so bold that hem ne dradde
And for to seche pees and grith³
They sende and praide anon forth-
with,

So that the kingés ben appesed
And every mannds hert is esed,
All was foryete and nought recorded,
And thus they ben to-gider accorded.
The kingés were ayein received,
And pees was take and wrathe
weived

And all through counseil which was
good

Of him that reson understood.

"By this ensample, sone, at-
tempre

Thin hert and let no Will distempre

¹ Abegge sore, abye,—pay for—it sorely.

² Wone, dwell.

³ Grith was a secured interval of peace;
"frith" was peace generally.

Thy Wit, and do no thing by might,
Which may be do by love and
right.

Foolhaste is cause of mochel wo,
Forthy my sone, do nought so.
And as touchend of homicide.
Which toucheth unto Loves side,
Ful ofte it falleth unavisd
Through Will which is nought wel
assised,

Whan Wit and Reson ben away
And that Foolhaste is in the wey,
Wherof hath falle great venge-
aunce.

Forthy take into remembraunce
To love in suche a maner wise,
That thou deserve no juise.
For well I wot, thou might nought
lette,

That thou ne shalt thin herte sette
To love, where¹ thou wolt or none.
But if thy wit be overgone,
So that it torne unto malice,
There wot no man of thilke Vice,
What perill that there may befall.
Wherof a tale amonges alle
Whiche is great pite for to here
I thenke for to tellen here,
That thou such mordre might with-
sonde,

Whan thou the tale hast under-
sonde.

Of Croie at thilke noble towne,
Whose fame stant yet of renowne
And ever shall to mannes ere,
The siege laste longe there
Er that the Grekes it mighte winne,
While Priamus was king therinne.
But of the Grekes that lien aboute,
Agemenon lad all the route.
This thinge is knowen overall,
But yet I thenke in speciall
To my matere therupon
Telle in what wise Agémenon

¹ Where, whether.

Through chaunce which may nought
be weived

Of loveuntrewee was deceived.
An olde sawe is : who that is sligh
In place where he may be nigh
He maketh the ferre leve loth¹
Of love, and thus ful ofte it goth.
There while Agémenon batailleth
To winne Troie and it assaileth
From home and was long time fer,
Egistus drough his quene ner
And with the leiserwhiche hehadde
This lady at his will he ladde.
Climestre was her righte name,
She was therof greatty to blame
To love there it may nought laste,
But fell to mischefe atte laste.
For whan this noble worthy knight
Fro Troie came, the firste night
That he at home a bedde lay
Egistus longe er it was day,
As this Climestre him had assent
And weren bothe of one assent,
By treson slough him in his bed.
But morder, which may nought ben
hed,

Sprung out to every mannes ere,
Wherof the lond was full of fere.

Agémenon hath by this quene
A sone, and that was after sene.
But yet as than he was of youth
A babe which no reson couth.
And as God wolde, it felle him thus,
A worthy knight Taltibius
This yonge childe hath in keeping.
And whan he herde of this tidfng,
Of this¹ treson, of this misdede,
He gan within him self to drede
In aunter if this false Egiste
Upon him come er he it wiste
To take and morder of his malice
This child whiche he hath to nonce;
And for that cause in alle haste

¹ The cunning man who can come near makes
loathed the loved one who is farmer off.

Out of the londe he gan him haste
 And to the kinge of Crete he straught
 And him this yonge lorde betought¹
 And praid him for his faders sake,
 That he this child wolde undertake
 And kepe him till he be of age,
 So as he was of his lignage,
 And told him over all the cas,
 How that his fader morthred was,
 And how Egistus, as men saide,
 Was king, to whom the londe obeide.

"And whan Ydomeneus the kinge
 Hath understanding of this thinge,
 Which that this knight him hadde
 told,

He made sorwe manyfold
 And toke the childe unto his warde
 And saide he wolde him kepe and
 warde,

Till that he were of such a might
 To handle a swerde and ben a knight
 To venge him at his owne will.
 And thus Horestes dwelleth still,
 Such was the chilles righte name,
 Whiche after wrought mochel
 shame

In vengeance of his faders deth.

"The time of yeres overgeth
 That he was man of brede and
 lengthe,

Of wit, of manhode, and of strengthe,
 A fair persone amanges alle.

And he began to clepe and calle
 As he which come was to man,
 Unto the kinge of Crete than
 Praiende that he wold him make
 A knight and power with him take,
 For lenger wolde he nought beleve,²
 He saith, but praith the kinge of
 leve

To gone and claim his heritdge
 And vengen him of thilke oultrdge
 Which was unto his fader do.
 The kinge assenteth well therto

With great honotir and knight him
 maketh

And great power to him betaketh.¹

And gan his journe for to caste

So that Horestes atte laste

His leve toke and forth he goth

As he that was in herd wroth.

His firste pleinte to bemene²

Unto the citee of Athene

He goth him forth and was re-
 ceived,

So there was he nought deceived.

The duke and tho that weren wise

They profren hem to his service,

And he hem thonketh of her proffer

And saith him self he wol gone offer

Unto the goddes for his spede,

And alle men him yive rede.

So goth he to the temple forth,

Of yiftds that be mochel worth

His sacrifice and his offringe

He made. And after his axinge

He was answerde, if that he wolde

His state recover, than he sholde

Upon his moder do vengeance

So cruel, that the remembraunce

Therof might evermore abide,

As she that was an homicide

And of her owne lord mordrice.

Horestes, whiche of thilke office

Was nothing glad, as than he
 praide

Unto the goddes there and saide,

That they the jugement devise,

How she shall take the juise.³

And therupon he had answer,

That he her pappes shulde of-tere

Out of her breast his owne hondes,

And for ensample of alle londes

With hors she shulde be to-drawe,

Till houndes had her bonds gnawe

Withouten any sepulture.

This was a wofull aventiire.

1 *Betaketh*, entrusted. 2 *Bemene*, bemoan.

3 *Jufse*, judgment (judicium).

1 *Betaught*, entrusted. 2 *Beleve*, remain.

"And whan Horestes hath all
herde,
How that the goddes have an-
swerde,
Forth with the strength whiche he
lad,

The duke and his power he had
And to a citee forth they gone,
The which was cleped Cropheone,
Where as Phorcus was lord and sire,
Which profreth him withouten hire
His helpe and all that he may do,
As he that was right glad therto
To greve his mortal enemy,
And tolde him certain cause why,
How that Egiste in maridge
His doughter whilom of full age
Forlay and afterward forsoke,
Whan he Horestes moder toke.
Men sain : old sinnd newe shame.
Thus more and more arose the blame
Ayein Egiste on every side.

" Horestes with his host to ride
Began, and Phorcus with him wente,
I trowe Egist him shall repente.
They riden forth unto Micene,
There lay Climestre thilke queene,
The whiche Horestes moder is.
And whan she herde telle of this,
The gates were faste shette,
And they were of her entre lette.¹
Anone this citee was withoute
Belain and sieged all aboute,
And ever among they it assaile
Fro day to night, and so travaile
Till atte laste they it wonne;
Tho was there sorwe inough be-
gonne.

" Horestes did his moder calle
Anone to-fore the lordes alle
And eke to-fore the people also,
To her and tolde his tale tho
And saide: 'O cruel beste unkinde,
How mlghtest thou thin herte finde,

1 Hindered from entering.

For any luste of loves draught
That thou accordedst to the slaught
Of him which was thin owne lorde?
Thy treson stant of such recorde,
Thou might thy werkes nought
forsake,

So mote I for my faders sake
Vengeaince upon thy body do,
As I commaunded am therto.
Unkindely for thou hast wrought,
Unkindelich it shall be bought:
The sone" shall the moder slee,
For that whilom thou saidest ye
To that thou shuldest nay have said.'
And he with that his honds hath laid
Upon his moder breast anone
And rent out from the bare bone
Her pappes both and caste away
Amiddes in the carte way,
And after toke the dede cors
And lete it be drawe away with hors
Unto the hounde, unto the raven,
She was none other wise graven.¹

" Egistus, which was dies where,
Tidinges comen to his ere,
How that Micene was belain,
But what was more herd he nought
sain.

With great manace and mochelboste
He drough power and made an hoste
And came in the rescousse² of the
town.

But all the sleight of his treson
Horestes wist it by a spie
And of his men a great partie
He made in busschement abide
To waite³ on him in suche a tide,
That he ne might her hond escape.
And in this wise as he hath shape
The thing befell, so that Egist
Was take er he him selfe it wist,
And was forth brought his hondes
bonde,

1 Craven, buried. 2 Rescousse, rescue,

3 Waite, watch.

As whan men have a traitor fonde.
 And tho that weren with him take,
 Whiche of tresrin were overtake,
 To-gider in one sentence falle.
 But false Egiste above hem alle
 Was demed to diverse peine,
 The worste that men couthe ordeigne,

And so forth after by the lawe
 He was unto the gibet drawe,
 Where he above all other hongeth,
 As to a traitor it belongeth.
 The Fame with her swifte winges
 Aboute fligh and bare tidinges
 And made it couth in *alle* londes,
 How that Horestes with his hondes
 Climestre his owne moder slough.
 Some sain, he did well enough,
 And some sain, he did amis,
 Divers opinion there is;
 That she is dede they speken alle,
 But plainly howe it is befall
 The matere in so litel throwe¹
 In sothe there might no man knowe
 But they that weren at the dede.
 And comunlich in every nede
 The worste speche is rathest herde
 And leved,² till it be answerde.
 The kinges and the lordes great
 Begonne Horestes for to threat
 To putten him out of his regne,—
 He is nought worthy for to regne,
 The child which slough his moders so,
 They said; and therupon also
 The lordes of comun assent
 The time sette of parlenent,
 And to Athenes king and lorde
 To-gider come of one accorde,
 To knowe how that the sothe was,
 So that Horestes in this cas
 They senden after, and he come.

" King Menelay the wordes nome
 And axeth him of this matere.
 And he, that all it mighten here,

1 In so short a time. 2 Leved, believed.

Answerde andtolde his tale at large,
 And how the goddes in his charge
 Commaunded him in suche a wise
 His owne hond to do juise.¹
 And with this tale a duke arose,
 Which was a worthy knight of lose,²
 His name was Menesteus,
 And saide unto the lordes thus :
 'The wreche³ whiche Horestes
 dede,

It was thinge of the goddes bede
 And nothinge of his cruelte :
 And if there were of my degre
 In all this place suche a knight
 That wolde sain it was no right,
 I woll it with my body prove.'
 And therupon he cast his glove
 And eke this noble duke alleide
 Full many an other skill⁴ and saide,
 She hadde well deserved wreche,⁵
 First for the cause of spouse breche,⁶
 And after wrought in suche a wise,
 That all the woilde it ought agrise,⁶
 Whan that she for so foul a vice
 Was of her owne lord mordrice.
 They sitten allé still and herde,
 But therto was no man answdrde,
 It thought hem all he saide skille,
 There is no man withsay it wille.
 Whan they upon the reson musen
 Horestes allé they excusen,
 So that with great solempnite
 He was unto his digniteS
 Received and corouned kinge.
 And tho befell a wonder thinge.
 Egfona whan she it wiste,
 Which was the doughter of Egiste
 And suster on the moder side
 To this Horest, at thilke tide,
 Whan she herde how her brother
 sped,

For purd sorwe whiche her led,

1 Juise, judgment. 2 Lose, praise, fame.
 3 Wreche, vengeance. 4 Alleged ... reason.
 5 Spouse breche, adultery.
 6 Agrise, to terrify.

That he ne hadde ben exiled,
 She hath her owne life beguiled
 Anone and henge her selfe tho.
 It hath and shall ben evermo
 To mordre who that woll assente
 He may nought faild to repente.
 This false Egiona was one
 Whiche to mordre Agamenon
 Yaf her accorde and her assent,
 So that by goddes jugement,
 Though other none man it wolde,
 She toke her juise as she sholde,
 And as she to an other wrought
 Vengeauncene upon herself she sought
 And hath of her unhappy wit
 A modre with a modre quit.
 Suche is of modre the vengeaunce.

"Forthy my sone, in remem-
 braunce
 Of this ensample take good hede.
 For who that thenketh his love spede
 With mordre, he shall with worldes
 shame

Him self and eke his love shame."—

"My fader, of this aventure,
 Whiche ye have tolde, I you assure
 My herte is sory for to here;
 But onely for I wolde lere
 What is to done and what to leve,
 And over this now by your leve.
 That ye me wolde telle I pray,
 If there be leful any way
 Without sinne a man may slee."—

"My sone, in sondry wise ye.¹
 What man that is of traierie
 Of mordre or elles robberie
 Attaint, the jugé shal not let
 But he shal seen of pure det^L
 And doth great sinne if that he
 wonde.³

For who, that lawe hath upon bonde,
 And spareth for to do justice
 For mercy, doth nought his office,

That he his mercy so bewareth,¹
 Whan for o shrewe, whiche he
 spareth,

A thousand gode men he greveth;
 With such mercy who that beleveth
 To plesse God, he is deceived
 Or elles reson mot be weived.
 The lawe stooode or² we were bore,
 How that a kinges swerde is bore
 In signe that he shall defende
 His true people and make an ende
 Of suche, as wolden hem devoure.

"Lo, thus my sone, to succour
 The lawe, and comun right to winne,
 A man may slee withoute sinne
 And do therof a great almesse
 So for to kepe rightwisnesse.
 And over this³ for his contree
 In time of werre a man is free
 Him self, his house, and eke his
 londe

Defende with his owne honde
 And sleen, if that he may no bet,
 After the lawe whiche is set."—

"Now fader, than I you beseche
 Of hem that dedly werres seche
 In worldes cause and sheden blood,
 If suche an homicide is good?"—

"My sone, upon thy question
 The trouth of min opinion,
 Als ferforth as my wit arecheth
 And as the pleine lawd techeth,
 I wol thee telle in evidence
 To reule with thy conscience.

The highe god of his justice
 That ilke foul horrible Vice
 Of Homicide he hath forbode
 By Moises, as it was bede.
 Whan Goddes sone also was bore
 He sent his aungel down therfoie,
 Whom the shephdrdes herden singe:
 'Pees to the men of welwillinge
 In erthe be amonge us here.'

1 Ye, yea. 2 Det, debt, obligation.
 3 Wonde, turn aside.

1 Bewareth, expends. 2 Or, ere.
 3 Over this, beyond this.

So for to speke in this mature
 After the lawe of charite,
 There shall no dedly werre be.
 And eke Nature it hath defended
 And in her lawd Pees commended,
 Whiche is the chefe of mannes welth,
 Of mannes life, of mannas helth.
 But dedly Werre hath his covine
 Of Pestilence and of Famine,
 Of Pouerte and of allé wo,
 Wherof this world we blamen so
 Which now the werre hath under
 fote,

Till God him self therof do bote.¹
 For allé thing, which God hath
 wrought,

Inerthe, Werre it bringeth onought.
 The chirche is brent, the prest is
 slain,

The wife, the maide is eke forlain,
 The lawe is lore and God unserved:
 I not² what mede he hath deserved,
 That suche werres ledeth inne,
 If that he do it for to winne,
 First to accompte his gret cost,
 Forth with the folke that he hath
 loste

As to the worldes reckenfng,
 There shall he finde no winningge.
 And if he do it to purchase
 The heven, mede of suche a grace
 I can nought spekd, nethéles
 Crist hath commaunded Love and
 Pees.

And who that worcheth the revers,
 I trowe his mede is full divers.
 And sithen thanne that we finde,
 That werres in her owne kinde
 Ben toward God of no deserte
 And eke they bringen in pouerte
 Of worldes good, it is merveile
 Among the men what it may eile
 That they a pees ne connen sette.
 I trowe Sinne be the lette,

1 Do bote, cause remedy. 2 Not know not.

And every mede of Sinne is deth.
 So wote I never howe it geth.
 But we, that ben of o' beleve
 Among us self, this wolde I leve,²
 That better it were Pees to chese
 Than so by double weie lese.

I not if that it now so stonde,
 But this a man may undeistonde,
 Who that these olde bokes redeth,
 That covetise is one which ledeth
 And broughte first the werres inne.
 At Grece if that I shall beginne,
 There was it proved howe it stood
 To Perse, whiche was full of good.
 They maden werre in special!
 And so they didden over all
 Where great richesse was in londe,
 So that they leften nothing stonde
 Unwerred, but onliche Archade.

For there they no werres made
 Because it was barein and pouer,
 Wherof they mighte nought recouer
 And thus pouerte was forbore,
 He that nought had nought hath
 lord.

But yet it is a wonder thinge,
 Whan that a riche worthy kinge
 Or other lord, what so he be,
 Woll axe and claime properte
 In thing to whiche he hath no right
 But only of his grete might.

For this may every man well wite,
 That bothe Kinde and Lawe write
 Expressely stonden there ayein.

But he mot nedes somewhat sain,
 All though there be no reson inne,
 Which secheth cause for to winne.
 For Wit that is with Will oppressed,
 Whan covetise him hath adressed
 And allé reson put away,
 He can well finde such a way
 To werre where as ever him liketh,³
 Wherof that he the worde entriketh,

1 O, one. 2 Leve, believe.

3 Entriketh, deceives by intrigue.

That many a man of him com-
pleigneth.

But yet alway some cause he
feigneth

And of his wrongfull herte he
demeth

That all is well what ever him
semeth

Be so that he may winne inough.

For as the true man to the plough

Only to the gaignage entendeth,

Right so the werriour despendeth

His time and hath no conscience.

And in this point for evidence

Of hem that suche werres make,

Thou might a great ensample take

How they her tirannie excusen

Of that they wrongfull werres usen,

And how they stonde of one ac-
corde,

The souldeour forth with the lorde,

The pouer man forth with the riche,

As of cordge they ben liche

To make werres and to pille

For lucre and for none other skille,¹

Wherof a propre tale I rede,

As it whilom befelle in dede.

" Of him, whom all this erthe
dradde

Whan he the world so overladde

Through werre, as it fortunèd is,

King Alisaundre, I redd this,

How in a marche where he lay

It fell parchaunce upon a day,

A rover of the see was nome,²

Which many a man had overcome

And slain and take her good away.

This pilour as the bokes say,

A famous man in sondry stede

Was of the werkes whiche he dede.

This prisoner to-fore the kinge

Was.' brought, and therupon this
thinge

In audience he was accused,

1 Skille reason.

2 Nome, taken.

And hehis dede hath nought excused

And praid the king to done him right

And said : ' Sire, if I were of might,

I have an herte liche to thine;

For if thy power were mine,

My wille is most in speciall

To rifle and geten over all

The large worldes good about.

But for I lede a pouer route

And am as who saith at mischefe,

The name of pilour and of thefe

I bere, and thou which routes great

Might lede and take thy beyete¹

And dost right as I wolde do,

Thy name is nothing cleped so,

But thou art named emperour.

Our dedes ben of one colour

And in effecte of one desrte,

But thy richesse and my pouerte

They be nought taken evenliche,

And netheles he that is riche

This day, to morwe he may be pouer,

And in contrarie also recouer

A pouer man to grete richesse.

Men sain forth let rightwisenesse

Be peised even in the balaunce.'

" The king his hardy contenance

Behelde, and herd his wordes wise,

And said unto him in this wise :

' Thin answer I have understonde,

Wherof my will is, that thou stonde

In my service and stille abide.'

And forth with al the same tide

He hath him terme of life witholde

Themore and for heshuldbenbolde,

He made him knight and yaf him

lond,

Whiche afterward was of his honde

An orped² knight in many a stede

And great prowesse of armes dede,

As the cronfques it recorden.

And in this wise they accorden,

The whiche of her condici6n

Be set upon destruction,

1 Beyete, gains. 2 Orped, distinguished.

Such capitain such retenue.¹
 But for to see to what issue
 The king befaller at the laste,
 It is great wonder that men caste
 Her herte upon such wrong towinne
 Where no beyete may ben inne
 And doth dise on every side;
 But whan Reson is put aside
 And Will govdrneth the conige,
 The faucon which fleeth rarge²
 And suffreth no thing in the way
 Wherof that he may take his pray,
 Is nought more set upon ravine
 Than thilke man whiche his covine
 Hath set in suche a maner wise.
 For all the world ne may suffice
 To Wil whiche is nought reson-
 able.

Wherof ensample concordable
 Lich to this point of which I mene
 Was upon Alisaundre sene,
 Whiche hadde set all his entent
 So as Fortun with him went,
 That Reson might him non governe,
 But of his Wille he was so sterne,
 That all the worlde he overran
 And what him list he toke and wan.
 In Ynde the superiour
 Whan that he was full conquerour
 And had his wilfull pourpos wonne
 Of all this erth under the sonne,
 This king homward to Macedoine
 Whan that he cam to Babiloine
 And wende moste in his empire,
 As he which was hole lorde and
 sire,
 In honour for to be received,
 Most sodenliche he was deceived
 And with strong poison envenfmed.
 And as he hath the world mistimed
 Nought as he shulde with his wit,
 Nought as he wolde it was acquit.
 Thus was he slain that whilom
 slough,

1 Like master like man. 2 *Ramage*, wild.

And he which riche was inough
 Thisday, tomorwe he haddennought.
 And in such wise as he hath wrought
 In disturbaunce of worldes pees,
 His werre he fond than enddles,
 In which for ever discomfite
 He was. Lo, now for what profile
 Of werre it helpeth for to ride,
 For covetise and worldes pride
 To slee the worldes men aboute
 As bestes, whiche gone there oute.
 For every life which reson can¹
 Oweth wel to knowe that a man
 Ne shulde through no tirannie
 Lich to these other bestes deie
 Til Kinds² wolde for him sende.
 I not how he it might amende
 Which taketh away for evermore
 The life that he may nought restore.

"Forthy my sone, in alle wey
 Be wel avised I thee prey
 Of slaughter that thou be coupdble
 Without cause resondble."—

"My fader, understonde it is,
 That ye have said, but over this
 I pray you telle me nay or ye,
 To passe over the greate see
 To werre and sle the Sarasin
 Is that the lawd?"—"Sone min,
 To preche and suffre for the feith
 That I have herd the gospel saith,—
 But for to sle, that here I nought.
 Crist with his owndeth hath bought
 All other men and made hem fre
 In token of parfit charite,
 And after³ that he taught him selve
 Whan he was dede these other twelve
 Of his apostles went aboute
 The holy feith to prechen oute,
 Wherof the deth in sondry place
 They suffre, and so God of his grace
 The feith of Crist hath made arise.
 But if they wolde in other wise

1 Everybody capable of reason.

2 *Kinde*, Nature. 3 *After*, according to.

By werre have brought in the
 creatince,
 It hadde yet stonde in balaunce.
 And that may proven in the dede ;
 For what man the croniques rede,
 Fro first that Holy Chirche hath
 weived¹
 To preche and hath the swerd re-
 ceived,
 Wherof the werres ben begonne,
 A great partie of that was wonne
 To Castes feith stant now miswent.
 God do therof amendement
 So as he wot what is the best.
 But sone, if thou wilt live in rest
 Of conscience well assised,
 Er that thou slee, be wel avised ;
 For man, as tellen us the clerkes,
 Hath God above all erthly werkes
 Ordeigned to be principall,
 And eke of soule in speciall
 He is made lich to the godhede :
 So sit it wel to taken hede
 And for to loke on every side
 Er that thou falle on homicide,
 Which sinne is now so generall
 That it wel nigh stant overall
 In Holy Chirche and elles where.
 But ail the while it is so there,
 The world mot nede fare amis.
 For whan the well of pite is
 Through covetfse of worldes good
 Defouled with shedding of blood,
 The remenaunte of folke about
 Unnethe stonde in any doubt
 To werre eche other and to slee,
 So it is all nought worth a stre,²
 The Charite wherof we prechen,
 For we do no thing as we techen.
 And thus the blinde conscience
 Of Pees hath lost thilke evidence
 Which Crist upon this erthe taught.
 Now may men se mordre and man-
 slaught

1 Weived, put aside.

2 Stre, straw.

Liche as it was by daies olde,
 Whan men the sinnes bought and
 solde.

" **In Grece** afore Cristes feith,
 I rede as the cronique saith
 Touchend of this matere thus,
 In thilke time how Peleus
 His owne brother Phocus slough.
 But for he hadde gold inough
 To yive, his sinne was despensed
 With golde wherof it was com-
 pensed.

Achastus, which with Venus was
 Her prest, assoiled¹ in that cas
 Al were there no rdpentaunce.
 And as the boke maketh rdmein-
 braunce,

It telleth of Medee also,
 Of that she slough her sones two
 Egeus in the same plite
 Hath made her of her sinnd quite.²
 The sone eke of Amphioras,
 Whose right name Almeus was,
 His moder slough Eriphiele,
 But Achilo the prest and he,
 So as the bokes it recorden,
 For certain some of golde accorden
 That thilke horrible sinfull dede
 Assoiled was; and thus for mede
 Of worldes good it falleth ofte,
 That homicide is set alofte
 Here in this life : but after this
 There shall be knowe, how that it is
 Of hem that suche thinges wirche,
 And how also that Holy Chirche
 Let suche sinnes passe quite,
 And how they wolde hemself acquite
 Of dedely werres, that they make.
 For who that wold ensample take,
 The lawd whiche is natural,
 By wey of Kinde sheweth wel
 That homicide in no degre
 Which werreth ayein charite
 Among the menne shulde dwelle.

1 Assoiled, absolved. 2 Quite, acquitted.

For after that the bokes telle,
To seche in all the worlde riche
Men shall nought finde upon his
liche¹

A beste for to take his prey,
And sithen Kind hath suche a wey,
Than is it wonder of a man,
Which kinde hath and reson can,
That he woll outhere more or lasse
His kinde and reson overpasse
And slee that is to him semldble.
So is the man nought resondble
Ne kinde, and that is nought
honeste,

Whan he is worse than a beste.

"Among the bokes which I finde
Solins speketh of a wonder kinde
And saith of foules there is one,
Whiche hath a face of blood and
bone

Like to a man in resemblaunce.
And if it falls' so parchaunce,
As he whiche is a foule of pray,
That he a man finde in his way,
He woll him sleen if that he may.
But afterward the same day
Whan he hath eten all his felle
And that shall be beside a welle
In whiche he woll drinke take
Of his visdge and seeth the make
That he hath slain, anone he
thenketh

Of his misdede, and it forthenketh
So greatly that for pure sorwe
He liveth nought till on the morwe.
By this ensample it may well sue,
That man shall homicide escheue,
For ever is mercy good to take.
But if the lawe it hath forsake
And that justice is there ayein,
Ful oftetime I have herd sain
Amonges hem that werres hadden,
That they somwhile her cause
ladden

1 Upon his own kind.

By mercy, whan they might have
slain,

Wherof that they were after sain.
And sone, if that thou wolt recorde
The vertue of misericorde,
Thou sighe never thilke place,
Where it was used lacke grace;
For every lawe and every kinde
The mannes wit to mercy binde,
And namely the worthy knightes,
Whan that they stonden most up-
rightes

And ben most mighty for to greve,
They shulden thanne most releve
Him whom they mighten over-
throwe,

And by ensample a man may
knowe

He maynought failen of his mede
That hath mercy; For this I rede.
In a cronique I finde thus,
Whan Achilles with Thelaphus
His sone toward Troie were,
It fell hem er they comen there
Ayein Theucer the kinge of Mese
To make werre and for to sese
His lond as they that wolden regne
And Theucer put out of his regne.
And thus the marches they assaile,
But Theucer yaf to hem bataile.
They foughten on both sides faste,
But so it hapneth atte laste
This worthy Greke this Achilles
The king amonge all other ches,
As he that was cruel and felle,
With swerd in honde on him hefelle
And smote him with a dethes
wounde,

That he unhorsed fell to grounde.
Achilles upon him alight
And wolde anone, as he we! might,
Have slain him fullliche in the place,
But Thelaphus his faders grace
For him besought, and for pite
Praith that he wolde let him be,

And cast his shield betwene hem
two.

Achilles axeth him why so.

And Thelaphus his cause tolde

And saith, that he is mochel holde,

For whilom Theucer in a stede

Great grace and socour to him dede,

And saith that he him wolde acquite

And praith his fader to respite.

Achilles tho withdrough his honde;

But all the power of the londe

Whan that they sigh her king thus
take

They fled and han the feld forsake.

The Grekes unto the chace fallé

And for the moste part of alle

Of that contre the lordes great

They toke and wonne a great beyete.

Anone after this victorie,

The king, whiche badde memorie,

Upon the grete mercy thought

Which Thelaphus toward him
wrought,

And in presence of all the londe

He toke him faire by the honde

And in this wise he gan to say :

'My sone, I mot by double way

Love and desire thin encrees,

First for thy fader Achilles

Whilom full many a day ere this

Whan that I shulde have fare amis

Rescousse did in my quarele

And kept all min estate in hele,

How so there fallé now distaunce

Amonges us, yet remembraunce

I have of mercy whiche he dede

As than, and thou nowe in this stede

Of gentillesse and of fraunchise

Hast do mnerc the same wise;

So woll I nought that any time

Be lost of that thou hast do by me,

For how so this fortune falle

Yet stant my truste aboven alle,

For the mercy whiche now I finde,

That thou wolt after this be kinde;

And for that suche is min espeir

And for my sone and for min heire

I thee receive, and all my londe

I yive and sese into thin honde.'

And in this wise they accorde,

The cause was misericorde,

The lordes do her obeisaunce

To Thelaphus, and purveaiince

Was made so that he was coroned

And thus was mercy reguerddned

Whiche he to Theucer did to-fore.

"Lo, this ensample is made
therefore,

That thou might take remem-
braunce,

My sone, and, whan thou seest a
chaunce,

Of other mennes passion

Take pite and compassion,

And let nothing to the be lef

Which to another man is gref.

And after this if thou desire

To stonde ayein the Vice of Ire,

Counseile thee with pacience

And take into thy conscience

Mercy to be thy governour,

So shalt thou fele no rancour,

Wherof thin herte shall debate

With Homicide ne with hate

For Chestre or for Malncolie.

Thou shalt be softe in compaignie

Withoutte Contek or Foolhaste,

For elles might thou longe waste

Thy time,er that thou have thy wille

Of Love; for the weder stille

Men preise, and blame the tern-
pestes."—

"My fader, I woll do your hestes,

And of this point ye have me taught

Toward my self the better saught¹

I thinke be while that I live.

But for als mochel as I am shrive

Of Wrath and all his circumstaunce,

Yef what ye list to my penaunce

¹ *Saught*, reconciled.

And axeth further of my life,
If other wise I be giltif
Of any thing, that toucheth sinne."—

"My sone, er we depart atwinne,¹
I shall behind no thing leve."—

"My gode fader, by your leve
Than axeth forth what so ye liste,
For I have in you such a triste²

As ye that be my soule hele,
That ye fro me nothing wol hele,³
For I shall telle you the trouthe."—

"My sone, art thou coulpable of
Slouth
In any point, which to him long-
eth?"—

"My fader, of tho points me
longeth⁴

¹ A twinne, separated. ² Triste, trust.

³ Hele, conceal.

⁴ I long to know plainly.

To wite plainly what they mene,
So that I may me shrive clene."—

"Now herken, I shal tho points
devise,

And understand well min apprise.
For shrifte stant of no value

To him that woll him nought
vertue

To leve of Vice the folie,
For worde is wind, but the mais-
trie

Is that a man him self defende
Of thing whiche is nought to com-
mende,

Whereof ben fewd now a day.

And netheles so as I may
Make unto thy memorie know
The points of Slouth thou shalt
knowe.

Book IV.

OF SLOTH.

Upon the Vices to precede
After the cause of mannes
dede

The firste point of Slouth I calle
Lachesse,¹ and is the chefe of alle
And hath this properlich of kind
To leven alle thing behind,
Of that he mighte do nowe here
He tarieth all the longe yere
And evermore he saith : ' To mor-
we,'

And so he woll his time borwe
And wissheth after: God mesende,²
That whan he weneth have an ende,
Than is he furthest to beginne.
Thus bringeth he many a mischefe
inne

Unware, till that he be mischved
And may nought thanne be releved.
And right so nouthere more ne lesse
It stant of Love and of Lachesse.
Some time he sloutheth on a day,
That he never after gete may.

" Now, sone, as of this ilke thing
If thou have any knowleching
That thou to Love hast done er this,
Tell on."—" My gode fader, yis.
As of Lachesse I am beknowe,
That I may stonde upon his rowe,
As I that am clad of his suite,
For whanne I thoughte my pursuite
To make, and therto set a day

To speke unto that swete may,¹
Lachesse bad abide yit
And bare on honde it was no Wit
Ne time for to speke as tho.²
Thus with his tales to and fro
My time in tarieng he drough;
Whan there was time good inough,
He said another time is better,
Thou shalt now senden her a letter
And par cas write more plein
Than thou by mouthe durstest sain.
Thus have I lette time slide
For slouth, and kepte nought my
tide,

So that Lachesse with his vice
Full oft hath made my wit so nice,
That what I thought to speke or do
With tarieng he held me so
Til whan I wolde and mighte
nought.

I not what thing was in my thought
Or it was drede, or it was shame,
But ever in earnest and in game
I wit there is long time passed,
But yet is nought the love lassed,
Whiche I unto my lady have ;
For though mytunge is slow to crave
At alle time, as I have bede,
Min hert stant ever in o stede
And axeth besiliche grace,
The whiche I may nought yet em-
brace,

1 Lachesse slackness. 2 For a godsend,

1 May, maid.

2 Tko, then.

And god wot that is malgre min.
For this I wot right well afin,¹
My grace cometh so selde aboute,
That is the Slouthe, which I doubt
More than of all the remenaunt
Whiche is to Love appartenaunt.

"And thus as touchend of Lachesse,

As I have tolde, I me confesse
To you, my fader; I besече
That furthermore ye wol me teche,
And if there be to this matere
Some goodly tale for to here,
How I may do Lachesse away,
That ye it wolden telle, I prey."—

"To wissethe, my sone, and rede,
Among the tales whiche I rede,
An olde ensample therupon
Now herken, and I wol telle on.

"**Ayein Lachesse** in Loves cas

I finde, how whilom Eneas,
Whom Anchises to sone hadde,
With great navie, which he ladde,
Fro Troie arriveth at Cartage.
Wherefore a while his herbergage
He toke, and it betidde so
With her which was a quene tho
Of the citee, his dcqueintaunce
He wan, whos name in remembrance

Is yet, and Dido was she hote,
Which loveth eneas so hote
Upon the wordes whiche he saide,
That all her hert on him she laide
And did all holy what he wolde.
But after that, as it be sholde,
Fro thenne he goth toward Itaile
By ship and there his arrivaile
Hath take and shope him for to ride.

But she, which may nought longe
abide

The hote peine of loves throwe,³

1 *Afin*, at last. 2 *Rede*, counsel.
3 *Throwe*, throe.

Anon within a litel throwe¹
A letter unto her knight hath write
And did him plainly for to wite
If he made any tarieng
To drecche² of his ayein comming,
That she ne might him fele and se,
She shulde stonde in such degre
As whilom stood a swan to-fore
Of that she hadde her make lore³
For sorwe a fether into her brain
She shof and hath her selve slain.
As king Menander in a lay
The soth hath founde, where she lay
Spraulend with her wingés twey
As she which shulde thanne deie
For love of him which was her make.
And so shal I do for thy sake
This quene saide, wel I wote.

"Lo, to Enee thus she wrote
With many another word of pleint.
But he which had his thoughtes feint
Towardes Love and full of Slouthe,
His time let, and that was routhe.
For she, which loveth him to-fore,
Desireth ever more and more
And whan she sigh him tary so,
Her hertd was so full of wo,
That compleignend manyfolde
She hath her owne tale tolde
Unto her self and thus she spake :
'Ha, who found ever suche a lacke
Of Slouth in any worthy knight?
Now wote I well my deth is dight
Through him, which shuld have be
my life.'

But for to stinten all this strife
Thus whan she sigh none other bote,
Right even unto her herte rote
A naked swerd anone she threste
And thus she gat her selve reste
In remembrance of alle slowe.

"Whereof, my sone, thou might
knowe,

1 *Throwe* space of time. 2 *Drecche*, delay.
3 *Make lore*, lost her mate.

How tarieng upon the nede
 In Loves cause is for to drede.
 And that hath Dido sore abought,
 Whose deth shall ever be bethought.
 And evermore if I shal seche
 In this matere another speche
 In a cronique I finde write
 A tale, whiche is good to wite.

"**At Troie** whan king Ylixes

Upon the siege, among the pres
 Of hem that worthy knightes were,
 Abode long time stille there,
 In thilke time a man may se,
 How goodly that Penelope,
 Which was to him his trewe wife,
 Of his Lachesse was pleintife,
 Wherof to Troie she him sende
 Her will by letter, thus spekende :

'My worthy love and lord also,
 It is and hath ben ever so,
 That where a woman is alone
 It maketh a man in his persone
 The more hardy for to wowe,
 In hope that she wolde bowe
 To such thinge as his wille were,
 While that her lord wereelles where.
 And of my self I telle this,
 For it so longe passed is
 Sith first that ye fro home wente,
 That well nigh every man is wente
 To there I am while ye be oute,
 Hath made and eche of hem aboute
 Which love can my lové seche
 With great praiere and me be-
 seche.

And some maken great mana'ce,
 That if they mighten come in place,
 Where that they mighten her¹ will
 have,

There is no thing me shulde save,
 That they ne wolde werche thinges.
 And some tellen me tidinges,
 That ye ben dede, and some sain,
 That certainly ye ben besain²

1 Her, their. 2 Besain, resolved.

To love a newe and leve me.
 But how as ever that it be,
 I thonke unto the goddes alle
 As yet for ought that is befallé,
 May no man do my chekes rede.
 But netheles it is to drede,
 That Lachesse in continuaunce
 Fortune mighte suche a chaunce,
 Whichnoman after sholde amende.'

"Lo, thus this lady compleignende
 A letter unto her lord hath write
 And praid him, that he wolde wite
 And thanke how that she was al his,
 And that he tarie nought in this,
 But that he wold his love acquite
 To her ayeinward, and nought write
 But come him self in alle haste,
 That he none other paper waste,
 So that he kepe and holde his
 trouthe

Withoute let of any Slouthe.

"Unto her lord and love liege
 To Troie, where the grete siege
 Was laid, this letter was conveied.
 And he, which wisdomé hath pur-
 veied

Of all that to reson belongeth,
 With gentil herte it underfongeth.
 And whan he hath it overrad,
 In parte he was right inly glad
 And eke in parte he was disesed.¹
 But love his hert hath so through
 sesed

With pure ymaginacion,
 That for none occupaciō
 Whiche he can take on other side
 He may nought flit his herte aside
 Fro that his wife him had enformed,
 Wherof he hath him self conformed
 With all the will of his corgé
 To shape and take the vidge
 Homeward, what time that he may.
 So. that him thenketh of a day
 A thousand yere till he may se

1 Disesed, made uneasy.

The visage of Penelope,
 Whiche he desireth most of alle.
 And whan the time is so befallē
 That Troid was distruied and brent,
 He made non delaïement,
 But goth him home in alle hie,¹
 Where that he found to-fore his eye
 His worthy wife in good estate,
 And thus was cessed the debate
 Of Love, and Slouthe was excused,
 Which doth geiat harm wher it is
 used,

And hindreth many a cause honest.

"For of the grete clerk Grostest
 I rede how busy that he was
 Upon the clergie an heved- of bras
 To forge and make it for to telle
 Of suche thinges as befelle.
 And seven yeres besinesse
 He laidd, but for the Lachesse
 Of half a minute of an houre
 Fro firstd he began labourē
 He lost all that he hadde do.
 And other while it fareth so
 In Loves cause, who is slowe,
 That he without under the wowe³
 By nights' stant full oft a colde,
 Which mighte, if that he hadde
 wolde

His time kept, have be withinne.

But Slouthe may nought profit
 winne,

But he may singe in his carole,⁴
 How latewar came to the dole,
 Where he no good receive might.
 And that was proved well by night
 Whilome of the maidens five,
 Whan thilke lord came for to wive,
 For that her⁵ oile was away
 To light her lampds in his wey,
 Her Slouthe brought it so aboute
 Fro him that they be shet withoute.

1 *Hie*, haste. 2 *Heved*, head.

3 *Wowe*, wall.

4 Late-aware came to the sharing.

5 *Her*, their.

"Wherof, my sone, be thou ware,
 Als ferforth as I telle dare.

For Love muste ben awaited,
 And if thou be nought well affaited¹
 In Love' to escheue Slouthe,
 My sone, for to telle' trouthe
 Thou might nought of thy self ben
 able

To winne love or make it stable,
 All though thou mightest love
 acheve."—

"My fader, that I may well leve.
 But me was never assigndd place
 Where yet to geten any grace,
 Nerne was non suchtime appointed,
 For than I wolde I were unjointed
 Of every limme that I have
 And I ne shulde kepe and save
 Min houre bothe and eke my stede,
 If my L'uty it hadde bede.
 But she is otherwise avised
 Than graunte suche a time assised.
 And netheless of my Lachesse
 There hath be no default I gesse
 Of time loste, if that I mighte.
 But yet her liketh nought alighte
 Upon no lure which I caste.
 For ay the more I crie faste
 The lasse her liketh for to here.
 So for to speke of this matere
 I seche that I may nought finde,
 I haste and ever I am behinde
 And wot nought what it may
 amounte.

But fader, upon min accompte,
 Whiche ye ben set to examine
 Of shrifte after the discipline,
 Say what your bestecounseileis."—

"My sone, my counseil is this.
 How so it stonde of time go,
 Do forth thy businessd so,
 That no Lachesse in thee be founde,
 For Slouthe is mighty to con-
 founde

1 *Affaited*, adapted to the purpose.

The spede of every mannas werke.
 For many a Vice, as saith the clerke,
 There hongen upon Slouthes lappe
 Of suche as make a man mishappe
 To pieigne and tell of had-I-wist.¹
 And therupon if that thee list
 To knowe of Slouthes cause more
 In special yet overmore
 There is a Vice full grevable
 To him which is therof coulpatible,
 And stant of alle Vertue bare
 Here after as I shall declare.

"**Touchend of slouth** in his
 degré,
 There is yet Pusillamite,
 Which is to say in this langage
 He that hath litel of corage
 And dare no mannes werk beginne;
 So may he nought by reson winne.
 For who that nought dare undertake
 By right he shall no profit take.
 But of this Vice the nature
 Dare nothing set in aventure,
 Him lacketh bothe worde and dede,
 Wherof he shuld his cause spede.
 He woll no manhode understonde,
 For ever he hath drede upon honde
 All is perill that he shall say,
 Him thenketh the wolfe is in the way.
 And of ymaginacion
 He maketh his excusacion
 And feigneth cause of pure drede
 And ever he faileth atte nede
 Till all be spilt that he with deleth.
 He hath the sore which no man
 heleth,
 The whiche is cleped lacke of herte;
 Though every grace about him
 sterte,
 He woll nought ones stere his fote,
 So that by reson lese he mote
 That woll nought aunter for to
 winne.

¹ Had-I-wist, if I had only known. See
 note 1, page 75

" And so forth, sone, if we be-
 ginne
 To speke of Love and his service,
 There ben truantes in suche a wise,
 That lacken herte whan best were
 They speken of Love, and right for
 fere
 They waxen dombe and dare nought
 telle,
 Withouten soun as doth the belle
 Whiche hath no clapper for to
 chime.

And right so they as for the time
 Ben herteles withoute speche
 Of Love and dare nothing beseche:
 And thus they lese and winne
 nought.

Forthy, my sone, if thou art ought
 Coulpatible as touchend of this
 Slouthe,
 Shrive thee therof and tell me
 trouthe."—

" My fader, I am all beknowe
 That I have ben one of the slowe
 As for to telle in Loves cas.
 Min herte is yet and ever was
 As though the world shuld al to-
 breke,

So ferful that I dare nought speke
 Of what purpos that I have nome
 Whan I toward my lady come,
 But let it passe and overgo."—

" My sone, do no more so.
 For after that a man pursueth,
 To Love so Fortune sueth
 Ful oft and yiveth her happy
 chaunce

To him which maketh continu-
 aunce

To preie love and to beseche,
 As by ensample I shall the teche,

I finde, how whilom there was
 one,

Whose name was Pigmaleon,
 Which was a lusty man of youthe.

The werkes of entaile¹ he couthe
 Above all other men as tho.
 And through Fortune it felle him so
 As he, whom Love shall travaile,
 He made an ymage of entaile
 Lich to a woman in semblaunce
 Of fature and of contenaunce,
 So faire yet never was figure.
 Right as a lives creature
 She semeth, for of yvor white
 He hath it wrought of such delite,
 That she was rody on the cheke
 And rede on both her lippes eke,
 Wherof that he him self beguileth,
 For with a goodly loke she smileth;
 So that through pure impression
 Of his ymagination
 With all the herte of his corgie
 His love upon this faire ymdge
 He set, and her of love preide.
 But she no worde ayeinward said.
 The longe day what thing he dede
 This ymage in the same stede²
 Was ever by, that atte mete
 He wold her serve and praidherete
 And put unto her mouth the cup.
 And whan the bord was taken up,
 He did as he would her embrace.
 And ever among he axeth grace,
 As though she wiste what it mente.
 And thus him self he gan tormente
 With such disese of loves peine,
 That no man might him more peine.
 But how, it were of his penaunce
 He made such continuaunce
 Fro day to night and praid so longe,
 That his praiere is underfonge,
 Which Venus of her grace herde
 By night, and whan that he worst
 ferde
 And it lay in his naked arme,
 The cold ymage he feeleth warme
 Of fleshe and bone and full of life.

Lo, thus he wanne a lusty wife,

1 *Entaile*, carving, sculpture. 2 *Stede*, place.

Whiche obeisaunt was at his will.
 And if he wolde have hold him still
 And nothing spoke, he shuld have
 failed.

"By this ensample thou might
 finde,

That word may worche above
 kinkle.

Forthy, my sone, if that thou spare
 To speke, lost is all thy fare,
 For Slouth bringeth in alle wo.

"And over this to loke also,
 It semeth Love is welwillende
 To hem that ben continuendc
 With besy herte to pursue
 Thing which that is to Love due.
 Wherof, my sone, in this matcre
 Thou might ensample taken here,
 That with thy grete besinesse
 Thou might atteigne the richesse
 Of Love, that there be no Slouth."—

"But fader, so as it is right
 In forme of shrifte to beknowe
 What thing belongeth to the
 slowe,

Your faderhode I wolde pray,
 If there be further any way
 Touchend unto this ilke Vice."

My sone, ye, of this office
 Theie serveth one in special,
 Which lost hath his memorial,
 So that he can no wit witholde
 In thing which he to kepe is holde,
 Wherof full ofte him self he gre-
 veth.

And who that most upon him leveth,
 Whan that his wittes ben so weived,
 He may full lightly be deceived.

To serve Accidie in his office,
 There is of Slouth an other Vice,
 Which cleped is Foryetelnesse,
 That nought may in his herte im-
 presse

Of vertue, which reson hath set,
 So clene his wittes he foryete.

For in the tellinge of his tale
 No more his herte than his male ¹
 Hath remembraunce of thilke forme
 Wherof he sholde his wit enforme
 As than, and yet ne wot he why.
 Thus is his purpos nought forthy
 Forlore, of that he wolde bidde,
 And scarsely if he saith the thridde ²
 To love of that he hadde ment.
 Thus many a lover hath be shent.
 Telle on therefore, hast thou ben
 one

Of hem that Slouth hath so be-
 gone ?"—

" Ye fader, ofte it hath ben so,
 That whan I am my lady fro
 And thenke me toward her drawe,
 Than cast I many a newe lawe
 And all the world torne up so down
 And so recorde I my lessoun
 And write in my memoriall
 What I unto her telle shall,
 Right all the mater of my tale.
 But all nis worth a nutteshale.
 For whan I come there she is,
 I have it all foryete iwis
 Of that I thoughte for to telle ;
 I can nought than unnethes spelle
 That I wende altherbest have rad,
 So sore I am of her adrad.
 For as a man that sodeinly
 A gost beholdeth so fare I,
 So that for fere I can nought gete
 My wit, but I my self foryete,
 That I wot never what I am,
 Ne whider I shall, ne whenne I
 cam,

But muse as he that were amased.
 Lich to the boke in whiche is rased
 The letter and may nothing be rad
 So ben my wines overlad,
 That what as ever I thought have
 spoken,

It is out of min herte stoken,

1 Male, bag. 2 Thridde, third.

And stonde as who saith doumbe
 and defe,

That all nis worth an yvy lefe
 Of that I wende well have saide.
 And atte last I make abraide,¹
 Cast up min heed and loke aboute
 Right as a man that were in doubte
 And wot not where he shall become.
 Thus am I oft all overcome
 There as I wende best to stonde.
 But after, whan I understonde
 And am in other place alone,
 I make many a wofull mone
 Unto my self and speke so :

' Ha fool, where was thine herte
 tho

Whan thou thy worthy lady sigh,
 Were thou afered of her eye ?
 For of her hond there is no drede,
 So well I knowe her womanhede,
 That in her is no more outrage
 Than in a childe of thre yere age.
 Why hast thou drede of so good one,
 Whom alle vertue hath begone,²
 That in her is no violence
 But goodlyhede and innocence
 Withouten spot of any blame.
 Ha, nice hene, fy for shame,
 A cowarde herte of love unlered,
 Wherof art thou so sore afered,
 That thou thy tunge suffrest frese
 And wolt thy gode wordes lese,
 Whan thou hast founde time and
 space:

How sholdest thou deserve grace,
 Whan thou thy self darst axe none,
 But all thou hast foryete anone ?
 And thus dispute in lovés lore,
 But helpenefinde I nought the more,
 But stomble upon min owne treine
 And make an eking³ of my peine.

¹ Make abraide, start suddenly, as from sleep.

² Begone, gone round about, wholly occupied, as in "woe-begone."

³ Eking, increasing.

For ever whan I thenke amonge,
 Howe all is on my self alonge
 I say : ' O fool of alle fooles
 Thoufares as he betwenetwo stoles
 That wolde sit and goth to grounde.
 It was ne never shall be founde
 Betwene Foryetelnesse and Drede,
 That man shulde any cause spede.'
 And thus, min holy father dere,
 Toward my self, as ye may here,
 I pleigne of my foryetelnesse.
 But dies all the businesse,
 That may be take of mannes thought,
 My herte taketh and 'is through
 sought
 To thenken ever upon that swete
 Withoute Slouthe I you behete.
 For what so falle or wel or wo,
 That thought foryete I nevermo,
 Where so I laugh or so I loure
 Nought half a minute of an houre
 Ne might I lette out of my minde
 But if I thought upon that ende:
 Therof me shall no Slouthe lette,
 Till Deth out of this world me fette,
 All though I had on suche a ring,
 As Moises through his enchaunting
 Sometime in Ethiope made,
 Whan that he Tharbis wedded had,
 Which ringe bare of oblivion
 The name, and that was by reson,
 That were it on a finger sate,
 Anone his Love he so foryate,
 As though he had it never knowe.
 And so it fell that ilke throwe,
 Whan Tharbis had it on her honde,
 No knouleching of him she fonde,
 But all was clene out of memoire,
 As men may reden in histoire.
 And thus he wente quite away,
 That never after that ilk' day
 She thought, that there was such a
 one;
 All was foryete and overgone.
 But in good feith so may nought I.

For she is ever faste by
 So nigh, that she minherthe toucheth
 That for no thing that Slouthe
 voucheth
 I may foryete her, lefe ne loth.
 For over all where as she goth,
 Min herte folweth her aboute.
 Thus may I say withouten doubte,
 For bet, for wers, for ought, for
 nought
 She passeth never fro my thought.
 But whan I am there as she is,
 Min hert, as I you said er this,
 Sometime of her is sore adrad
 And sometime it is overglad
 All out of reule and out of space.
 For whan I se her goodly face
 And thenke upon her highe pris,
 As though I were in paiadis,
 I am so ravished of the sight,
 That speke unto her I ne might
 As for the time, though I wolde.
 For I ne may my witte unfolde
 To finde o wo-rde of that I mene,
 But all it is foryete clene.
 And though I stonde there a mile,
 All is foryete for the while;
 A tunge I have and wordes none.
 And thus I stonde and thenke alone
 Of thing that helpeth ofte nought.
 But what I had afore thought
 To speke, whan I come there,
 It is foryete, as nought ne were.
 And stond amased and assoted,
 That of no thing which I have noted
 I can nought than a note singe,
 But all is out of knouleching.
 Thus what for joy and what fordrede
 All is foryeten atte nede,
 So that, my fader, of this Slouthe
 I have you said the pleine trouthe,
 Ye may it, as ye list, redresse.
 For thus stant my foryetelnesse
 And eke my pusillamite.
 Say now forth what ye list to me,

For I wol only do by you."—

" My sone, I have wel herd, how thou

Hast said, and that thou must amende.

For Love his grace wol nought sende
To that man which dare axe none.

For this we knowen everychone,
A mannes thought without speche
God wot, and yet that man beseche

His will is.¹ For withoute bedes
He doth his grace in fewe stedes.

And what manthat foryetehimselfe,
Among a thousand be nought twelve
That wol him take in remembraunce,
But let him falle and take his
chaunce.

Forthy pull up a besy herte,
My sone, and let no thing asterte
Of Love fro thy besinesse.

For touching of foryetelnesse,
Which many alovehath set behinde,
A tale of great ensample I finde,
Wherof it is pite to wite
In the maner as it is write.

King Demephon whan he by
ship

To Troie ward with felaship
Sailend goth upon his wey,
It hapneth him at Rodepey,
As Eolus him hade blowe
To londe and rested for a throwe.
And fell that ilke time" thus,
That the doughter of Ligurgus,
Which quene was of the contre,
Was sojourned in that citee
Within a castel nigh the stronde,
Where Demephon cam up to londe.
Phillis she hight and of yong age
And of stattice and of visdge
She had all that her best besemeth.
Of Demephon right wel her que-
meth,²

¹ Although God knows our thoughts, yet his will is that we utter them in prayer.

² Her quemeth, is agreeable to her.

Whan he was come and made him
chere.

And he, that was of his manere
A lusty knight, ne might asterte
That he ne set on her his herte,
So that within a day or two
He thought, how ever that it go,
He wolde assaie the fortune;
And gan his herte to comune
With goodly wordes in her ere,
And for to put her out of fere
He swore and hath his trouthe
plight

To be for ever her owne knight.
And thus with her he stille abode
There, while his ship on anker rode,
And had inough of time and space
To speke of love and sechd grace.
This lady herd all that he saide,
And how he swore and how he
praide,

Which was as an enchauntement
To here, that was as innocent.
As though it were trouthe and feith
She leveth all that ever he saith,
And as her in fortune sholde
She graunteth him all that he wolde.
Thus was he for the time in joie,
Til that he shulde go to Troie,
But tho she made mochel sorwe¹
And he his trouthe laid to borwe¹
To come and if that he live may
Ayein within a monthd day.
And therupon they kisten bothe,
But were hem leef or were hem lothe
To ship he goth, and forth he went
To Troy, as was his first entent.
The daies go, the monthe passeth,
Her love encreseth and his lasseth ;
For him she lefte slepe and mete,
And he his time hath all foryete,
So that this wofull yongé quene,
Which wot nought what it mighte
mene,

¹ To borwe, in pledge.

A letter send and praid him come
And saith how she is overcome
With strengthe of love in suche a
wise,

That she nought longe may suffice
To liven out of his presence,
And put upon his conscience
The trouthe whiche he hath behote,
Wherof she loveth him so hote,
She saith, that if he lenger lette
Of such a day as she him sette,
She shulde sterven in his Slouthe,
Which were a shame unto his
trouthe.

This letter is forth upon her sonde,
Wherof somdele comfort on honde
She toke, as she that wolde abide
And waite upon that ilke tide
Which she hath in her letter write.
But now is pite for to wite,
As he did erst, so he foryate
His time eftsome and over-sate.
But she, which mighte nought do so,
The tide awaiteth evermo
And cast her eye upon the see.
Somtime nay, sometime ye,
Somtime he cam, sometime nought.
Thus she disputeth in her thought
And wot nought what she thenke
may.

But fastend all the longe day
She was into the derke night;
And tho she hath do set up light
In a lanterne on high alofte
Upon a toure, where she goth ofte
In hope that in his comminge
He shulde se the light brennfng,
Wherof he might his weies right
To come where she was by night.
But all for nought, she was deceived,
For Venus hath her hope weived
And shewed her upon the sky
How that the day was faste by,
So that within a litel throwe
The daies light she mighte knowe ;

Tho she beheld the see at large:
And whan she sigh there was no
barge

Ne ship, als fer as she may kenne,
Down fro the tour she gan to renne
Into an herber all her owne,
Where many a wonder wofull mone
She made, that no life it wist,
As she which all her joie mist,
That now she swouneth, now she
pleigneth,

And all her face she disteigneth
With teres, whiche as of a welle
The stremes from her eyen felle.
So as she might, and ever in one,
She cleped upon Demephon
And said : Alas, thou slowe wight,
Where was there ever suche a
knight,

That so through his ungentillesse
Of Slouthe and of Foryetelnesse
Ayein his trouthe brak his Steven.¹
And tho her eye up to the heven
She cast and saide : ' O thou un-
kinde,
Here shalt thou through thy Slouthe
finde,

If that the list to come and se,
A lady dede for love of the,
So as I shall my selve spille,
Whome, if it hadde be thy wille,
Thou mightest save well enough.
With that upon a grene bough
A ceinteofsilke, which she there had,
She knette, and so her self she lad
That she about her white swere²
It did, and henge her selven there.
Wherof the goddes were amoved,
And Demephon was so reproved,
That of the goddes providence
Was shape suche an evidence
Ever afterward ayein the slowe,
That Phillis in the same throwe³

¹ Steven, voice. ² Swere, neck.

³ Throwe, pace of time.

Was shape into a nutte-tre,
That alle men it mighte se,
And after Phillis philliberd¹
This tre was cleped in the yerd,
And yet for Demephon to shame
Into this day it bereth the name.
This wofull chaunce how that it ferde
Anone as Demephon it herde
And every man it hadde in speche.
His sorwe was nought tho to seche,
He gan his Slcuthe for to banne,²
But it was all to late thanne.

" Lo, thus, my sone, might thou
wite

Ayein this Vice how it is write,
For no man may the harmes gesse,
That fallen through Foryetelnesse,
Wherof that I thy shrift have herd.
But yet of Slouthe how it hath ferd
In other wise I thenke oppose,
If thou have gilt, as I suppose.

Fulfilled of Slouthes exemplaire
There is yet one his secretaire,
And he is cleped Negligence,
Which woll nought loke his evi-
dence,

Wherof he may beware to-fore.
But whan he hath his cause lore
Than is he wise after the honde,
Whan helpe may no maner bonde
Than atte firste wold he binde.
Thus evermore he stant behinde,
Whan he the thing may nought
amende,

Than is he ware, and saith at ende :
' Ha, wolde god I hadde knowe,³
Wherof bejaped with a mowe³
He goth, for whan the grete stede
Is stole than he taketh hede
And maketh the stable-dore fast.
Thus ever he pleith an after cast
Of all that he shall say or do.

¹ Philliberd, filbert.

² Banne, put under interdict.

³ Mowe, mouth, grimace.

He hath a maner eke also,
Him list nought lerne to be wise,
For he sette of no vertu prise
But as him liketh for the while,
So feleth he ful ofte guile
Whan that he weneth siker to
stonde.

And thus thou might wel under-
stonde,

My sone, if thou art suche in love
Thou might nought come at thin
above

Of that thou woldest wel acheve."—

" Min holy fader, as I leve,
I may wel with sauf conscience
Excuse me of Negligence
Towardes Love in allé wise.
For though I be none of the wise,
I am so truly amorous,
That I am ever curious
Of hem that conne best enforme
To knowe and witen all the forme,
What falleth unto Loves craft.
But yet ne fond I nought the haft
Which might unto the blade accorde.
For never herd I men recorde
What thinge it is that might availle
To whine love withoute faile.

Yet so fer couthe I never finde
Man that by reson ne by kinde
Me couthd teche suche an arte,
That he ne failed of a parte.
And as toward min owne wit
Contrive I couthd never yit
To finden any sikernesse,
That me might other more or lesse
Of Love make for to spede.
For leveth wel withouten drede,
If that there were suche a way
As certainly as I shall deie
I hadde it lerned longe ago;
But I wot wel there is none so.
Andnethéles it may wel be
I am so rude in my degrid
And eke my witts ben so dull,

That I ne may nought to the full
 Atteigne unto so highe a lore.
 But this I dar say evermore,
 All though my Wit ne be nought
 stronge,

It is nought on my Will alonge ;
 For that is besy night and day
 To lerne all that he lerne may,
 How that I mighte Love winne.
 But yet I am as to beginne
 Of that I wolde make an ende,
 And for I not¹ how it shall wende,
 That is to me my moste sorwe.
 But I dare take God to borwe,
 As after min entendement
 None other wise negligent
 Than I you say have I nought be.
 Forthy pur sainte charité
 Tell me, my fader, what you
 semeth."—

" In good feith, sone, wel me
 quemeth,

That thou thy self hast thus acquit
 Toward this Vice in which no wit
 Abidd may, for in an houre
 He lest² all that he may laboure
 The longe yere, so that men sain
 What ever he doth it is in vein.
 For through the Slouth of Negli-
 gence

There was yet never such science
 Ne vertue which was bodely,
 That nis destruied and lost therby.
 Ensample that it hath be so,
 In boke I finde write also.

Phebus, which is the sonne hote,
 That shineth upon erthe hote
 And causeth every lives helth,
 He hadde a sone in all his welth,
 Which Pheton hight, and he de-
 sireth

And with his moder he conspireth,
 The which was cleped Clemene,
 For helpe and counseil, so that he

His faders carte¹ lede might
 Upon the faire dais light.
 And for this thing they bothe praide
 Unto the fader, and he saide,
 He wolde wel, but forth with all
 Thre points he bad in speciall
 Unto his sone in alle wise,
 That he him shule wel advise
 And take it as by wey of lore.
 First was, that he his hors to sore
 Ne prike; and over that he tolde,
 That he the reines faste holde;
 And also that he be right ware
 In what manr he lede his chare,
 That he mistakd nought his gate,
 But upon avisement algate
 He shulde bere a siker eye,
 That he to lowd ne to high
 His carte drive at any throwe,
 Wherof that he might overthrowe.
 And thus by Phebus ordenaunce
 Toke Pheton into gouvance
 The sonnes carte, which he ladde.
 But he such veine glorie hadde
 Of that he was set upon high,
 That he his own estate ne sigh
 Through negligence, and toke none
 hede.

So might he wel nought longe spede.
 For he the hors withouten lawe
 The carte let aboute drawe
 Where as hem liketh wantonly,
 That atte laste sodeinly,
 For he no reson wolde knowe,
 This firy cart he drove to lowe
 And fireth all the worlde aboute;
 Wherof they weren all in doubte,
 And to the god for helpe criden
 Of suche unhappes as betiden.
 Phebus, which sigh the negligence,
 How Pheton ayein his defence -
 His chare hath drive oute of the wey
 Ordeigneth that he fel away

1 Not, know not.

2 Lest, lost.

1 *Carte*, chariot.

2 *Defence*, for bidding.

Out of the cart into the flood
 And dreinte. Lo now, how it stood
 With him, that was so negligent,
 That fro the highe firmament,
 For that he wolde go to lowe,
 He was anone down overthrowe.
 In high estate it is a Vice
 To go to lowe, and in service
 It greveth for to go to high,
 Wherof a tale in poesie

I finde, how whilom Dedalus
 Whiche hadde a sone and Icharus
 He hight, and though hem thoughte
 lothe

In such pris6n they weren bothe
 With Minotaurus, that aboute
 They mighten no where wenden
 oute.

So they begonne for to shape
 How they the prison might escape.
 This Dedalus, which fro his youthe
 Was taught and many craftes couth e,
 Of fethers and of other thinges
 Hath made to flee diversd winges
 For him and for his sone also ;
 To whome he yaf in charge tho
 And bad him thanke therupon,
 How that his winges ben set on
 With wax, and if he toke his flight
 To high, all sodeinlich he might
 Make it to meltd with the sonne.
 And thus they have her flight be-
 gonne

Out of the prison faire and softe.
 And whan they weren both alofte,
 This Icharus began to mounte
 And of the counseil none acompte
 He sette whiche his fader taught,
 Til thatthe sonne his winges caught,
 Wherof it malt, and fro the hight
 Withouten helpe of any flight
 He fell to his destruction.
 And lich to that condition
 There fallen ofte times fele
 For lacke of governaunce in wele

Als wel in love as other wey."—

"Now gode fader, I you prey,
 If there be more in this matere
 Of Slouthe, that I might it here."—

" My sone, as for thy diligence,
 Whiche every mannes conscience
 By reson shulde reule and kepe,
 If that thee list to take kepe,
 I wol thee tell aboven alle,
 In whom no vertu may befallé,
 Whiche yiveth unto the Vices rest
 And is of Slouthe the slowest.

Among these other of Slouthcs
 kinde,

Whiche allé labour set behinde,
 And hateth alle besinesse,
 There is yet one, whiche Idelnesse
 Is clepd, and is the norice
 In mannes kinde of every Vice,
 Which secheth esds many folde.
 In winter doth he nought for colde;
 In somer may he nought for hete ;
 So wether that he frese or swete,
 Or be he in, or be he oute,
 He woll ben idel all aboute,
 But if he pleie ought at dees.
 For who as ever take fees
 And thenketh worship to deserve,
 There is nolordwhomehewoll serve
 As for to dwelle in his service,
 But if it were in suche a wise,
 Of that he seeth par aventure,
 That by lordship and coverture
 He may the more stonde stille
 And use his Idelnesse at wille.
 For he ne woll no travail take
 To ride for his ladies sake,
 But liveth all upon his wissches,
 And as a cat wold ete fisshes
 Withoute weting of his cles,
 So wolde he do, but netheles
 He faileth ofte of that he wolde.

" My sone, if thou of suche a molde
 Art made, now tell me plein thy
 shrift."—

" Nay fader, god I yive a yift,
That toward Love, as by my wit
All idel was I never yit,
Ne never shall, while I may go."—

" Now, sone, telle me than so,
What hast thou done of besiship
To Love and to the ladyship
Of here which thy lady is ?"—

" My fader, ever yet er this
In every place, in every stede,
What so my lady hath me bede,
With all min herte obedient
I have therto be diligent.

And if so is that she bid nought,
What thing that than into my
thought

Cometh first, of that I may suffice,
I bowe and profre my service.
Somtime in chambre, sometime in
halle,

Right so as I se the times falle,
And whan she goth to here masse
That time shall nought overpasse,
That I napproche her ladyhede
In aunter if I may her lede
Unto the chapel and ayein,
Than is nought all my way in vein.
Somdele I may the better fare,
Whan I, that may nought fele her
bare,

May lede her clothed in min arme.
But afterwarde it doth me harme
Of pure ymagination,
For thanne this collation

I make unto my selven ofte
And say: ' Ha lord, how she is softe,
How she is round, how she is small,
Now woldd God, I hadde her all
Without daunger at my wille ! '

' And than I sike and sitte stille,
Of that I se my besy thought
Is torned idel into nought.
But for all that let I ne may,
Whan I se time another day,
That I ne do my besinesse

Unto my ladies worthinesse,
For I therto my wit affaite¹
To se the times and awaite
What is to done, and what to leve.
And so whan time is, by her leve
What thing she bit me don, I do,
And where she bit me gon, I go,
And whan her list to clepe, I come.
Thus hath she fulliche overcome
Min Idelness til I sterve,
So that I mot her nedes serve.
For as men sain, nede hath no lawe,
Thus mote I nedely to her drawe;
I serve, I bowe, I loke, I loute,
Min eye folweth her aboute.
What so she wolle so woll I,
Whan she woll sit, I kneld by,
And whan she stont, than woll I
stonde,
And whan she taketh her werk on
honde

Of weving or of embrouderie,
Than can I nought but muse and
prie

Upon her fingers longe and smale.
And nowe I thenke, and nowe I tale,
And nowe I singe, and nowe I sike,
And thus my contenaunce I pike.-
And if it falle, as for a tim
Her liketh nought abid by me
But busien her on other thinges,
Than make I other tarienges
To drecche forth the longé day,
For me is loth departe away.
And than I am so simple of port,
That for to feigne some desporte
I pleie with her litel hound
Nowe on the bed, nowe on the
ground,

Now with the briddes in the cage,
For there is none so litel page
Ne yet so simple a chamberere,
That I ne make hem alle chere,

¹ *Affaite*, bring to fitness.
- *Pike*, make peep.

All for they shulde speke wele.
 Thus mow ye se my besy whele,
 That goth nought ideliche aboute.
 And if her list to riden oute
 On pelrinage or other stede,
 I come, though I be nought bede,
 And take her in min arme alofte
 And set her in her sadel softe
 And so forth lede her by the bride!,
 For that I wolde nought ben idel.
 And if her list to ride in chare,
 And than I may therof beware,
 Anone I shape me to ride
 Right even by the chares side.
 And as I may, I speke amonge,
 And other while I singe a songe,
 Whiche Ovide in his boks made,
 And said : ' O whiche sorws glad,
 O which woftill prosperity
 Belongeth to the proprete
 Of Love ? Who so wold him serve,
 And yet therefromaynoman swerve,
 That he ne mot his lawe obey.'
 And thus I ride forth my wey
 And am right besy overall
 With herte, and with my body all,
 As I have saide you here to-fore.
 My gode fader tell therfore
 Of Idelnesse if I have gilt."—
 " My sone, but thou telte wilt
 Ought elles than I may now here,
 Thou shalt have no penaunce here.
 And netheles a man may se,
 How now a daies that there be
 Full many of such hertes slowe,
 That woll nought besien hem to
 knowe
 What thing Love is, til atte last,
 That he with strengthe hem over-
 cast
 That malgre hem they mot obey
 And done all idelship away
 To serve wel and besiliche.
 But, sone, thou art none of sich,
 For Love shall thee wel excuse.

But otherwise if thou refuse
 To love thou might so par cas
 Ben idel, as somtimd was
 A kinges doughter unavised,
 Til that Cupide her hath chastised,
 Wherof thou shalt a tald here
 Accordant unto this matere.

of Jlrneme I rede thus,
 There was a king whiche Herupus
 Was hote, and he a lusty maide
 To doughter had, and as men saide
 Her name was Rosiphele,
 Which tho was of great renome.
 For she was bothd wise and faire
 And shuldd ben her faders heire.
 But she had o defaulte of Slouthe
 Towards Love, and that was routhe.
 For so well couthd no man say
 Which might set her in the way
 Of loves occupation
 Through none ymaginacien ;
 That scotewoldd she nought knowe.
 And thus she was one of the slowe
 As of suche hertes besinesse,
 Till whanne Venus the goddesse,
 Which Loves Court hath for to
 reule,
 Hath brought her into better reulc
 Forth with Cupide, and with his
 might,

For they merveile of suche a wight,
 Which tho was in her lusty age
 Desireth not of maridge.
 For he, that highd hertes loweth,
 Withfirydartdswichehethroweth,
 Cupide, whiche of Love is god,
 In chastisfng hath made a rod
 To drive away her wantonnesse,
 So that within a while I gesse
 She had on suche a chaunce sporned¹
 That all her mod was overturned,
 Which first she had, of slowe
 manere.

For thus it felle, as thou shalt here,

¹ *Scorned, stumbled against.*

Whan come was the month of
 May,
 She wolds' walke upon a day,
 And that was er the sonne arist,
 Of women but a fewe it wist.
 And forth she wente prively
 Unto the park was fastd by,
 All softd walkend on the gras,
 Till she came there the laund¹ was,
 Through which ther ran a great
 rivere.
 It thought her faire and saide:
 'Here
 I woll abide under the shawe.'
 And bad her women to withdrawe
 And there she stood alone stille
 To thenke what was in her wille.
 She sigh the swot⁵ floures springe,
 She herde gladde foulds singe,
 She sigh the bestes in her kinde,
 The buck, the doo, the hert, the
 hinde,
 The male go with the femele.
 And so began there a quarele
 Betwend Love and her owne herte,
 Fro which shecouthe nought asterte.
 And as she cast her eye aboute,
 She sigh clad in one sute a route
 Of ladies, where they comen ride
 A longe under the wods side.
 On faire amblende hors they set,
 That were all white, faire and great,
 And everychone ride on side.
 The sadels were of suche a pride
 With perle and gold so well begone,
 So riche sigh she never none.
 In kirtles and in copes riche
 They weren clothed alle aliche,
 Departed even of white and blew
 With alle hastes that she knewe
 They were embrouded over all.
 Her bodies weren longe and small,
 The beaute fair upon her² face
 It may none erthly thing deface,

¹ *Laiindt*, lawn.

² *Htr*, their.

Corounes on her hede they bere
 As eche of hem a quene were,
 That all the golde of Cresus halle
 The leste coronall of alle
 Ne might have bought after the
 worth.
 Thus comen they ridende forth.
 The kinges doughter, which this
 sigh,
 For pure abasshedrewe her adrigh¹
 And helde her close under a bough
 And let hem passen stille inough.
 For as her thought in her avise,
 To hem that weren of suche a price
 She was nought worthy to axen there
 Fro whenne they come, or what
 they were;
 But lever than this worldes good
 She wolde have wist how that it
 stood
 And put her hede a litel out,
 And as she loked her aboute,
 She sigh comend under the linde
 A woman upon an hors behinde.
 The hors on which she rode was
 black,
 All lene and galled upon the back
 And halted as he were encloied,²
 Wheiof the woman was annoied.
 Thus was the hors in sory plight,
 But for all that a sterre whit
 Amiddes in her front she hadde.
 Her sadel eke was wonder badde,
 In which the wofull woman sat.
 And netheles there was with that
 A riche bridel for the nones
 Of golde and preciouise stones;
 Her cote was somdele to-tore,
 About her middel twenty score
 Of horse halters and well mo
 There hingen atte time tho.
 Thus whan she came the lady nigh,
 Than toke she better hede and sigh

¹ *Adrigh*, aside.

² *Encloied*, hurt with a nail in shoeing.

The -woman fair was of visdge,
 Fresh, lusty, yong and tendre of age.
 And so this lady, there she stood,
 Bethought her well and understood,
 That this, which came ridende tho,
 Tidmges couthe telle of tho
 Whiche as she sigh to-fore ride,
 And put her forth and praide abide
 And said: 'Ha suster, let me here,
 What ben they that riden now here
 And ben so richely arraied?'
 This woman, which came so es-
 maied,¹

Answerde with full softe speche
 And said: 'Madame, I shall you
 teche,

These are of tho, that whilom were
 Servaunts to love and trouthe bere
 There as they had their hertes sette.
 Fare well, for I may nought be lette.
 Madame, I go to my servfce,
 So must I haste in alle wise,
 Forthy madame, yif me leve.
 I may nought long with you leve.'²

'Ha, gode suster, yet I prey,
 Tell me, why ye be so besey
 And with these halters thus begone?'

'Madame, whilom I was one,
 That to my fader hadde a king.
 But I was slowe and for no thing
 Me liste nought to Love obey,³
 And that I now full sore abey,³
 For⁴ I whilom no love hadde,
 My hors is now feble and badde
 Aud all to-tore is min array,
 And every yere this fressh⁵ May
 These lusty ladies ride aboute,
 And I must nedes sue her route
 In this maneY, as ye now se
 And trusse her halters forth with me
 And am but as her horse knave.

¹ *Esmaid*, troubled, but possibly a-Maying, for "estnaier" meant also in old French to crown with green leaves.

² *Lne*, remain. ³ *Abty*. pay for.

⁴ *For*, because.

None other office I ne have,
 Hemthenketh I am worthnomore,
 For I was slowe in Loves lore
 Whan I was able for to lere
 And wolde nought the tales here
 Of hem that couthen Love teche.'

'Now tell me than, I you beseche,
 Wherof that richd bridel serveth?'
 With that her chere away she
 swerveth

Andgan to wepe and thus she tolde:
 'This bridel, which ye now beholde,
 So riche upon min horse hed;
 Madame, afore er I was dede,
 Whan I was in my lusty life,
 There fell into min hert a strife
 Of love, which me overcome,
 So that therafter hede I nome
 And thought I wolde love a knight;
 That laste well a fourtdnight,
 For it no lenger mightd laste,
 So nigh my life was atte laste.
 But nowe alas to late ware
 That I ne had him loved ere,
 For deth cam so in haste by me,
 Er I therto had any time,
 That it ne mightd ben acheved.
 But' for all that I am releved
 Of that my will was good therto
 That Love sufifreth it be so
 That I shall such a bridel were.
 Nowe have ye herd all min answer,
 To God, madame, I you betake,¹
 And warneth alle for my sake,
 Of Love that they be nought idel,
 Andbidhemthenke upon mybridel.'
 And with that worde all soideinly
 She passeth as it were a skie²
 All clene out of this ladies sight.
 And tho for fere her herte aflight
 And saide to her self: 'Helas!
 I am right in the same cas.
 But if I live after this day,
 I shall amende it if I may.'

¹ *Betake* entrust, commend, ² *Skie* shadow.

And thus homwa'rd this lady went
And chaunged all her first entent
Within her herte, and gan to swere
That she no halters wolde bere.

"Lo sone, here might thou taken
hede,

How Idelnesse is for to drede,
Nameliche of love, as I have write.
Fo thou might understonde and
wite,

Among the gentil nacidn
Love is an occupacion

Which for to kepe his lustes save
Shold every gentil herte have;
For as the lady was chastised,
Right so the knight may ben avised
Which idel is and woll nought serve
To Love, he may par cas deserve
A greater peine than she hadde,
Whan she aboute with her ladde
The horse halters; and forthy
Good is to be ware therby.

But for to loke aboven alle
These maidenenes how so it falle,
They shulden take ensample of this,
Whiche I have tolde, for soth it is.
And thilke Love is well at ese,
Which set is upon maridge,
For that dare shewen the visage
In alle places openly.

A great merveile it is forthy,
How that a maiden wolde lette
That she her time ne besette
To haste unto that ilkd feste,
Wherof the Love is all honeste.
Men may recover loss of good,
But so wise man yet never stood
Which may recover time ilore.
So may a maiden well therfore
Ensamble take, of that she straun-
geth

As thouhast understonde above."—

"My fader, as toward the love
Of maidens for to telle trouthe,
Ye have thilke Vice of Slouthe

Me thenketh right wonder wel de-
clared,

That ye the women have nought
spared

Of hem that tarien so behinde.
But yet it falleth in my minde
Toward the men, how that ye speke
Of hem that woll no travail seke
In cause of Love, upon deserte,
To speke in 'vordes so coverte
I not what travail that ye ment."—

"My sone, and after min entent
I woll the telle what I thought,
How whilom men her loves bought
Through great travaile in straunge
londes,

Where that they wroughten with
her hondes

Of armes many a worthy dede
In sondry place, as men may rede.

"That every love of pure kinde
Is first forth drawe, well I finde.
But netheless yet over this
Deserte doth so, that it is
The rather had in many place.
Forthy who secheth Loves grace
Where that these worthy women
are,

He may nought than him serve spare
Upon his travail for to serve
Wherof that he may thank de-
serve;

Where as these men of armes be
Sometime over the Crete See,
So that by londe and eke by ship
He mot travaill for worship
And make many hastif rodes,
Somtime in Pruse, sometime in
Rodes,

And some time into Tartarie,
So that these heralds on him crie:
'Vailant, vailant, lo, -where he
goth 1'

And than he yiveth hem golde and
cloth,

So that his fame mighte springe
And to his ladies ere bringe
Some tiding of his worthinesse;
So that she might of his prowess
Of that she herde men recorde
The better unto his love accorde
And daunger put out of her mood,
Whan allé men recorden good,
And that she wot well for her sake
That he no travail woll forsake.

" Mysone, of this traveile mene;
Now shrif the, for it shall be sene,
If thou art idel in this cas."—

" My fader ye, and ever was
For as me thenketh truely,
That every man doth more than I
As, of this point, and if so is,
That I have ought so done er this,
It is so litel of accompt

As who saith it may nought amount
To winne of love his lusty yifte.

For this I telle you in shrifte,
That me were lever her love winne
Than Kaire and all that is therinne.
And for to sleen the hethen alle
I not¹ what good there mighte
falle,

So mochel blood though ther be
shad.

This finde I writen, how Crist bad
That no man other shulde slee.

What shulde I winne over the see,
If I my lady lost at home ?

But passe they the salte fome
To whom Crist bad they shulden
preche

To all the world and his feith teche.
But now they rucken² in her nest
And resten as hem liketh best
In all the swetenesse of delices.

Thus they defenden³ us the Vices
And sit hem selven all amidde;
To sleen and fighten they us bidde

Hem whom they shuld, as the bokc
saith,

Converten unto Cristes feith.

But herof have I great merveile,
How they wol bidde me traveile.

A Sarazin if I slee shall,
I slee the souls' forth withall,
And that was never Cristes lore.
But now Ho' there, I say no more.

But I woll speke upon my shrifte
And to Cupide I make a yifte,
That who as ever pris deserve
Of armes, I wol Love serve,
As though I shuld hem bothe kepe,
Als well yet wolde I take kepe,
Whan it weie time to abide
And for to travaile and to ride,
For how as ever a man laboiiere,
Cupide appointed hath his hoiire.

" For I have herds' tell also,
Achilles left his armes so
Both of him self and of his men
At Troie for Polfxenen
Upon her love whan he felle,
That for no chaunce that befelle
Among the Grekes or up or down
He wolde nought ayein the town
Ben armed, for the love of her.

And so me thenketh, leve sir,
A man of armes may him reste
Somtime in hope for the beste,
If he may finde a werre ner;
What shulde I thanne go so fer
In straunge londes many a mile
To ride, and lese at home there
while

My love ? it were a short beyete²
To winne chafTe and lese whete.
But if my lady bidde wolds',
That I for her love sholde
Travail, me thenketh truely,
I might rlee through out the sky
And go through out the depe see,

1 Not, kuow not. 2 Rucken squat'
3 Defenden, forbid,

1 Ho! was the cry for stopping in the chase.
2 *Beyete*) gain.

For all ne sette I at a stre,¹
 What thank that I might dies gete.
 What helpeth a man have mete,
 Where drinke lacketh on the borde,
 What helpeth any mannes worde
 To say howe I travaile faste,
 Where as me faileth atte laste
 That thing whiche I travaile fore.
 O, in good timd were he bore,
 That might atteigne suche a mede.
 But certs if I mighte spede
 With any maner besinesse
 Of worldes travail, than I gesse
 There shulde me none idelship
 Departen from her ladyship.
 But this I se on daies now,
 The blinde god, I wot nought how,
 Cupido, which of love is lorcle,
 He set the thinges in discorde,
 That they that lest to love entende
 Full ofte hewoll hem yive and sende
 Most of his grace, and thus I finde,
 That he that shold go behinde,
 Goth many a time fer to-fore.
 So wote I nought right well therfore,
 On whether bord that I shall sailc.
 Thus can I nought myself counseile,
 But all I set on aventure
 And am, as who saith, out of cure
 For ought that I can say or do;
 For evermore I finde it so,
 The more besinesse I lay,
 The more that I knele and pray
 With gode wordes and with softe,
 The more I am refused ofte
 With besinesse and may nought
 winne,
 And in goodfeith that is great sinne.
 For I may say of dede and thought,
 That idel man have I be nought,
 For how as ever I be deslaiecl,
 Yet evermore I have assaied.
 But though my besinesse laste,
 All is but idel atté laste,

1 *Stre*, straw.

For whan theffect is Idelnesse,
 I not what thing is besinesse.
 Say what availeth all the dede,
 Which nothing helpeth atte nede ?
 For the Fortune of every fame
 Shall of his ends' bere a name.
 And thus for ought is yet befallc,
 An idel man I woll me calle
 As after min entendement.
 But upon your amendemerit,
 Min holy fader, as you semeth
 My reson and my cause demeth."—
 "My sone, I have herde of thy
 matere,
 Of that thou hast thee shriven
 here.
 And for to speke of idel fare
 Me semeth that thou tharst¹ nought
 care,
 But only that thou might nought
 spede.
 And therof, sone, I woll thee rede,
 Abide and haste nought to faste,
 Thy dedes ben every day to caste,
 Thou nost,² what chaunce shall
 betide.
 Better is to waite upon the tide
 Than rowe ayein the stremes
 stronge.
 For though so be thee thenketh
 longe,
 Par cas the revolucidn
 Of heven and thy condicion
 Ne be nought yet of one accorde.
 But I dare make this recorde
 To Venus, whose prest that I am,
 That sithen that I hider cam
 To here, as she me bad, thy life,
 Wherof thou elles be giltife,
 Thou might herof thy conscience
 Excuse and of great diligence,
 Which thou to love hast so dis-
 pended,
 Thou oughtest wel to be comended.

1 *Tharst*, needst, 2 *tlost*, knowest not,

But if so be that there ought faile,
Of that thou slouthest to travaile
In armes, for to ben absent,
And for thou makest an argument
Of that thou saidest here above,
How Achillas through strength of
love

His armes lefte for a throwe,
Thou shalt an other tale knowe,
Whiche is contrarie, as thou shalt
wite.

For this a man may finde write,
Whan that knighthode shall be
werred,

Lust may nought thanne be pre-
ferred,

The bed mot thanne be forsake
And shield and spere on honde take,
Which thing shall make hem after
glad,

Whan they be worthy knightes
made,

Wherof, so as it cometh to honde,
A tald thou shalt understonde,
How that a knight shall armes sue,
And for the while his ese eschue.

"Upon knighthode I rede thus,
How whilom whan the king Nau-
plus,

The fader of Palamides,
Came for to preien Ulixes
With other Gregois eke also,
That he with hem to Troie go,
Where that the siege shulde be,
Anone upon Penelope,
His wife, whom that he loveth hote,
Thenkend, wolde hem nought be-
hote.

But he shope than a wonder wile
How that he shulde hem best be-
guile,

So that he mighte dwelle stille
At home and weld his love at wille.
Wherof erly the morwe day
Out of his bed wheie that he lay

Whan he was up, he gan to fare
Into the felde and loke and stare
As he which feigneth to be wode,¹
He toke a plough where that it stood,
Wherin anocie in stede of oxes
He let do yoken grete foxes,
And with great salt the londehe sewe.
But Nauplus, which the cause² knewe,
Aye in the sleighte which he feigneth
Another sleight anone ordeigneth.
And fell that time Ulixes hadde
A childe to sone, and Nauplus radde
How men that sone take sholde
And setten him upon the molde,
Where that his fader held the plough
In thilke furgh which he thodrough.
For in such wise he thought assay
Howe it Ulixes shulde pay,
If that he were wode or none.
The knightes for this child forth
gone,

Telemacus anone was fette
To-fore the plough and even sette,
Where that his fader shulde drive,
But whan he sigh his childe as blive²
He drof the plough out of the way,
And Nauplus tho began to say
And hath half in a jape cried:

'O Ulixes, thou art aspied,
What is all this thou woldest mene?
For openlich it is now sene
That thou hast feigned all this thing,
Which is great shame to a king
Whan that for lust of any slouth
Thou wolt in a quare! of trouthe
Of armes thilke honour forsake
And dwelle at home for loves sake.
For better it were honour to winne
Than love which likfnge is inne.
Forth take worship on honde
And elles thou shalt understonde
These other worthy kinges alle
Of Grece", which unto thee calle,
Towardes thee wol be right wroth

¹ . 'VotU, mad.² As blive, quickly.

And greve the par chaunce both,
Which shall be to thee double shame
Most for the hindringe of thy name,
That thou for slouthe of any love
Shalt so thy lustes set above
And leve of armes the knighthode,
Whiche is the prise of thy manhode
And oughte first to be desired.'

"But he, which had his herfe
fired,

Upon his wife, whan he this herd,
Nought o¹ word there ayein an-
swerd,

But torneth home halving ashamed
And hath within him self so tamed
His herte, that all the sotie
Of love for chivaleric

He lefte, and be him leef or loth
To Troie with hem forth he goth
That he him mightd nought excuse.
Thus stant it, if a knight refuse
The lust of armes to travaile ;

There may no worldes ese availle,
But if worship be with all.
And that hath shewed overall,
For it sit wel in alle wise

A knight to ben of high emprise
And putten alle drede away,
For in this wise I have herd say,

" Iffe worths knight Prothe-
salay

On his passa'ge where he lay
Towardes Troie thilke siege
She which was all his owne liege
Laodomie his lusty wife,
Which for his love was pensife
As he whiche all her herte hadde,
Upon a thing wherof she dradde
A letter for to make him dwelle
Fro Troie send him, thus to telle,
How she hath axed of the wise
Touchend of him in suche a wise,
That they have done her under-
stonde,

¹ O, one.

Towardes other how so it stonde,
The destine it hath so shape,
That he shall nought the deth escape
In cas that he arrive at Troy.
Forthy as to her worldes joy
With all her herte she him preide
And many another cause alleide,
That he with her at home abide.
But he hath cast her letter aside
As he which tho no maner hede
Toke of her wommanische drede
And forth he goth, as nought ne
were,

To Troy, and was the firste there
Which londeth and toke arrivaile,
For him was lever in the bataile
He saith to deien as a knight
Than for to live in all his might
And be reproved of his name.
Lo, thus upon the worldes fame
Knighthode hath ever yet beset,
Which with no cowardis is let.

" g)f 6inge gaul also I finde,
Whan Samuel out of his kinde,
Through that the Phitonesse hath
lered,

In Samarie was arered¹
Long time after that he was dede.
The kinge Saul him axeth rede,
If that he shall go fight or none.
And Samuel him said anone:
The firste day of the bataile
Thou shalt be slain withoute faile
And Jonathas thy sone also.
But how as ever it felle so,
This worthy knight of his cordge
Hath undertake the vidge
And wold nought his knighthode
let²

For no perfl he couthè set;
Wherof that bothe his sone and he
Upon the mounte of Gelbod
Assemblen with her enemies.
For they knighthode of such a pris

¹ Arered, raised up.

² Let, hinder.

By olde dales thannd helden,
That they none other thing be-
helden.

And thus the fader for worship
Forth with his sone of felaship
Through lust of armes weren dede
As men may in the bible rede,
They whos knighthode is yet in
minde

And shall be to the worldes ende.

" And for to loken overmore
It hath and shall ben evermore,
That of knighthode the prowessse
Is grounded upon hardiesse
Of him that dare wel undertake.
And who that wolde ensample take
Upon the forme of knightes lawe,
How that Achilles was foith drawe
With Chiro, which Centaurus hight,
Of many a wonder here he might.
For it stood thilke time thus,
That this Chiro this Centaurus
Within a large wildernessse,
Where was ledn and leonesse,
The lepard and the tigre also
With hert and hinde, buk and doo,
Had his dwelling as tho befell
Of Peleon upon the hill,
Wherof was thanne mochel speche,
There hath Chiro this child to teche
What time he was of twelve yere
age.

Wherefore to maken his corage
The more hird by other wey
In the forest to hunt and pley,
Whan that Achilles walke wolde
Centaurus bad that he ne sholde
After no beste make his chas
Which wolde fleen out of his place
As buk and doo and hert and hinde,
With which he may no werre finde.
Buttho thatwolden himwithstonde,
There shuld he with his dart on
honde

Upon the tigre and the ledn

Purchase and make his venison,¹
As to a knight is accordaunt.

And therupon a covaunant
This Chiro with Achilles set,
That every day withouten let
He shulde such a cruel beste
Or sle or wounden atte leste,
So that he might a token bring
Of blood upon his home comfng.
And thus of that Chiro him taught
Achilles such an herte caught,
That he no more a leon drad
Whan he his dart on honde had
Than if a Ie6n were an asse.
And that hathmade him for to passe
All other knightes of his dede,
Whan it cam to the gret nede,
As it was afterward wel knowe.

" Lo, thus, my sone, thou might
knowe

That the corgde of hardiesse
Is of knighthode the prowessse,
Which is to Love suftisaunt
Aboven all the remenaunt
That unto Loves Court pursue.
But who that wol no Slouth eschue
Upon knighthode and nought tra-
vaile

I not what love him shuld availle,
But every labour axeth why
Of some reward, wherof that I
Ensamples couthe tel inough
Of hem that toward love drough
By olde dales, as they shulde."—

"My fader, therof here I
wolde."—

" My sone, it is wel resonddle
In place which is honourable
If that a man his herte sette,
That than he for no Slouth lette
To do what longeth to manhede.
For if thou wolt the bokes rede
Of Launcelot and other mo,
Theremight thou seenhowitwastho

¹ Venison, hunted game.

Of armes, for they wold atteigne
 To Love which withouten peine
 May nought be get of Idelnesse.
 And that I take to witnesse
 An old cronique in speciall,
 The whiche into memoriall
 Is write, for his loves sake
 How that a knight shal under-
 take.

Chermas a king, which Oenes
 Was hoten and he under pees
 Held Calidoine in his empire
 And had a daughter Deianire;
 Men wist in thilke time none
 So fair a wight as she was one.
 And as she was a lusty wight,
 Right so was than a noble knight,
 To whom Mercirrie fader was.
 This knight the two pilldrs of "bras,
 The whiche yet a man may finde,
 Set up in the deseVt of Ynde,
 That was the worthy Hercules,
 Whos name shall be endeles
 For the merveiles which he wrought.
 This Hercules the love sought
 Of Deianire, and of his thing
 Unto her fader which was king
 He spake touchend of maria'ge.
 The king knowend his high lignage
 And drad also his mightes sterne
 To him ne durst his doughter
 werne

And neth&es, this he him saide,
 How Achelous, er he, first preide
 To wedden her, and in accorde
 They stood, as it was of recorde.
 But for all that this he him graunt-
 eth,
 That which of hem that other
 daunteth

In armes, him she shulde take,
 And that the king hath undertake.
 This Achelous was a geaunt,
 A subtil man, a deceivaunt,

Which through magique and sor-
 cerie

Couth all the worlde of trecherie.
 And whan that he this tale herde,
 How upon that the king answerde,
 With Hercules he muste feight,
 He trusteth nought upon his sleight
 Al onely, whan it cometh to nede;
 But that which voideth alle drede
 And every noble herte stereth,
 The love that no life forbereth
 For his lady whom he desireth,
 With hardiesse his herte fireth,
 And send him word withoute fail,
 That he woll take the bataile.
 They setten day, they chosen felde,
 The knightes covered under shelde
 To-gider come at time sette
 And eche one is with other mette.
 It fel they foughten both on foot,
 There was no stone, there was no
 root,

Whiche mighte letten hem the wey,
 But all was voide and take away.
 They smiten strokes but a fewe,
 For Hercules, which wolde shewe
 His grete strengthe as for the nones,
 He stert upon him all at ones
 And caught him in his armes
 stronge.

This geaunt wote he may nought
 longe

Endure under so harde bondes,
 And thought he wold out of his
 hondes

By sleight in some maner escape.
 And as he couthe him self forshape,
 In likenesse of an adder he slipte
 Out of his honde and forth he
 skipte;

And efte, as he that fighte wolle,
 He torneth him into a bolle
 And gan to belwe in suche a soun,
 As though the world shuld al go
 doune.

The grounde he sporneth and he
traunceth,

His large homes he avaunceth
And cast hem here and there
about.

But he which stant of hem no
doubte

Awaiteth wel whan that he cam
And him by bothe homes nam
And all at ones he him caste
Unto the grounde and held him
faste,

That he ne mighte with no sleight
Out of his hond get upon height,
Till he was overcome and yolde,
And Hercules hath what he wolde.
The kinge him graunteth to fulfille
His axing at his owne wille;
And she, for whom he hadde served,
Her thought he hath her wel de-
served.

" (pneas eke within Itaile
Ne had he wonne the bataile
And done his might so besily
Ayein king Turne his enemy,
He hadde nought Lavine wonne,
But for he hath him over ronne
And gete his pris, he gat her love.

" By these ensamples here above
Lo, now, my sone, as I have told,
Thou might wel se, who that is bold
And bar travaile and undertake
The cause of Love, he shall be take
The rather unto Loves grace;
For comunliche in worthy place
The women loven worthinesse
Of manhode and of gentilesse,
Forthegentils ben most desired."—

" T g fafcer, but I were enspired
Through lore of you, I wot no way
What gentilesse is for to say,
Wherof to telle I you beseche."—

" The ground, my sone, for to
seche

Upon this diffinicion

The worldes constitucion
Hath set the name of gentilesse
Upon the fortune of richesse,
Which of long time is falle in age.
Than is a man of high lignage
After the forme as thou might here
But no thing after the mature.
For who that reson understand
Upon richesse it may nought stond,
For that is thing which faileth ofte.
For he that stant to day alofte
And all the worlde hath in his
wones,¹

To morwe he faileth all at ones
Out of richesse into pouerte ;
So that therof is no deserte,
Which gentilesse maketh abide.
And for to loke on other side
How that a gentilman is bore,
Adam, whiche alle was to-fore
With Eve his wife, as of hem two,
All was aliche gentil tho ;
So that of generation,
To make declaration,
There may no gentilesse be.
For to the reson if we se
Of mannes birthe the mestire,
It is so comun to nature,
That it yiveth every man aliche,
As well to the pouer as to the riche,
For naked they ben bore bothe;
The lorde hath no more for to clothe
As of him self that ilke throwe,
Than hath the pouerest of the rowe.
And whan they shullen bothe passe,
I not of hem whiche hath the lasse
Of worldes good, but as of charge
The lorde is more for to charge,
Whan God shall his accompte here,
For he hath had his hastes here.
But of the body which shall deie,
All though there be diverse wey
To deth, yet is there but one ende,
To which that every man shall wende

¹ Wanes, dwellings.

As well the begger as the lorde
 Of o' nature, of one accorde.
 She, which our olde moder is,
 The erthd both" that and this
 Receiveth and alich devoureth,
 That she to nouthur part favotireth.
 So wote I nothing after kinde,
 Where I may gentilessd finde,
 For lacke of vertue lacketh grace,
 Wherof richesse in many place
 Whan men best wend for to stonde
 All sodeinly goth out of honde:
 But vertue set in the corgde,
 There may no world be so salvage,
 Which might it take and done away
 Till whanne that the body deie;
 And than he shall be richdd so,
 That it may faild nevermo.
 So that may well be gentillesse,
 Which yiveth so great a sikernesse,
 For after the condicion
 Of resondble entencion,
 The which out of the soul groweth
 And the Vertue fro Vied knoweth,
 Wherof a man the Vice eschueth
 Withoute Slouth, and Vertue sueth,
 That is a verray gentelman;
 And nothing ellds whiche he can
 Ne which he hath, ne which he may.
 But for all that yet now a day
 In Loves Court to taken hede,
 The pouer Vertue shall nought
 spede,
 Where that the richd Vied woweth.
 For selde it is, that Love alloweth
 The gentil man withouten good,
 Though his conditidn be good.
 But if a man of bothd two
 Be riche and vertuouus also,
 Than is he well the mord worth.
 But yet to put him selvd forth
 He must done al his besinesse,
 For nouthur good ne gentillesse
 May helpen hem whiche idel be.

But who that woll in his degre
 Travaill so as it belongeth,
 It happeth oftd that he fongeth
 Worship and ese bothd two.
 For ever yet it hath be so,
 That love hondst in sondry wey
 Profiteth, for it doth away
 The Vice, and as the bokds sain,
 It maketh curteis to the vilafn
 And to the coward hardiesse
 It yiveth, so that the verray prowesse
 Is caused upon lovés reule
 To him that can manhode reule,
 And eke toward the womanhede,
 Who that therof woll taken hede.
 For they the better affaited be
 In every thinge, as men may se,
 For love hath ever his lustds grene
 In gentil folke, as it is sene,
 Which thing there may no kind
 areste.

I trowd, that there is no beste,
 If he with love shulde acqñeint,
 That he ne woldd make it queint
 As for the while that it laste.
 And thus I conclude atte laste,
 That they ben idel, as me semeth,
 Whiche unto thing that lové
 demeth

Forslouthen that they shulden do;
 And over this, my sone, also
 After the Vertue morall eke
 To speke of Love, if I shall seke,
 Among the holy bokds wise,
 I finde write in suche a wise
 Who loveth nought is here as dede,
 For Love above all other is hede,
 Whiche hath the Vertues for to
 lede,

Of all that unto mannds dede
 Belongeth. For of idelship
 He hateth all the felaship,
 For Slouth is ever to despise,
 Whiche in disdeigne hath all ap-
 prise,

And that accordeth nought to man.
 For he that wit and reson can,
 It sit him wel that he travaile
 Upon such thing which might availe,
 For idelship is nought comended,
 But every law it hath defended.¹
 And in ensample thereupon
 The noble wise Salomon,
 Whiche had of every thing insight,
 Saith: As the briddes to the flight
 Ben made, so the man is bore
 To labour.' whiche is nought forbore
 To hem that thenken for to thrive.
 For we, whiche nowe are alive,
 Of hem that besy whilom were
 Als wel in scole as elles where
 Now every day ensample take,
 That if it were now to make
 Thing which that they first founden
 out,

It shold⁵ nought be brought about.
 Her² livs thanne werd longe,
 Her wittds great, her mightds
 stronge,

Her hertes full of besinesse,
 Wherof the worldes redinesse
 In body both and in corgde
 Stant ever upon his avauntdege.
 And for to drawe into memoire
 Her names both and her histoire,
 Upon the vertu of her dede
 In sondry bokes thou might rede.

" Of ewers tmsbont the parfit
 The highe God of his spirit
 Yaf unto men in erthe here
 Upon the forme and the matere
 Of that he woldd make hem wise.
 And thus cam in the first apprise
 Of boks and of alle good
 Through hem that whilom under-
 stood

The lore which to hem was yive,
 Wherof these other that now live
 Ben every day to lerne new.

1 Defended, forbidden, - Her, their.

But er the time that men sue'
 And that the labour forth it brought,
 There was no corn, though men it
 sought,

In none of all the feldes oute.
 And er the wisdom cam aboute
 Of hem that first the bokes write,
 This may wel every wise man wite,
 There was great labour eke also.
 Thus was none idel of the two:
 That one the plough hath undertake
 With labour which the bond hath
 take;

That other toke to studie and muse
 As he which wolde nought icfuse
 The labour of his winds alle.
 And in this wise it is befall
 Of labour which that they begonne
 We be now taught of that we conne.
 Her besinesse is yet to sene,
 That it stant ever aliche grene,
 All be it so the body deie
 The name of hem shall never away.

In the cronfques as I finde
 Cham, whos labour is yet in minde,
 Was he which first the letters fonde
 And wrote inHebreuwith hishonde,
 Of natural philosophy
 He found first also the clergy.
 Cadmus the letters of Gregois
 First made upon his owne chois.
 Theges of thing which shal befall
 He was the first augure of alle.
 And Philemon by the visdge
 Found to describe the corgde.
 Claudius, Esdras and Sulpices,
 Trismegist, Pyth'g'ras, Frige
 Dares,¹

Menander and Epicurus,
 Solinus, Pandas, Josephus

¹ Snc, sowed seed
Frigidities of the MS. is evidently Phry-
 gian Dares, whose Trojan Chronicle was then
 of high authority. As Epicurus was a friend
 of Menander's—they were born in the same
 year—he must be the writer whom the MS.
 calls Ephiloquorus.

The firste were of enditours
 Of old cronique and eke auctours.
 And Herodot in his science
 Of metre, of rime and of cadence
 The firste was of which men note.
 And of musique also the note
 In mannds voise or softe or sharpe
 That founde Jubdl. And of the harpe
 The mery sounne, whiche is to like,
 That found Paulius with phisique.
 Zeuxis found first the portreture,
 And Prometheus the sculpture,
 After what forme that hem thought
 The resemblaunce anon they
 wrought.

Tubal in iron and in stele
 Found first the forge and wrought
 it wele,

And Jadahel, as saith the boke,
 First made nette and fisshes toke.
 Of hunting eke he found the chace,
 Which now is knowe in manyplace;
 A tent of cloth with corde and stake
 He set up first and did it make.
 Berconius of cokerie
 First made the delfcacie.

The craft Minerve of wolle fonde
 And made cloth her ownd honde.
 And Delbora made it of line,¹
 The women were of great engine.²
 But thing which yiveth us mete and
 drinke

And doth the labour for to swinke
 To till the londes and set the vines,
 Wherof the cornds and the wines
 Ben sustenavince to mankind,
 In oldd bokds as I finde,
 Saturnus of his owne wit
 Hath founde first, and more yit
 Of chapmenhode he found the wey"
 And eke to coignd the money
 Of sondry metal, as it is,
 He was the firstd man of this.
 But how that metal cam a place

Through mannds wit and goddes
 grace

The route of philos6phres wise
 Contreveden by sondry wise
 First for to get it out of mine
 And after for to trie and fine.
 And also with great diligence
 They foundd thilke experience,
 Which cleped is alconomy,¹
 Wherof the silver multiply
 They made, and eke the golde also.
 And for to telle howe it is so,
 Of bodies seven in speciall
 With foure spirits joint withal!
 Stant the substance of this mature.
 The bodies whiche I speke of here
 Of the pianettes ben begonne.
 The golde is titled to the Sonne,
 The Mone of silver hath his part,
 And iron that stond upon Mart,
 The leed after Satorne groweth,
 And Jupiter the brass bestoweth,
 The copper set is to Ven'tis,
 And to his part Mercurius
 Hath the quick silver, as it falleth,
 The whiche after the boke it calleth
 Is first of thilke found named
 Of spirites which ben proclaimed.
 And the spirft, whiche is secounde
 In sal ammoniak is founde.
 The thridde spirit sulphur is,
 The fourthe suende after this
 Arsenicum by name is note.
 With blowing and with fires hote
 In these thingés, whiche I say,
 They worchen by diverse way.
 For as the philosopre tolde,
 Of golde and silver they ben holde
 Two principal extremities,
 To whiche all other by degrees
 Of the metalles ben accordaunt.
 And so through kindd'resemblaunt,
 That what man couthe awaid take
 The rust of which they waxen blacke,

1 Line, linen. 2 Engtne, ingenuity.

¹ Alconomy, alchemy.

And the savour of the hardnesse,
 They shulden take the likenesse
 Of golde or silver parfitly.
 But for to worche it sikerly
 Betwene the corps and the spirit,
 Er that the metall be parfft,
 In seven forme's it is set
 Of all. And if that one be let¹
 The remenaunt may nought availe,
 But other wise it may nought faile.
 For they by whom this art was
 founde,

To every point a certain bounde
 Ordeignen, that a man may finde
 This craft is wrought by wey of
 kinde

So that there is no fallas inne.
 But what man that this werk be-
 ginne,

He mote awaite at every tide,
 So that nothfng be left aside.
 First of the distillation
 Forth with the congelation
 Solucidn, discention,
 And kepe in his entention
 The point of sublimation,
 And forth with calcination
 Of verry approbation
 Do that there be fixation
 With tempred hetes of the fire,
 Till he the parfit elixire
 Of thillce philosdphres stone
 May gete, of which that many one
 Of philos6phres whilom write.
 And if thou wolt the name's wite
 Of thilke stone with other two
 Whiche as the clerkes maden tho,
 So as the bokes it recorden,
 The kinde of hem I shall recorden.

"These olde philosdphres wise
 By wey of kinde in sondry wise
 Thre stone's made through clergy.²
 The firste if I shall specify,
 Was cleped *vegetabilis*,

¹ Let, impeded.

² Clergy, lenning.

Of which the propre vertue is
 To mannes held for to serve
 As for to kepe and to preserve
 The body fro sikenesses alle,
 Till deth of kinde upon him falle.

"The stone seconde I thee behote
 Is *lapis animalis* hote,
 The whose vertue is propre and
 couth

For ere andeyeandnase and mouth,
 Wherof a man may here and se
 And smelle and taste in his degre.
 And for to fele and for to go
 It helpeth a man, of bothe two
 The wittes five he underfongeth
 To kepe as it to him belongeth.

"The thridde stone in speciall
 By name is clepdd *minerall*,
 Which the metalles of every mine
 Attremeth till that they ben fine,
 And pureth hem by such a wey
 That all the vice goth away
 Of rust, of stinke and of hardnesse.
 And whan they ben of such clen-
 nesse,

This minerall, so as I finde,
 Transformeth all the firste kinde
 And maketh hem able to conceive
 Through his vertue and to receive
 Both in substance and in figure
 Of golde and silver the nature.
 For they two ben thextremities
 To whiche after the propeties
 Hath every metal his desire
 With helpe and comfort of the fue
 Forth with this stone, as it is said,
 Which to the Sonne and Moneislaid;
 For to the redde and to the white
 This stone hath power to profite,
 It maketh multiplication
 Of golde and the fixation
 It causeth, and of his habite
 He doth the werke to be parfite
 Of thilke elixir: which men calle
 Alconomy, as is befall

To hem that whilom were wise.
 But nowe it stant all otherwise.
 They speken fast of thilke stone,
 But how to make it now wot none
 After the sothe experience.
 And netheles great diligence
 They setten upon thilke dede
 And spillen more than they spede.
 For alls' way they finde a lette¹
 Which bringeth in pouerte anddette
 To hem, that riché were afore.
 The loss is had, the lucre is lore,
 To get a pound they spenden five,
 I not how such a craft shall thrive
 In the maner as it is used.
 It were better be refused
 Than for to worchen upon wene²
 In thing which stant nought as they
 wene.

But noughtforthy, whothatitknewe,
 The science of him self is trewe
 Upon the forme as it was founded,
 Wherof the names yet be groundd
 Of hem that first it founden out.
 And thus the famé goth about
 To such as soughten besinesse
 Of vertue and of worthinesse,
 Of whom if I the namés calle,
 Hermes was one the first of alle,
 To whom this art is most applied.
 Geber therof was magnified
 And Ortolan and Morien,
 Among the which is Avicen,
 Which found and wrote a great
 partie

The practique of alconomie.
 Whose bokes plainly, as they stonde
 Upon this craft, few understonde;
 But yet to put hem in assay,
 There ben full many now a day
 That knowen litel what they mene.
 It is nought one to wite and wene
 In forme of wordes they it trete,
 But yet they fallen of beyete,

¹ Lette hindrance. ² Went, expectation.

For of to moche or of to lite
 There is algate found a wite,¹
 So that they folwe nought the line
 Of the parfité medicine,
 Which groundd is upon nature.
 But they that writen the scripture
 Of Greke, Arabe and of Caldee,
 They were of suche auctorité,
 That they first founden out the way
 Of all that thou hast herd me say,
 Wherof the cronique of her lore
 Shall stonde in prise for evermore.
 But toward ouré marches here
 Of the Latins, if thou wolt here
 Of hem that whilom vertuous
 Were and therto laborious,
 Garmente made of her engine
 The firsté letters of Latine,
 Of which the tungé Remain cam,
 Wherof that Aristarchus nam
 Forth with Donat and Dindimus
 The firsté reule of scole, as thus
 How that Latin shall be cimpounded
 And in what wise it shall be souned,
 That every word in his degré
 Shall stond upon congruite.
 And thilke time at Rome also
 Ther was Tullius Cicero
 That writeth upon rethorique,
 How that men shuld her wordés
 pike

After the forme of eloquence,
 Which is, men sain, a great prudence.

And after that out of Hebrew
 Jeromé, which the langage knew,
 The Bible in which the lawe is closed
 Into Latine he hath transposed.
 And many an other writer eke
 Out of Caldee, Arabe and Greke
 With great labour the bokes wise
 Translateden. And otherwise
 The Latins of hem self also
 Her study at thilké time so

¹ Wite, blame..

With great travaile of scole toke
 In sondry forme for to boke,
 That we may take her evidences
 Upon the lore of the sciences,
 Of craftes bothe and of clergie ;
 Among the whiche in poesie
 To the lovers Ovidé wrote
 And taught, if lové be to hote,
 In what maner it shulde akele.

" Forthy my sone, if that thou
 fele,

That Lové wringe the to sore,
 Behold Ovide and take his lore."—

" My fader, if they mighté spede
 My love, I wolde his bokés rede.
 And if they techen to restreigne
 My love, it were an idel peine
 To lerne a thing which may nought
 be.

For lich unto the grené tre
 If that men take his root away,
 Right so min herte shulde deie
 If that my lové be withdrawe.
 Wherof touchend unto this sawe
 There is but onely to pursue
 My Love, and Idelship escheue."—

" My godé soné, soth to say,
 If there be siker any way
 To lové, thou hast said the best.
 For who that woll have all his rest
 And do no travaile at the nede,
 It is no reson that he spede
 In Lovés causé for to winne.
 For he which dare nothingbeginne,
 I not what thinge he shulde acheve.
 But over this thou shalt beleve,
 So as it sit thee well to knowe,
 That there ben other Vices slowe,
 Which unto Lové don great lette,
 If thou thin hert upon hem sette.

Toward the slowe progeny
 There is yet one of compaigny,
 And he is cleped Sompnolence,
 Which doth to Slouth his reverence
 As he which is his chamberlein,

That many an hunderd time hath
 lein

To slepé whan he shulde wake.
 He hath with Lové trewes take,
 That wake who so waké will,
 If he may couche adown his bill
 He hath all wowed what him list,
 That oft he goth to bed unkist
 And saith, that for no druery
 He woll nought leve his sluggardy.
 For though no man it wold allowe,
 To slepe lever than to wowe
 Is his maner, and thus on nightes,
 Whan he seeth the lusty knightes
 Revelen where these women are,
 Away he skulketh as an hare
 And goth tobéd and laith him softe;
 And of his Slouth he dremeth ofte,
 How that he sticketh in the mire,
 And how he sitteth by the fire
 And claweth on his bare shankes,
 And how he climeth up the bankes
 And falleth in the slades¹ depe.
 But thanne who so take kepe
 Whan he is fall in suche a dreame
 Right as a ship ayein the streame
 He routeth with a slepy noise²
 And brustleth as a monkés froise²
 Whan it is throwe into the panne.
 And otherwhilé selde whanne
 That he may dreame a lusty sweven,
 Him thenketh as though he were
 in heaven

And as the world were holy his ;
 And than he speketh of that and this
 And maketh his exposition
 After his disposition
 Of that he wold, in such a wise
 He doth to Love all his servise,
 I not what thank he shall deserve.
 But sone, if thou wolt Lové serve,
 I rede that thou do nought so."—

" Ha, godé fader, certes no.
 I haddé lever by my trouth,

1 Slades, valleys. 2 Freise, pancake.

Er I were set on such a Slouth
 And here such a slepy snout,
 Bothe eyen of my hede were out.
 For me were better fully deie
 Than I of suche sluggardie
 Had any namé, God me shielde.

" For certes, fader Genius,
 Yet unto now it hath be thus
 At alle time if it befelle
 So that I mighte come and dwelle
 In place there my lady were,
 I was nought slow ne slepy there.
 For than I dare well undertake,
 That whan her list on nightés wake
 Inchambre as to cardie and daunce,
 Me thenketh I may me more
 avaunce

If I may gone upon her honde,
 Than if I wonne a kingés londe.
 For whan I may her hond beclippe,
 With such gladnesse I daunce and
 skippe

Me thenketh I touche nought the
 floor,

Theroo, which renneth on the moor,
 Is thanné nought so light as I.
 So mow ye witen all forthy,
 That for the timé slepe I hate.
 And whan it falleth other gate,
 So that her liké nought to daunce,
 But on the dees to casté chaunce,
 Or axe of Love some demaunde,
 Or elles that her list commaunde
 To rede and here of Troilus,—
 Right as she wold, or so or thus,
 I am all redy to consent.

And if so is, that I may hent
 Somtime amonge a good leisfr,
 So as I dare of my desir
 I telle a part, but whan I prey,
 Anone she biddeth me go my wey
 And saith : ' It is fer in the night.'
 And I swere, it is even light.
 But as it falleth atté laste,
 There may no worldes joie laste,

So mote I nedés fro her wende
 And of my wacche make an ende.
 And if she thanne hede toke
 How pitouslich on her I loke,
 Whan that I shall my leve take,
 Her ought of mercy for to slake
 Her daunger, which saith ever nay.
 But he saith often, 'Have good day,'
 That loth is for to take his leve.
 Therforé while I may beleve,¹
 I tarie forth the night alonge.
 For it is nought on me alonge
 To slepé that I so soone go
 Till that I mote algatd so,
 And thanne I bidde : ' God her se,'
 And so down knelende on my kne
 I take leve, and if I shall
 I kisse her and go forth withall,
 And other while, if that I dore,²
 Er I come fully atte dore,
 I torne ayein and feigne a thing,
 As though I hadde lost a ring
 Or somewhat elles, for I wolde
 Kisse her eftsone, if that I sholde.
 But selden is, that I so spede.
 And whan I se that I mot nede
 Departen, I departe, and thanne
 With all my herte I curse and
 banne

That ever slepe was made for eye.
 For as me thenketh I might drie³
 Withoute slepe to waken ever
 So that I shulde nought dissever
 Fro her in whom is all my light.
 And than I curse also the night
 With all the will of my cordge
 And say: 'Away thou black ymage,
 Which of thy derke cloudy face
 Makest all the worldés light deface
 And causet unto slepe a way,
 By which I mot now gone away
 Out of my ladies compaignie.
 O slepy night, I thee defie,

¹ Beleve, remain. ² Dore, dare.
³ Drie, endure.

And wolde that thou lay in presse
 With Proserpine the goddessse
 And with Pluto the hellé king.
 For till I se the dalés spring,
 I sette slepe nought at a risshe.¹
 And with that worde I sigh and
 wisshe

And say: 'Ha, why ne were it day,
 For yet my lady than I may
 Beholde, though I do no more.
 But slepe,—I not wherof it serveth,
 Of which no man his thank de-
 serveth

To get him love in any place,
 But is an hindrer of his grace
 And maketh hem dede as for a
 throwe

Right as a stoke were overthrowe.
 And so, my fader, in this wise
 The slepy nightés I despise
 And ever amiddes of my tale
 I thenke upon the nightingale,
 Which slepeth nought by wey of
 kinde

For love, in bokes as I finde.
 Thus atté last I go to bedde
 And yet min herté lith to wedde
 With her where as I came fro,
 Though I departe hewoll nought so.
 There is no lock may shet him out,
 Him nedeth nought to gon about
 That percé may the harde wal,
 Thus is he with her overall.

And thus my selven I torment,
 Til that the dede slepe me hent.
 But thanne by a thousand score
 Wei moré than I was to-fore
 I am tormented in my slepe,
 But that I dreme is nought on shepe,
 For I ne thenke nought on wulle,
 But I am drecched¹ to the fulle
 Of lové that I have to kepe,
 That now I laugh and now I wepe
 And now I lese and now I winne

¹ *Drecched*, troubled, vexed.

And now I ende and now beginne,
 And other while I dreme and mete,¹
 That I aloud with her mete
 And that Daunger is left behinde.
 And than in slepe such joy I finde,
 That I ne bedé never awake.
 But after, whan I hedé take,
 And shall arise upon the morwe,
 Than is all tornéd into sorwe,
 Nought for the cause I shall arise,
 But for I mette² in suche a wise,
 And atte last I am bethought,
 That all is vein and helpeth nought,
 But yet me thenketh by my wille
 I wold have lay and slepé stille³
 To meten ever of such a sweven,³
 For than I had a slepy heven."—

"My sone, and for thou tellest so,
 A man may finde of time ago,
 That many a sweven hath be certain,
 All be it so that som men sain
 That swevens ben of no credence.
 But for to shewe in evidence
 That they full ofté sortié thinges
 Betoken, I thenke in my writings
 To telle a tale therupon,
 Which fell by olde daies gone.

"**This finde I** written in poesy.
 Ceix the king of Troceny
 Hadde Alceond to his wife,
 Which as her owne hertés life
 Him loveth. And he had also
 A brother, which was clepdd tho
 Dedalion, and he par cas
 Fro kinde of man forshapé was
 Into a goshauke for likendsse;
 Wherof this king great hevinesse
 Hath take and thought in hiscordge
 To gone upon a pelrindge
 Into a straungé regi6n,
 Where he hath his devocidn
 To done his sacrifice and prey
 If that he might in any wey

¹ *Mete*, dream. ² *Mwtte*, dreamt.
³ *Sweven*, a dream.

Toward the goddes finde grace
 His brothers hele to purchase,
 So that he mighte be reformed
 Of that he haddé be transformed.
 To this purpose and to this ende
 This king is redy for to wende
 As he which woldé go by ship.
 And for to done him felaship
 His wife unto the see him brought
 With all her herte, and him besought
 That he the time her woldé sain
 Whan that he thoughte come ayein.
 Within, he saith, two monthes day.
 And thus in alle haste he may
 He toke his leve and forth he saileth,
 Wepend and she her self bewaileth
 And torneth home there shecamfro.
 But whan the monthds were ago,
 The which he set of his coming,
 And that she herdé no tiding,
 There was no card for to seche
 Wherof the goddés to beseche.
 Tho she began in many a wise
 And to Juno her sacrifice
 Above all other most she dede
 And for her lord she hath so hede
 To wite and knowehowthatheferd,
 That Juno the goddessse her herde
 Anone, and upon this matere
 She badde Yris her messagere
 To Slepés hous that she shal wende
 And bid him that he make an ende
 By sweven, and shewe all the cas
 Unto this lady how it was.

"This Yris fro the highé stage,
 Whiche undertake hath the mes-
 sage,

Her reiny copé did upon,
 The which was wonderly begone
 With colours of divérsd hewe
 An hunderd mo than men it knewe,
 The heven liche unto a bowe
 She bende, and she cam downe lowe
 The God of Slepe where that she
 fond,

And that was in a straunge lond
 Which marcheth¹ upon Chimery.
 For there, as saith the poesy,
 The God of Slepe hath made his
 hous,

Whiche of entaile is merveilous.

"Under an hill there is a cave
 Which of the sonnd may nought
 have,

So that no man may knowe aright
 The point betwene the day and
 night.

There is no fire, there is no sparkc,

There is no doré which maycharke,²

Wherof an eye shulde unshet,

So that inward there is no let.

And for to speke of that withoute,

There stant no great tre nigh aboute,

Wheron there mighté crowe or pie

Alighté for to clepe or crie.

There is no cock to crowe day,

Ne besté none which noisé may

The hille, but all abouté round

There is growend upon the ground

Poppy, which bereth the sede of
 slepe,

With other herbés suche an hepe.

A stille" water for the nones

Rennend upon the smalle stones,

Which hight of Lethés the river,

Under that hille in such maner

There is, which yiveth great ap-
 petite

To slepe. And thus ful of delite

Slepe hath his hous, and of his
 couche

Within his chambre if I shall touche

Of hebenus that slepy tre

The bordes all abouté be,

And for he shuldé stepé softe

Upon a fether bed alofte

He lith with many a pilwe of doun,

The chambre is strowéd up and
 doun

1 Marcheth, borders. 2 Charke, creak.

With swevenes many a thousand
fold.

Thus came Yris into this holde
And to the bed, whiche is all black,
She goth, and ther with Slepe she
spake,

And in this wise as she was bede
The message of Juno she dede.
Full ofte her wordes she reherceth,
Er she his slepy era's perceth
With mochel wo. But atté laste
His slombrend eyen he upcaste
And said her, that it shal be do,
Wherof amonge a thousand tho
Within his hous that slepy were
In speciall he chese out there
Thre, whiché shulden do this dede.
The first of hem, so as I rede,
Was Morpheus, the whose nature
Is for to také the figure
Of that personé that him liketh,
Wherof that he ful ofte entriketh¹
The life which slepé shal by night.

And Ithecus that other hight,
Which hath the vois of every soun,
The chere and the condicioin
Of every life what so it is.
The thriddé suend after this
Is Panthasas, which may transforme
Of every thing the righté forme
And chaunge it in another kinde.
Upon hem thre, so as I finde,
Of swevens stant all thappardnce,
Which other while is evidence
And other whilé but a jape.²

But netheles it is so shape,
That Morpheus by night alone
Appereth unto Alceone
In likenesse of her husdbonde
Al naked dede upon the stronde,
And how he dreint³ in speciall
These other two it shewen all.
The tempest of the blacké cloude

The wode¹ see, the windés loude
All this she met,² and sigh him
deien,

Wherof that she began to crien
Slepend abeddé there she lay.
And with that noise of her affray
Her women sterten up aboute,
Whiche of her lady were in double
And axen her how that she ferde.
And she right as she sigh and herde
Her sweven hath tolde hem every
dele.

And they it halsen³ alle wele
And sain, it is a token of good ;
But til she wist how that it stood,
She hath no comfort in her herte.
Upon the morwe and up she sterte
And to the see where as she met²
The body lay withoute lete
She drough, and whanné she cam
nigh

Starke dede, his armés sprad, she
sigh
Her lord fleténd upon the wawe,
Wherof her winés be withdrawe.
And she which toke of deth no kepe,
Anone forth lepte into the depe
And wold have caught him in her
arme.

This infortune of double harme
The goddés from the heven above
Beheld, and for the trouthe of love
Whiche in this worthy lady stood,
They have upon the sake flood
Her dreinté lorde and her also
Fro deth to life torned so,
That they ben shapen into briddes
Swimmingd upon the wawe amidde.
And when she sigh her lord livénd
In likenesse of a bird swimmingd,
And she was of the samé sort,
So as she mighté do disport
Upon the joie which she hadde,

1 *Entriketh*, deceives. 2 *Jape*, trick, jest.
3 *Dreint* was drowned.

1 *Wode*, raging. 2 *Met*, dreamed.
3 *Halsen*, embrace,

Her wingés both abrode she spradde
 And him so as she may suffice
 Beclipt and kist in suche a wise
 As she was whilome wont to do.
 Her winges for her armes two
 She toke and for her lippés softe
 Her hardé bille, and so ful ofce
 She fondeth in her briddes forme,
 If that she might her self conforme
 To do the plesaunce of a wife
 As she did in that other life.
 For though shehaddeher power lore
 Her will stood as it was to-fore,
 And serveth him so as she may.
 Wherof into this ilke day
 To-gider upon the see they wone,¹
 Where many a doughter and a sone
 They bringen forth of briddes
 kinde.

And for men shulden take in minde
 This Alceon the trewe quene,
 Her briddes yet as it is sene
 Of Alceon² the namd bere.

"Lo thus, my sone, it may thee
 stere

Of swevens for to také kepe;
 For ofte time a man a slepe
 May se what after shall betide.
 Forthy it helpeth at some tide
 A man to slepe as it belongeth ;
 But Slouthd no life underfongeth
 WhicheistoLove appertenaunt."—

"My fader, upon the covenaut
 I dare wel make this avowe,
 Of alle my life into nowe
 Als fer as I can understonde
 Yet took I never slepe on honde
 When it was timé for to wake,
 For though min eye it wolde take,
 Min herte is ever there ayein.
 But netheles to speke it plein
 All this that I have said you here
 Of my wakfng, as ye may here,
 It toucheth to my lady swete,

1 Wone, dwell. 2 Alceon, halcyon.

For other wise I you behete,¹
 In straungé place whan I go
 Me list no thing to wake so.
 For whan the women listen play
 And I her se nought in the way
 Of whome I shuldé merthé take,
 Me list nought longé for to wake
 But if it be for pure shame
 Of that I wolde escheue a name,
 That they ne shuld have causé none
 To say : ' Ha, whéré goth such one
 That hath forlore his contenance,'
 And thus among I singe and daunce
 And feigne lust thereas none is.
 For ofte sith I fele this,
 Of thought which in min herte
 falteth,

Whan it is night min hede ap-
 palleth,²

And that is for I se her nought
 Whiche is the waker of my thought.
 And thus as timelich as I may
 Ful oft, whan it is brode day,
 I take of all these other leve
 And go my wey, and they beleve³
 That seen par cas her loves there,
 And I go forth as nought ne were
 Unto my bed, so that alone
 I may there ligge, sigh and grone
 And wisshen all the longé night,
 Til that I see the dalés light.
 I not if that be Sompnolence,
 But upon youré conscience,
 Min holy fader, demeth ye."—

"My sone, I am well paid⁴ with
 the,

Of slepe that thou the sluggardy
 By night in lovés compaignie
 Eschued hast, and do thy pain
 So that thy lové dare nought pleine.
 But only slepé helpeth kind
 Somtime in phisique as I finde,

¹ I you behete, I promise you.

² Appalleth, becomes weak.

³ Beleve, remain.

⁴ Paid, pleased.

Whan it is take by mesure,
But he which can no slepe mesure
Upon the reule as it belongeth
Fulofteof sodein chauncehefongeth
Suche infortune that him greveth.
But who these olde bokes leveth
Of Sompnolence howe it is write,
There may a man the sothe wite,
If that he wolde ensample take,
That other while is good to wake;
Wherof a tale in poesy
I thénké for to specify.

"**Ovide telleth** in his sawes,
How Jupíter by oldd dawes
Lay by a maide whiche Yo
Was cleped, wherof that Juno
His wife was wrothe and the god-
desse

Of Yo torneth the likenesse
Into a cow to gon there oute
The large feldés all aboute
And gette her mete upon the grene.
And therupon this highé quene
Betoke her Argus for to kepe,
For he was selden wont to slepe ;
And yet he had an hunderd eyen,
And all aliche wel they sighen.
Now herke how that he was be-
guiled.

Mercury, which was all affiled¹
This cow to stele, he camedesguised
And had a pipe wel devised
Upon the notes of musique,
Wherof he might his era's like.
And over that he had affaited
His lusty tales and awaited
His time. And thus into the felde
He came, where Argus he behelde
With Yo, which beside him went.
With that his pipe anon he hent
And gan to pipe in his manure
Thing which was slepy for to here.
And in his piping ever amonge
He tolde him such a lusty songe,

1 *Affiled*, adapted.

That he the fool hath brought a slepe,
There was none eye that might
kepe

His hede, which Mercury of-smote.
And forth withall anone foot hote
He stale the cow whiche Argus
kepte,

And all this fel for that he slepte.
Ensamble it was to many mo,
That mochel slepe doth ofte wo
Whan it is time for to wake.

For if a man this Vice take
In Sompnolence and him delite,
Men shuld upon his dor£ write
His epitaphe and on his grave,
For he to spille and nought to save
Is shape as though he werd dede.

" Forthy my sone, hold up thin
hede

And let no slepe thin eye englue,
But whan it is to reson due."—

" My fader, as touchend of this
Right so as I you tolde it is,
That ofte abedde whan I sholde
I may nought slepé though I wolde.
For Love is ever fastd by me,
Which taketh none hede of due timé,
For whan I shall min eyen close,
Anone min hert he woll oppose
And hold his scole in such a wise
Till it be day that I arise,
That selde it is whan that I slepe.
And thus fro Sompnolence I kepe
Min eye. And forthy if there be
Ought diés more in this degre
Now axeth forth."—" My sond, yis.
For Sleuthe, whiche as moder is
The forth drawer and the norfice
To man of many a dredful Vice,
Hath yet another, last of alle,
Which many a man hath made to
falle

Where that he might never arise,
Wherof for thou thee shalt avise
Er thou so with thy self misfare,

What Vice it is I woll declare.

"**Whan Slouth**¹ hath don all
that he may

To drive forth the longe day,
Till it become to the nede,
Than atté last upon the dede
He loketh how his time is lore,
And is so wo begone thorefore
That he within his thought conceiveth

Tristesse, and so him self deceiveth
That he Wanhope¹ bringeth inne,
Where is no comfort to beginne.
But every joy him is deslaied,
So that within his herte affraied
A thousand time with one breth
Wepdnd he wissheth after deth,
Whan he Fortune fint adverse.
For than he woll his hope reherse,
As though his world were all forlore,
And saith, ' Alas, that I was bore,
How shall I live ? how shall I do ?
For now Fortune is thus my fo,
I wot well God me woll nought helpe,

What shulde I than of joies yelp²,
Whan there no bote³ is of my care ;
So overcast is my welfare,
That I am shapen all to strife;
Helas, that I nere of this life,
Er I be fullich overtake !'
And thus he woll his sorwe make,
As God him mighte nought availe.
But yet ne woll he nought travaile
To helpe him self at suche a nede,
But sloutheth under suche a drede
Whiche is affermé in his herte
Right as he mighte nought asterte
The worldes wo which he is inne.
Also whan he is falle in sinne,
Him thenketh he is sofercoupla'ble,
That god woll nought be merciable
So great a sinne to foryive,

And thus he leveth to be shrive.

And if a man in thilké throwe
Wold him counseile, he wol nought knowe

The sothé, though a man it finde.
For Tristesse is of suche a kinde,
That for to mainten his foty,
He hath with him obstinacy,
Which is within of suche a Slouth
That he forsaketh alle trouth
And woll unto no reson bove.
And yet ne can he nought abowe '
His owné skills, but of hede
Thus dwine² he till he be dede,
In hindring of his owne estate.
For where a man is obstinate,
Wanhopé folweth atte laste,
Whiché may nought longe afterlaste
Till Slouth make of him an ende.
But God wot whider he shall wende!

" My sone, and right in such
manere,

There be lovers of hevvy chere,
That sorwen more than is nede,
Whan they be taried of her spede
And conne nought hem selven rede,
But lesen hopé for to spede
And stinten love to pursue.
And thus they faden hide and hewe
And lustles in her hertés waxe.
Herof it is that I wolde axe,
If thou, my sone, arte one of tho ?"—

" Ha, gode fader, it is so,
Outtake o point, I am beknowe,³
For elles I am overthiowe
In all that ever ye have saide;
My sorwe is evermore unteide
And secheth over all my veines.
But for to counseile of my peines,
I can no bote do therto.
And thus withouten hope I go,
So that my wittés ben empeired
And I as who saith am dispeired

¹ Wanhope, despair. ² Yelpe, boast, .
Bate, remedy.

¹ Abowe, maintain.

² Dwineth, wastes, pines.

³ I confess, except as to one point.

To winne love of thilke swete,
 Withoute whom, I you behete,
 Min herté that is so bestadde
 Right inly never may be gladde.
 For by my trouth I shall nought lie
 Of puré sorwe whiche I drié¹
 For that she saith she willme nought,
 With drecching² of min own
 thought

In suche a Wanhope I am falle,
 That I ne can unnethes calle
 As for to speke of any grace
 My ladies mercy to purchase.
 But yet I said nought for this
 That all in my default it is
 That I cam never yet in stede
 Whan time was, that I my bede
 Ne saide and as I dorsté tolde.
 But never found I that she wolde
 For ought she knewe of min entent
 To speke a goodly worde assent.
 And nethéles this dare I say,
 That if a sinfull wolde prey
 To God of his foryivénesse
 With half so great a besnesse
 As I have do to my lady
 In lack of axing of mercy,
 He shuldd never come in helle.
 And thus I may you sothly telle,
 Sauf only that I crie and bidde,
 I am in Tristesse all amidde
 And fulfilled of desperaunce.
 And therof yef me my penaunce,
 Min holy fader, as you liketh."—

"My sone, of that thin herte siketh
 With sorwe might thou nought
 amende,

Till Love his gracie woll thee sende,
 For thou thin owne cause empeirest
 What time as thou thy self despeirest.
 I not what other thinge availeth
 Of hopé whan the herté faileth,
 For suche a sore is incurdble,
 And eke the goddés ben vengeable,

¹ Drie, endure.

² Drecching, vexing.

And that a man may right well
 frede,¹

These olde bokes who so rede
 Of thing which hath befallé er this,
 Now here, of what ensample it is.

Phylom by oldé daies fer
 Of Mese was the king Theucer,
 Whiche had a knight to sone Iphis.
 Of love and he so mastred is,
 That he hath set all his corage
 As to reward of his ligndge
 Upon a maide of lowe estate.
 But though he were a potestate
 Of worldés good, he was subgit
 To love and put in suche a plite
 That he excedeth the mesure
 Of reson, that him self assure
 He can nought. For the more he
 praid,

The lasse love on him she laid.
 He was with love unwise con-
 streigned,

And she with reson was restieigned.
 The lustes of his herte he sueth,
 And she for drede shame eschueth,
 And as she shulde, toke good hede
 To save and kepe her womanhede.
 And thus the thing stood in debate
 Betwene his lust and her estate,
 He yaf, he send, he spake by mouth,
 But yet for ought that ever he couth
 Unto his specie he found no wey,
 So that he cast his hope away.
 Within his hert he gan despeire
 Fro day to day and so empeire
 That he hath lost all his delite
 Of lust, of slepe, of appetite,
 That he through strength of love
 lasseth,

His wit and reson overpasseth
 As he whiche of his life ne rought-
 His deth upon him self he sought,
 So that by night his wey he nam,
 Theie wiste none where he becam.

¹ Frede, feel.

² Rought, recked.

The night was derk, there shone
 no mone,
 To-fore the gatés he cam sone,
 Where that this yonge maiden was,
 And with this wofullhorde, 'Helas,'
 His dedly pleintes he began
 So stille that there was no man
 It herde, and than he saidé thus:
 'O thou Cupide, O thou Vends,
 Fortuned by whose ordenaunce
 Of love is every mannes chaunce,
 Ye knowen all min holé hert,
 That I ne may your hond astert,
 On you is ever that I crie,
 And you deigneth nought to plie
 Ne toward me your ere encline.
 Thus for I se no medicine
 To make an ende of my quarele,
 My deth shall be in stede of hele.
 Ha, thou my wofull lady dere,
 Which dwellest with thy fader here
 And slepest in thy bedde at ese,
 Thou wost nothing of my disese,
 How thou and I be now unmete.
 Ha lord, what sweven shalt thou
 mete?
 What dremés hast thou now on
 honde?
 Thou slepest there, and I here
 stonde,
 Though I no deth to thee deserve.
 Here shall I for thy love sterve,
 Here shall I a kings sons' deie
 For love and for no felony;
 Where thou therof have joy or sorwe,
 Here shalt thou se me dede to
 morwe.
 O herté hard aboven alle,
 This deth, which shall to me befallé,
 For that thou wol nought do my
 grace,
 Yet shall be tolde in many a place ;
 That I am dede for love and trouth
 In thy defaulté and in thy slouth,
 Thy daunger shall to many mo

Ensample be for evermo,
 Whan they my wofull deth recorde.'
 And with that worde he toke a corde
 With which upon the gate tre
 He henge him self, that was pité.
 The morvve cam, the night is gone,
 Men comen out and sigh anone,
 Where that this yongé lord was dede.
 There was an hous withoute rede,
 For no man knewe the causé why,
 There was wepingé, there was cry.
 This maiden, whan that she it herde
 And sigh this thing howe it mis-
 ferde,
 Anone she wisté what it ment,
 And all the causé how it went
 To all the world she tolde it out
 And preith to hem that were about
 To take of her the vengeance,
 For she was cause of thilke chaunce
 Why that this kingés sone is spilt.¹
 She taketh upon her self the gilt
 And is all redy to the peine
 Whiche any man her wold ordeigne,
 And but if any other wolde,
 She saith, that she her selve sholde
 Do wreche with her owne honde,
 Through out the worlde in every
 londe
 That every life² therof shall speke
 How she her self it shuldd wreke.
 She wepeth, she crieth, she swouneth
 ofte,
 She cast her eyen up alofte
 And said among full pitously :
 'O god, thou wost wel it am I,
 For whom Iphis is thus beseine,
 Ordeigné so, that men may saine
 A thousand winter after this,
 How suche a maiden did amis,
 And as I diddé do to me
 For I ne diddé no pite
 To him which for my love is lore,
 Do no pité to me therfore.'

1 Spilt, destroyed. 2 Life, body.

And with this word she fell to
grounde

A swoune, and there she lay
astounde.

" The goddés, which her pleintes
herd

And sigh how wofully she ferd,
Her life they toke away anone
And shopen her into a stone
After the forme of her ymage
Of body both and of visage.

And for the merveile of this thing
Unto this place came the king

And eke the quene and many mo,
And whan they wisten it was so,

As I have tolde it here above,
How that Iphis was dede for love

Of that he haddé be refused,
They helden alle men excused

And wondren upon the vengeance.
And for to kepé remembraunce

This faire ymagé maiden liche,
With compaignie noble and riche

With torche and great solempnité
To Salaminé the cité,

They lede and carie forth withall
This dede corps, and saine it shall

Beside thilke ymagé have
His sepulture and be begrave.¹

This corps and this ymage thus
Into the cité to Venus,

Where that goddesse her temple
had,

To-gider bothé two they lad.
This like ymage as for miracle

Was set upon an high pindcle
That alle men it mighte knowe,

And under that they maden lowe
A tombe riché for the nones

Of marbre and eke of jaspre stones,
Wherin that Iphis was beloken

That evermore it shall be spoken.
And for men shall the sothe wite

They have her epitaphe write

¹ Begravend.

As thing which shulde abide stable,
The letters graven in a table

Of marbre were and saiden this :
' Here lith, which sloughe him self,

Iphis
For love of Araxarathen,

And in ensample of tho women
That suffren men to deié so,

Her forme a man may se also,
How it is tornéd flesshe and bone

Into the figure of a stone.
He was to neissh¹ and she to harde,

Beware forthy here afterwarde,
Ye men and women, bothé two,

Ensampleth you of that was tho.'

" Lo thus, my sone, as I thee say
It greveth by diverse way

In Desespere a man to falle,
Which is the laste braunch of alle

Of Slouthé, asthou hast herd devise,
Wherof that thou thy self avise

Good is, er that thou be deceived
Wher that the grace of hope is

weived."—
" My fader, how so that it stonde,

Now have I plainly understonde
Of Slouthés Court the properte,

Wherof touchend in my degre
For ever I thinké to beware.

But over this so as I dare
With all min hert I you beseche,

That ye me wolde enforme and teche,
What there is more of your apprise

In Love als well as otherwise,
So that I may me clené shrive."—

My sone, while thou art alive
And hast also thy fulle minde,

Among the Vices, which I finde,
There is yet one such of the Seven

Which all this world hath setuneven
And causeth many thinges wronge

Where he the cause hath underfonge;
Wherof hereafter thou shalt here

The forme bothe and the mature.

¹ Neissh, delicate.

Book V.

OF AVARICE.

first whan the high God began
This worlde and that the kind
of man

Was fall into no gret encess,
For worldes good was tho¹ no press
But all was set to the comune,
They speken than of no fortune
Or for to lese or for to winne,
Till Avarice brought it inne.
And that was whan the world was
woxe

Of man, of hors, of shepe, of oxe,
And that men knewen the money,
Tho wenté pees out of the wey
And werre came on every side,
Whiche alle lové laid aside
And of comun his propre made,
So that in stede of shovel and spade
The sharpe swerd was take on honde.
And in this wise it cam to londe
Wherof men maden diches depe
And highé walles for to kepe
The gold which Avarice encloseth.
But all to litel him supposeth,
Though he might all the world purchase.

For what thing that he may embrace
Of golde, of catel or of londe,
He let it never out of his honde,
But get him more and halt it fast,
As though the world shuld ever last.

¹ *Tho*, then.

So is he lich unto the helle,
For as these olde bokds telle,
What cometh ther in lass or more
It shall departe nevermore.
Thus whan he hath his cofre loken,
It shall nought after ben unstoken¹
But whan him list to have a sight
Of gold, how that it shineth bright,
That he theron may loke and muse,
For otherwise he dare nought use
To take his part or lasse or more.
So is he pouer, and evermore
Him lacketh that he hath inough.
An Ox⁶ draweth in the plough
Of that him self hath no proffte,
A shep right in the same plite
His wolfe bereth, but on a day
An other taketh the flees away.
Thus hath he, that he nought ne
hath,

For he therof his part ne tath,²
To say how suche a man hath good
Who so that reson understood
It is unproperliche said;
That good hath him and halt him
taid³

That he ne gladdeth nought withall,
But is unto his good a thrall
And a subgit; thus serveth he
Where that he shulde maister be :

¹ *Unstoken*, unbarred. ² *Tath*, taketh.

³ *Taid*, tied.

Suche is the kinde of thavarous.

" My sone, as thou art amorous,
Tell if thou fare of Lové so."—

" My fader, as it semeth, no,
That avarous yet never I was,
So as ye setten me the cas.
For as ye tolden here above
In full possession of love
Yet was I never here to-fore,
So that me thenketh well therefore
I may excusé well my dede.
But of my will withoute drede
If I that tresor mighte gete
It shuldé never be foryete
That I ne wolde it fasté holde,
Till God of Love him selvd wolde
That deth us shuld departe atwo.
For leveth well, I love her so,
That even with min owne life,
If I that swete lusty wife
Might ones welden at my wille,
For ever I wold holde her stille.
And in this wisé, taketh kepe,
If I her had I wolde her kepe ;
And yet no friday wolde I fast,
Though I her kepte and heldé fast.
Fy on the bagges in the kist,
I had inough if I her kist.
For certes if she weré min,
I had her lever than a mine
Of gold, for all this worldes riche
Ne mights' make me so riche
As she, that is so inly good
I sette nought of other good ;
For might I getté such a thing,
I had a tresor for a king,
And though I wolde it fasté holde,
I weré thannd wel beholde.
But I might pipé now with lasse
And suffre that it overpasse,
Nought with my will, for thus I
wolde

Ben avarous if that I sholde.
But fader, I you herdé say,
How thavarous hath yet some way,

Wherof he may be glad. For he
May, whan him list, his tresor se
And grope and fele it all aboute.
But I full ofte am shet theroute,
There as my worthy tresor is,
So is my life lich unto this
That ye me tolden here to-fore,
How that an oxe his yoke hath bore
For thing that shulde him nought
availe;

And in this wise I me travaille.
For who that ever hath the welfare
I wot wel that I have the care,
For I am had and nought ne have
And am as who saith loves knave.
Now demeth in your ownd thought,
If this be avarice or nought."—

"My sone, I have of thee no
wonder,
Though thou to serve be put under
With Love, which to kinde ac-
cordeth.

But so as every boke recordeth,
It is to findé no plesaunce
That man above his sustenaunce
Unto the gold shall serve and bowe.
For that may no reson avowe.

But Avarice nethdles,
If he may geten his encrés
Of gold, that wold he serve and
kepe,

For he taketh of nought elles
kepe,

But for to fille his bagges large;
And all is to him but a charge,
For he ne parteth nought withall,
But kepeth it as a servaunt shall,
And thus though that he multiply
His golde, without tresory
He is, for man is nought amended
With gold but if it be despended
To mannés use, wherof I rede
A tale and take therof good hede
Of that befell by olde tide,
As telleth us the clerke Ovide.

Bachus, which is the god of wine,
 Accordant unto his divine
 A prest the which Cillenus hight
 He had, and fell so, that by night
 This prest was drunke and goth
 astraied,
 Whereof the men were evil apaid
 In Phrigilond, where as he went.
 But atte last a cherle him hent
 With strength of other felaship,
 So that upon his drunkeship
 They bounden him with cheines
 faste
 And forth they lad him also faste
 Unto the king, which highte Mide.
 But he that wolde his Vicé hide
 This curteis king toke of him hede
 And bad, that men him shulde lede
 Into a chambre for to kepe,
 Till he of leiser hadde slepe.
 And tho this prest was sone unbound
 And up a couche fro the ground
 To slepe he was laid soft inough.
 And whan he woke, the king him
 drough
 To his presence and did him chere,
 So that this prest in such manere
 While that him liketh ther he
 dwelleth,
 And al this he to Bachus telleth
 Whan that he cam to him ayein.
 And whan that Bachus herde sain
 How Mide hath done his curtesy,
 Him thenketh, it were a vilany
 But he reward him for his dede,
 So as he might of his godhede.
 Unto this king this god appereth
 And clepeth, and that other hereth.
 This god to Mide thonketh faire
 Of that he was so debonaire
 Toward his prest, and bad him say
 What thinge it were he wolde pray
 He shulde it have, of worldes good.
 This king was glad and stillé stood

And was of his axinge in doubte
 And all the worlde he cast aboute,
 What thing was best for his estate.
 And with him self stood in debate
 Upon thre pointes, which I finde
 Ben levest unto mannes kinde.
 The first of hem it is delite,
 The two ben worship and profite.
 And than he thought, if that I crave
 Delite, though I delite may have,
 Delite shall passen in my age ;
 That is no siker avauntage.
 For every joie bodely
 Shall ende in wo, delite forthy
 Woll I nought chese. And if worship
 I axe and of the world lordship,
 That is an occupation
 Of proude ymagination,
 Which maketh an herte vein with-
 inne;
 There is no certain for to winne,
 For lorde and knave is all o wey
 Whan they be bore and whan they
 deie.
 And if I profite axe wolde,
 I not in what maner I sholde
 Of worldés good have sikernesse,
 For every thefe upon richesse
 Awaiteth for to robbe and stele.
 Such good is cause of harmes fele ;
 And also though a man at ones
 Of all the world within his wones¹
 The tresor might have every dele,
 Yet had he but one mannes dele
 Toward him self, so as I thinke,
 Of clothing and of mete and drinke,
 For more, out také vanite,
 There hath no lord in his degre.
 And thus upon these points
 diverse
 Diverselich he gan reherce,
 What point it thought him for the
 best.
 But plainly for to get him rest

¹ Wones dwellings.

He can no siker waie cast,
 And netheles yet atlé laste
 He fell upon the covetise
 Of gold, and than in sondry wise
 He thought, as I have said to-fore,
 How tresor may be sone lore,
 And hadde an inly great desir
 Touchénde of such recoverfr,
 How that he might his cause availle
 To gete him gold withoute faile.
 Within his hert and thus he preiseth
 The gold, and saith how that he
 peiseth

Above all other metal most.
 The gold, he saith, may lede an
 hoste

To maké werre ayein a king,
 The gold put under alld thing
 And set it whan him list above,
 The gold can make of hate love
 And werre of pees and right of wrong
 And long to short and short to long.
 Withoute gold may be no fest,
 Gold is the lord of man and best
 And may hem bothe beie and selle,
 So that a man may sothly telle
 That all the world to golde obeieth.

"Forthy this king to Bachus
 preieth

To graunt him gold, but he ex-
 cedeth

Mesuré moré than him nedeth. '
 Men tellen, that the malady,
 Which cleped is ydropesy
 Resembled is unto this Vice
 By way of kinde of Avarice.
 The more ydropesié drinketh,
 The more him thursteth, for him
 thinketh

That he may never drink his fille.
 So that there may no thing fulfille
 The hastés of his appetite,
 Bnd right in such a maner plite
 B ant Avarice and ever stood ;
 Hie more he hath of worldés good,

The more he wolde it kepe streite
 And ever more and more coveite,
 And right in such condition
 Withoute good discretion
 This king with Avarice is smitte,
 That all the worlde it mighté witte.
 For he to Bachus thanne preide,
 That therupon his honde he leide,
 It shulde through his touche anone
 Become gold ; and therupon
 This god him graunteth as he bad.
 Tho was this kinge of Phrigé glad.
 And for to put it in assay
 With all the haste that he may
 He toucheth that, he toucheth this,
 And in his hond all gold it is ;
 The stone, the tre, the leef, the gras,
 The flour, the fruit, all gold it was.
 Thus toucheth he while he maylaste
 To go, but hunger atte laste
 Him toke so, that he must nede
 By wey of kinde his hunger fede.
 The cloth was laid, the bord was set
 And all was forth to-fore him set
 His dissh, his cup, his drink, his
 mete,

But whan he wolde or drinke or ete
 Anone as it his mouth cam nigh
 It was all gold, and than he sigh
 Of Avarice the folie.

And he with that began to crie
 And preide Bachus to foryive
 His gilt and suffre him for to live
 And be such as he was to-fore,
 So that he were nought forlore.
 This god which herd of this gre-
 vaunce

Toke routhe upon his repentaunce
 And bad him go forth redely
 Unto a flood was faste by,
 The which Pactole thanne hight,
 In whiche als clene as ever he might
 He shuld him wasshen overall,
 And said him thanne that he shall
 Recover his first estate ayein.

This king right as he herdé sain
 Into the flood goth fro the lond
 And wissh him bothe fote and hond,
 And so forth all the remenaunt
 As him was set in cove-naunt.
 And than he sigh merveilésstraunge,
 The flood his colour gan to chaunge,
 The gravel with the smale stones
 To gold they torne both atones,
 And he was quite of that he hadde,
 And thus Fortune his chaunceladde.
 And whan he sigh his touch away,
 He goth him home the righte wey
 And liveth forth as he did er
 And put all Avarice afer
 And the richesse of gold despiseth
 And saith, that mete and cloth
 suffiseth.

Thus hath this king experience,
 How foolés done the reverence
 To gold, which of his owné kinde
 Is lassé worth than is the rinde
 To sustenaunce of manned food.
 And than he made lawés good
 And all his thing set upon skille,
 He bad his people for to tille
 Her lond and live under the lawe,
 And that they shulde also forth drawe
 Bestaile and seche none encrees
 Of gold, whiche-is the breche of pees.
 For this a man may finde write,
 To-fore the time, er gold was smite
 In coigne, that men the florein
 knewe,

There was wel nigh no man untrewé.
 Tho was there nouthér shield né
 spere

Né dedly wepen for to bere;
 Tho was the town withouten walle,
 Whiche nowé is closéd over alle;
 Tho was there no broca'ge in lond,
 Which now taketh every cause on

hond.

So may men knowe how the florein
 Was moder first of malengm

And bringer in of alle werre,
 Wherof this world stant out of herre,¹
 Through the counseú of Avarice,
 Whiche of his owné propré Vice
 Is as the hellé wonderful,
 For it may nevermore be full,
 That what as ever cometh therinne
 Away né may it never winne.

"Butsonemin, dothou nought so,
 Let all suche Avaricé go
 And take thy part of that thou hast.
 I biddé nought that thou do wast,
 But hold largesse in his mesúre.
 And if thou se a creature,
 Which through pouerte is falle in
 nede,

Yef him some good, for this I rede
 To him that wol nought yeven here
 What peine he shal have elles where.
 There is a peín amongés alle
 Benethe in hellé, which men calle
 The wofull peine of Tantaly,
 Of which I shall thee redely
 Devisé how men therin stonde.
 In hellé thou shalt understonde
 There is a flood of thilk office,
 Which serveth all for Avarfce.
 What man that stondé shall therinne
 He stant up even to the chinne,
 Above his hede also there hongeth
 A fruit which to that peind longeth,
 And that fruit toucheth ever in one
 His overlippe, and therupon
 Such thirst and hunger him as-
 saileth,

That never his appetite né failéth.
 But whan he wolde his hunger fede
 The fruit withdraweth him at nede,
 And though he have his hede on high
 The fruit is ever alicné nigh,
 So is the hunger wel the more.
 And also though him thursté sore
 And to the water bowe adown,
 The flood in such condition

¹ Unhinged.

Avalet¹,¹ that his drinke arecche
 He may nought. Lo now, whiche
 a wreche,
 That mete and drinkeis him so couth
 And yet ther cometh none in his
 mouth!

Lich to the peínés of this flood
 Stant Avarice in worldés good,
 He hath inoughand yet himnedeth,
 For his scarcenése it himforbedeth
 And ever his hunger after more
 Travailleth him aliche sore,
 So is he perneM overall.

Forthy thy goodés forth withal,
 My sond, loké thou despende,
 Wherof thou might thy self amende
 Both here and eke in other place.
 And also if thou wolt purchase
 To be belovéd, thou must use
 Largessé, for if thou refuse
 To yiv6 for thy lovés sake,
 It is no reson that thou take
 Of lové that thou woldest crave.
 Forthy if thou wolt gracé have,
 Be gracious and do largesse,
 Of Avarice and ² the sikenesse
 Escheue above all other thinge,
 AndtakeensampleofMidethekinge
 And of the flood of helle also,
 Where is inough of alle wo.

And though there weré no mature
 But onely that we finden here,
 Men oughten Avarice eschue;
 For what man thilké Vicé sue,
 He gete him self but litel rest.
 For how so that the body rest,
 The hert upon the gold travdileth,
 Whom many a nightés drede as-
 saileth.

For though he ligge a bedde naked,
 His herte is evermore awaked
 And dremeth as he lith to slepe

¹ *Avalet*, goes lower.

² *Of Avarice and, &c.*; And *Escheue, &c.*
 See note, page 61. This construction is fre-
 quent throughout the poem.

How besy that he is to kepe
 His tresor, that no thefe it stele;
 Thus hath he but a wofull wele.
 And right so in the same wise,
 If thou thy self wolt wel avise,
 There be lovés of suche inow,
 That wollen unto reson bowe
 If so be that they come above,
 Whan they ben maisters of her love
 And that they shulden be most glad
 With love, they ben most bestad,
 So fain they wolden holde it all.
 Her herte, her eye is overall,
 And wenen every man be thefe
 To stele away that hem is lefe ;
 Thus through her owné fantasy
 They fallen into jelousy.
 Than hath the ship to-brokhiscable
 With every winde and is mev-
 able."¹—

" My fader, for that ye now telle,
 I have herd ofetime telle
 Of Jelousy, but what it is
 Yet understode I never er this.
 Wherfore I wolde you beseche,
 That yemewoldeenforme andteche
 What maner thing it mighte be."—

" ~~My sond~~, that is hard to me,
 But netheles as I have herd
 Now herke, and thou shalt be
 answerd.

Among the men lack of manhode
 In mariage upon wif-hode
 Maketh that a man him self de-
 ceiveth,
 Wherof it is that he conceiveth
 That ilke unsely malady,
 The whiche is cleped Jelousy,
 Of whiche if I the proprete
 Shall telle after the nicetd
 So as it worcheth on a man,—
 A fever it is cotidian,
 Whiche every day wol come aboute
 Where so a man be in or oute,

1 And is to be moved by every wind.

At home if that a man wol wone
 This fever is than of comun wone¹
 Most grevous in a mannes eye,
 For than he maketh him tote and
 pry;

Where so as ever his lové go,
 She shall nought with her litel toe
 Misteppe, but he se it all.
 His eye is walkend overall,
 Where that she singe or that she
 daunce,

He seeth the leste countenance;
 If she loke on a man aside
 Or with him rowne at any tide,
 Or that she laugh or that she loure,
 His eye is there at every hotire.
 And whan it draweth to the night,
 If she than be withoute light,
 Anone is all the gamé shent.
 For than he set his parlernent
 To speke it whan he cometh to bed
 And saith : ' If I were now to wed,
 I wolde never more have wife.'

And so he torneth into strife
 The lust of lovés duete
 And al upon diversité.
 If she be fresshe and well arraied,
 He saith her banner is desplaied
 To clepe in gestes by the way;
 And if she be nought wel besey²
 And that her list nought to be glad,
 He bereth on honde that she is
 mad

And loveth nought her husebonde ;
 He saith, he may wel understonde,
 That if she wolde his compaignie,
 She shulde than afore his eye
 Shew all the plesure that she might.
 So that by daie ne by night
 She not what thing is for the best,
 But liveth out of allé rest.
 For what as ever him list to sain,
 She dare nought speke o worde
 ayein,

But wepeth and holt her lippés
 I close.

She may wel writd, ' Sans repose,'
 The wife, which is to such one
 maried.

Of allé women be he waried,¹
 For with his fever of jelousy
 His eche daiés fantasy
 Of sorwe is ever aliche grene,
 So that there is no lové sene
 While that him list at home abide.
 And whan so is he woli out ride,
 Than hath he redy his aspy
 Abiding in her compaigny
 A jangler, an ill mouthed one,
 That she ne may no whider gone
 Ne speke o word, ne onés loke,
 But he ne wol it wende and croke
 And torne after his owne entent,
 Though she no thing but honour
 ment.

Whan that the lord cometh home
 ayein

The jangler muste somewhat sain.
 So what withoute and what withinne
 This fever is ever to beginne,
 For where he cometh he can nought
 ende

Til deth of him hath made an ende.
 For though so be that he ne here,
 Ne se, ne wite, in no mancre
 But all honoure and womanhede,
 Therof the jelous taketh none hede,
 But as a man to Love unkinde
 He cast his stafe and as the blinde
 And fint defaulte where is none;
 As who so dremeth on a stone
 How he is laid, and groneth ofte
 Whan he lieth on his pilwes softe.
 So is there nought but strife and
 chest,

Whan lové shuldé make his fest.
 I wot the time is ofte cursed,
 That ever was the gold unpursed,

1 Wone, custom. 2 Besey, clothed,

' 1 Waried, cursed,

The which was laid upon the boke,
 Whan that all other she forsoke
 For love of him, but all to late
 She pleigneth, for as than algate
 She mot forbere and to him bowe,
 Though he ne woldé that allowe;
 For man is lord of thilké faire,
 So may the wōman but empeire
 If she speke ought ayein his wille,
 And thus she bereth her peine stille.
 But if this fever a woman take
 She shall be wel more harde shake,
 For though she bothe se and here
 And finde that there is no matere,
 She dare but to her selve pleigne,
 And thus she suffreth double peine.

"Lo thus, my sone, as I have
 write,

Thou might of jelousié wite
 His fever and his condicion,
 Which is full of suspicion.
 But wherof that this fever groweth,
 Who so these oldé bokés troweth,
 There may he finde how it is.
 For they us teche and telle this,
 How that this fever of jealousy
 Somdele it groweth of soty¹
 Of love and somdele of untrūst.
 For as a sikman lest his lust,²
 And whan he may no savour gete
 He hateth than his owne mete,
 Right so this feverous malady,
 Which caused is of fantasy,
 Maketh the jelous in feble plite
 To lese of love his appetite
 Through feigned enformacion
 Of his ymaginacion.
 But finally to taken hede
 Men may wel make a liklyhede
 Betwene him whiche is avarous
 Of golde and him that is jelous
 Of love, for in o degre
 They stondé both, as semeth me;

¹ Soty(sottise), folly.

² Loses his enjoyment.

That one wold have his bagges still
 And nought departen¹ with his will
 Anddare nought for the theves slepe
 So faine he wolde his tresor kepe;
 That other may nought well be glad,
 For he is evermore adrad
 Of these lovers that gone aboute,
 In aunter if they put him oute.
 So have they bothé litel joy
 As wel of love as of money.

"Now hast thou, sone, of my
 teching
 Of jealousy a knouleching,
 That thou might understonde this,
 Fro whenne he cometh and what
 he is,

And eke to whom that he is like.
 Beware forthy thou be not sike
 Of thilké fever, as I have spoke,
 For it woll in him self be wroke.
 For Lové hateth no thing more,
 As men may finde by the lore
 Of hem that whilom were wise,
 How that they speke in many
 wise."—

"My fader, soth is that ye sain;
 But for to loke there ayein
 Before this time how it is falle,
 Wherof there might ensample falle
 To suche men as ben jelous
 In what manér it is grevous,
 Right fain I wolde ensample
 here."—

"My godé sone, at thy praiere
 Of suche ensamples as I finde,
 So as they comen now to minde
 Upon this point of timé gone,
 I thinke for to tellen one.

Ovide wrote of many thinges,
 Among the whiche in his writings
 He told a tale in poesy,
 Which toucheth unto jealousy
 Upon a certain cas of Love.
 Among the goddes al above

¹ Departen, distribute.

It felle at thilké time thus.
 The god of fire, which Vulcanus
 Is hote and hath a craft forth with
 Assigned for to be the smith
 Of Jupiter, and his figure
 Both of visage and of stature
 Is lothly and malgracious ;
 But yet he hath within his hous
 As for the liking of his life
 The fairé Venus to his wife.
 But Mars, which of bataillés is
 The god, an eye had unto this,
 As he which was chivalerous.
 It felle him to ben amorous,
 And thought it was a great pité
 To se so lusty one as she
 Be coupled with so lourd¹ a wight,
 So that his peine day and night
 He did, if he her winne might.
 And she that had a good insight
 Toward so noble a knightly lord
 In love fel of his accord.
 There lacketh nought but time and
 place,
 That he nis siker of her grace.
 But whan two hertés fallen in one,
 So wise a wait² was never none
 That at sometime they ne mete;
 And thus this fairé lusty swete
 With Mars hath ofté compaigny.
 But thilke unkinde jelousy,
 Which evermore the herteopposeth,
 Maketh Vulcanus that he supposeth
 That it is nought wel overall;
 And to him self he said, he shall
 Aspte better, if that he may.
 And so it felle upon a day,
 That he this thing so sleightlyledde,
 He founde hem bothé two abedde.
 With stronge cheines he hem
 bounde,
 As he to-gider hem had founde,
 And lefte hem both ligge so
 And gan to clepe and drie tho

1 *Lourd*, dull, heavy. 2 *Wait*, watch.

Unto the goddés all aboute.
 And they assembled in a route
 Come all at onés for to se,
 But none amends's hadde he,
 But was rebuked here and there
 Of hem that lovés frendés were,
 And saiden that he was to blame,
 For if there felle him any shame
 It was through his misgovernance,
 "And thus he losté contenance
 This god and let his causé falle,
 And they toscorne him laughen alle.
 Forthy my sone, in thine office
 Beware, that thou be nought jeious,
 Whiche ofte time hath shent the
 hous."—

" My fader, this ensample is hard,
 How such thing to the heavenward
 Among the goddés mighte falle.
 For there is but o god of alle,
 Which is the lord of heven and helle.
 But if it like you to telle
 How suché goddés come aplace,
 Ye mighten mochel thank purchase,
 For I shall be wel taught with-
 all."—

" My sone, it is thus overall
 With hem, that stonden misbeleved,
 That suché goddés ben beleved
 In sondry place sondry wise.
 Amonges hem which be unwise,
 There is betaken of credence,
 Wherof that I the difference
 In the manér as it is write
 Shall do thee plainly for to wite.

" **Gr Crist was bore** among us
 here
 Of the bellés that, tho were,
 In fouré formés thus it was.
 They of Caldee as in this cas
 Had a beleve by hem selve,
 Which stood upon the signes twelve,
 Forth eke with the planetés seven,
 Whiche as they sighen upon the
 heven

Of sondry constellation
 In her ymaginacion
 With sondry kerfe and portreture
 They made of goddes the figure.
 In thelementes and eke also
 They hadden a belevé tho.
 And all was that unresondble,
 For thelementes ben servisdble
 To man. And ofte of accidence,
 As men may se thexperience,
 They ben corrupt by sondry way,
 So may no mannés reson say
 That they ben god in any wise.
 And eke if men hem wel avise,
 The sonne and mone eclipsen both,
 That be hem lef or be hem loth
 They suffre, and what thing is pas-
 sible¹

To ben a god is impossible.
 These elements ben creatures,
 So ben these hevenly figures,
 Wherof may wel be justified,
 That they may nought ben deified.
 And who that taketh away thonour,
 Which due is to the creatour,
 And yiveth it to the creature,
 He doth to great a forfeiture.
 But of Calded nethéles
 Upon this feith though it be lesse
 They holde afferméed the creauce,
 So that of hellé the penaunce,
 As folk which stant out of beleve,
 They shall receive, as we beleve.

"Of the Caldees so in this wise
 Stant the beleve out of assise.
 But in Egipté worst of alle
 The feith is fals, how so it falle,
 For they diversee bestés there
 Honour, as though they goddes were.
 And nethelesse yet forth withal!
 Thre goddés most in special!
 They have forth with a goddessse,
 In whome is all her sikernesse.
 Tho goddes be yet cleped thus

¹ *Possible*, capable of suffering.

Orus, Tiphon and Isirus.
 They weré brethren alle thre
 And the goddessse in her degre
 Her suster was and Ysis hight,
 Whom Isirus forlay by night
 And helde her after as his wife.
 So it befell, that upon strife
 Tiphon hath Isre his brother slain,
 Which had a child to sone, Orain,
 And he his faders deth to herte
 So toke, that it may nought asterte
 That he Tiphon after ne slough,
 Whan he was ripe of age inough.
 But yet thegipcienés trowe
 Forallthiserrour, which they knowe,
 That thesé brethern ben of might
 To sette and kepe Egipt upright
 And overthrowé if that hem like.
 But Ysis, as saith the cronique,
 Fro Grece into Egipte cam
 And she than upon honde nam
 To teche hem for to sowe and ere,
 Which no man knew to-foré there.
 And whanné thegipcienés sigh
 The feldés full afore her eye,
 And that the lond began to greine,
 Which whilom hadde be bareinc,
 For therthé bare after the kinde
 His *due* chargé, this I finde,
 That she of berthe the goddessse
 Is clepéd, so that in distresse
 The women therupon childing
 To her they clepe and her offring
 They beren whan that they ben light.
 Lo, howe Egipt all out of sight
 Fro reson stant in misbeleve,
 For lacke of lore as I beleve.

"Among the Grekes out of the wey
 As they that reson put away
 There was, as the cronique saith,
 Of misbeleve an other feith,
 That they her goddés and goddesses
 As who saith token all to gesses
 Of suche as weren full of vice,
 To whom they made sacrifice.

"The Highe God, so as they
saide,

To whom they moste worship laide,
Saturnus hight, and king of Crete
He haddé be. But of his sete
He was put down as he which stood
In frenésy and was so wode¹
That fro his wife, which Rea hight,
His owne children he to plight²
And ete hem of his comune wone.³
But Jupiter, which was his sone
And of full age, his fader bonde
And kut of with his owne honcle
His genitals, whiche also faste
Into the depe see he caste,
Wherof the Grekes afferme and say
That, whan they were cast away
Came Venus forth by wey of kinde.
And of Saturne also I finde,
Howe afterwarde into an ile
This Jupiter him didde exile,
Where that he stood in great mis-
chefe.

Lo, what a god they maden chefe !
And sithen that suche one was he
Which stood most high in his degre
Among the goddés, thou might know
These other that ben moré low
Ben litel worth, as it is founde.

" For Jupiter was the secounde,
Whiche Juno had unto his wife.
And yet a lechour all his life
He was and in avouterie⁴
He wroughte many a trecherie.
And for he was so full of vices,
They cleped him God of Delices,
Of whom if thou wolt moré wite
Ovide the poéte hath write.
But yet her sterrés bothé two
Saturne and Jupiter also
They have, although they ben to
blame,
Attitled to her owne name.

¹ Wode, mad. - *To plight*, plucked to pieces.

³ *Of his comune wone*, as his usual custom.

⁴ *Avouterie*, adultery.

" Mars was an other in that lawe,
The which in Dace was forth drawe,
Of whom the clerk Vegecius
Wrote in his boke and toldé thus,
Howe he into Itaile came
And such fortuné there he nam,
That he a maiden hath oppressed,
Whiche in her ordre was professed
As she which was the prioresse
In Vestés temple the goddesse,
So was she well the more to blame.
Dame Ylia this ladye name
Men clepe, and eke she was also
The kingés doughter, that was tho,
Which Minitor by namé hight.
So that ayein the lawés right
Mars thilké time upon her that
Remus and Romulus begat,
Whiche after, whan they come in
age,

Of knighthode and of vassellage
Itaile al hole they overcome
And foundeden the greté Romé,
la armés and of suche emprise
They weren, that in thilké wise
Her fader Mars for the merveile
The God is cleped of Bataile.
They were his children bothé two,
Through hem he toke his name so,
There was none other causé why.
And yet a sterre upon the sky
He hath unto his name applied,
In which that he is signified.

" An other god they hadden eke,
To whom for counseil they beseke,
The which was brother to Venus,
Apollo men him clepe thus.
He was an hunte upon the hilles,
There was with him no vertue elles
Wherof that any bokés carpe,
But only that he couthe harpe,
Which whan he walked over londe
Full ofte time he toke on honde
To get him with his sustenaunce
For lack of other purveaunce.

And otherwhile of his falshede
 He feigneth him to conne arede
 Ofthing which afterward shuld falle,
 Wherof among his sleightés alle
 He hath the leude¹ folk deceived,
 So that the better he was received.
 Lo now, through what creacion
 He hath deification
 And cleped is the God of Wit,
 To suche as be the foolés yet.

"An other god, to whom they
 sought,
 Mercuric hight, and him ne rought
 What thing he stale, ne whom he
 slough.

Of sorcery he couthe inough,
 That whan he wold him self trans-
 forme,

Full ofte time he toke the forme
 Of woman and his owné lefte.
 So did he well the more thefte.
 A great spekér in alte thinges
 He was also and of lesinges
 An autor, that men wiste none
 An other suche as he was one.
 And yet they maden of this thefe
 A god which was unto hem lefe,
 And cleped him in tho beleves
 The God of Marchants and of
 Theves.

But yet a sterre upon the heven
 He hath of the planetes seven.

But Vulcanus, of Whom I spake,
 He had a courbe² upon the back,
 And thevto he was hippe-halt,
 Of whom thou understonde shalt,
 He was a shrewe in al his youth
 And he none other vertue couth
 Of craft to helpe him selve with
 But only that he was a smith
 With Jupiter, whiche in his forge
 Diverse thingés made him forge ;
 So wote I nought for what desire
 They clepen him the God of Fire.

1 *Leude*, unlearned. 2 *Courbe*, hump.

King of Cicile Ypolitus
 A sone he had, and Eolus
 He hight, and of his faders graunt
 He held by way of covenaut
 The governaunce of every ile
 Which was longend unto Cicile,
 Of hem that fro the lond forein
 Lay ope the windes alle pleine.¹
 And fro thilke iles into the londe
 Full ofté cam the wind to honde;
 After the name of him forthy
 The windés cleped Eoly
 They were, and he the God of Winde.
 Lo now, how this beleve is blinde.

The king of Cretd Jupiter,
 The samé, whiché I spake of er,
 Unto his brother, which Neptune
 Was hote, it list him to comune
 Parte of his good, so that by ship
 He made him stronge of the lordship
 Of all the see in tho parties,
 Where that he wrought his tiran-
 nies,

And the straunge ilés aboute
 He wan, that every man hath doubte
 Upon his marche² for to saile.
 For he anone hem wolde assaile
 And robbe what thing that they
 ladden,

Hissauf conduit but if³ they hadden.
 Wherof the comun vois aros
 In every lond, that suche a los
 He caught, all nere it worth a stre,
 That he was cleped of the See
 The God by name, and yet he is
 With hem that so beleve amis.
 This Neptune eke was thilke also,
 Which was the firsté founder tho
 Of noble Troy, and he forthy
 Was well the more lette by.

The loresman of the shepherdes
 And eke of hem that ben netherdes,
 Was of Archade and highte Pan,

1 Laid up a full store of all the winds.
 2 *Marche*, borders. 3 But if, unless.

Of whom hath spoke many a man.
 For in the wode of Nonartigne
 Enclosed with the trees of pigne
 And on the mount of Parasie¹
 He had of bestés the bailie,¹
 And eke beneth in the valey,
 Where thilke river, as men may say,
 Which Ladon highte, made his
 cours,

He was the chefe of governours
 Of hem that kepten tame bestes,
 Wherof they maken yet the festes
 In the citee of Stimfalides.
 And forth withall yet netheles
 He taughté men the forth drawing
 Of bestaile and eke the making
 Of oxen and of hors the same,
 How men hem shulderide and tame,
 Of foules eke, so as we finde,
 Full many a subtil craft of kinde
 He found, which no man knew to-
 fore.

Men did him worship eke therfore,
 That he the first in thilke londe
 Was, which the melodic fonde
 Of reedes whan they weren ripe,
 With double pipés for to pipe.
 Therof he yaf the firsté lore,
 Till afterward men couthé more;
 To every crafte of mannes helpe
 He had a redy wit to helpe
 Through natural experience.
 And thus thurh nice reverence
 Of foolds, whan that he was dede,
 The foot was torned to the hede
 And clepen him God of Nature,
 For so they maden his figure.

" An other god, so as they fele,
 Whiche Jupiter upon Semele
 Begat in his avouterie,
 Whom, for to hide his lecherie
 That none therof shall take kepe,
 In a mountaigne for to kepe
 Which Dion hight and was in Ynde

¹ *Bailie*, custody.

He send, in bokes as I finde,
 And he by name Bachus hight,
 Which afterward, whan that he
 might,

A wastor was and all his rent
 In wine and bordel¹ he despent.
 But yet all were he wonder bad
 Among the Grekes a name he had,
 They cleped him the God of Wine
 And thus a gloton was divine.

" There was yet Esculapius
 A god in thilke time as thus.
 His craft stood upon surgerie,
 But for the luste of lecherie,
 That he to Daires doughter drough,
 It fell that Jupiter him slough.
 And yet they made him nought
 forthy

A god, and wist no causé why.
 In Rome he was long time so
 A god among the Romains tho,
 For as they saide of his presence
 There was destruiéd a pestilence
 Whan they to thile of Delphos went;
 And that Apollo with him sent
 This Esculapiús his sone
 Among the Romains for to wone;
 And there he dwelte for a while,
 Till afterwarde into that ile
 Fro when he cam ayeine he torneth,
 Where all his life that he sojourneth
 Among the Grekes till that he
 deiede.

And they upon him thanne leide
 His name, and God of Medicine
 He hatte after that ilke line.

" An other god of Hercules
 They made, which was nethéles
 A man, but that he was so stronge
 In al this world that brode and longe
 So mighty was no man as he.
 Merveilestwelve in his degre,
 As it was couth in sondry londes,
 He dide with his owne hondes

¹ *Bordel*, revelry.

Ayein geaunts and monstres both,
The whiclie horrible were and loth.
But he with strength hem overcam,
Wherof so great a price he nam,
That they him clepe amonges alle
The God of Strengthe and to him
calle.

And yet there is no reson inne,
For he a man was full of sinne,
Which proved was upon his ende,
For in a rage him self he brende.
And suche a cruell mannes dede
Accordeth nothing with godhede.

They had ofgoddés yet an other,
Which Pluto hight, and was the
brother

Of Jupiter, and he fro youth
With every word which cam to
mouth,

Of any thing, whan he was wroth.
He wolde swere his comun othe
By Lethen and by Flegeton,
By Cochitum and Acheron,
The whiche after the boko's telle
Ben the chefe floodes of the hellc ;
By Segne and Stige he swore also,
That ben the depe pittes two
Of helle the most principall.

Pluto these othes over all
Swore of his comun custumaunce,
Till it befelle upon a chaunce,
That he for Jupiteres sake
Unto the goddes let do make
A sacrifice, and for that dede
One of the pittés for his mede
In hell of whiche I spake of er
Was graunted him, and thus he
there

Upon the fortune of this thinge
The namé toke of Hellé Kinge.

" Lo, thesé goddés and well mo
Among the Grekés they had tho,
And of goddesses many one,
Whose namesthou shalthereanone,
And in what wisé they deceiven

The foolles, whiche her feithreceiven.

" So as Saturne is souveraine
Of false goddés, as they saine,
So is Cybeles of goddesses
The moder, whom withoute gesses
The folké prein, honour, and serve
As they the whiche her lawe observe.
But for to knowen upon this,
Fro when she cam and what she is,
Bethincia the contré hight,
Where she cam first to marinés sight.
And after was Saturnes wife,
By whom thre children in her life
She bare, and they were clepéd tho
Juno, Neptunus and Pluto,
The which of nice fantasy
The people wolde deify.

And for her children weren so
Cybeles thanne was also
Made a goddesse, and they her calle
The Moder of the Goddes alle.
So was that namé bore forth,
And yet the cause is litel worth.

A vois unto Saturne tolde,
How that his owne sone him sholde
Out of his regne put away,
And he because of thilke wey
That him was shape suche a fate,
Cybele his wife began to hate
And eke her progeme bothe.
And thus while that they were wrothe
By Philerem upon a day
In his avouterie he lay,
On whom he Jupiter begat.
And thilke child was after that
Which wrought al that was proph-
ecied,

As it to-fore is specified.

So whan that Jupiter of Crete
Was king, a wife unto him mete
The doughter of Cybele he toke,
And that was Juno, saith the boke
Of his deification
After the fals opinion
That I have tolde, so as they mene.

And for this Juno was the queene
 Of fúpiter and suster eke,
 The fooles unto hire seke
 And sain, that she is the Goddesse
 Of Regnes bothe and of Richesse,
 And eke she, as they understonde,
 The , water nimphds hath in honde
 To seden at her owne heste.
 And ' whan her list the sky tempeste
 The reinbowe is her messagere.
 Lo, which a misbeleve is here
 That she goddesse is of the sky,
 I wot none other causé why.

"An other goddesse is Minerve,
 To w hom the Grekes obey and
 s erve.

And s he was nigh the greate lay¹
 Of Tr iton founde, where she lay
 A chil d for-cast, but what she was
 There knew no man the sothé cas.
 But in Aufrique she was laide
 In the. maner as I have saide
 And c aried fro that ilke place
 Into a n ile fer in Trace,
 The v, 'hich Fallene thanne hight,
 Wheres a nonce hir kepte and dight.
 And a fter for she was so wise,
 That she found first in her avise
 The c loth making of woll and line,
 Men i'saiden that she was divine,
 And the Goddesse of Sapience
 They clepen her in that credence.

Of the goddesse, which Pallas
 Is cleped, sondry speche was.
 One saith her fader was Pallaunt,
 Whiche was in his time a geaunt,
 A cruell man, a batailous.

An other saith, how in his hous
 She was the cause why he deiede.
 And of this Pallas some eke saide
 That she was Martes wife, and so
 Among the men that weren tho
 Of misbeleve in the riot
 The goddesse of Batailds hote

¹ Lay, lake.

She was, and yet she bereth the
 name.

Now loke, how they be for to blame.

" Saturnus after his exile

Fro Cretd cam in great perile

Into the londes of Itaille

And there he dide great merveile,

Wherof his name dwelleth yit.

For he founde of his owne wit

The firste crafte of plough tilling,

Of ering¹ and of corn sowing,

And how men shulden sette vines

And of the grapes make wines ;

All this he taught. And it fell so

His wife, the which cam with him tho,

Was cleped Cereres by name,

And for she taught also the same

And was his wife that ilké throwe,

As it was to the people knowe,

They made of Ceres a goddesse,

In whom Jier tilthé yet they blesse

And sain that Tricolonius

Her sone goth amonges us

And maketh the corn good chcpe

or dere,

Right as her list, from yere to yere,

So that this wife because of this

Goddesse of Cornés cleped is.

" King Jupiter, which his liking

Whilom fulfilled in allé thing,

So priveliche about he ladde

His lust, that he his willé hadde

Of Latona and on her that

Diane his doughter he begat

Unknownen of his wife Juno.

But afterward she knewe it so,

That Latona for drede fled

Into an ile, where she hid

Her wombé which of childe aros,

Thilke ile cleped was Delos,

In which Diana was forth brought

And kept so that her lacketh nought.

And after whan she was of age,

She toke none hede of maridge,

¹ Ering, ploughing.

But out of mannes compaigny
 She toke her all to venery¹
 In forest and in wilderness,
 For there was all her businesse
 By day and eke by nightés tide
 With arwés brode under the side
 And bow in honde, of which she
 slough

And toke all that her list inough
 Of bestés which ben chaceable.
 Wherof the cronique of this fable
 Saith that the gentils most of alle
 Worshipped her, and to her calie
 And the Goddesse of highe Hilles,
 Of grene trees, of fresshe welles
 They clepen her in that beleve,
 Which that no reson may acheve.

"Proserpina, which doughter was
 Of Cereres, befell this cas :
 While she was dwelling in Cicile,
 Her moder in that ilké while
 Upon her blessing and her hest
 Bad that she shulde ben honest
 And lerné for to weve and spinne
 And dwell at home and kepe her
 inne.

But she cast all that lore away,
 And as she went her out to pley
 To gader floures in a pleine,
 And that was under the mountaigne
 Of Ethna, fell the same' tide
 That Pluto cam that waie ride.
 And sodeinly, er she was ware,
 He toke her up into his chare,²
 And as they riden in the felde,
 Her graté beaute he behelde,
 Which was so plesaunt in his eye,
 That for to holde in compaignie
 He wedded her, and helpe her so
 To ben his wife for evermo.
 And as thou hast to-fore herde telle,
 How he was cleped God of Helle,
 So is she clepéd the Goddesse
 Because of him, ne more ne lesse.

¹ Venery-, hunting, ² Chare, car, chariot,

" Lo thus, my sone, as I the tolde
 The Grekes whilom by daies olde
 Her goddes had in sondry wise,
 And through the lore of her apprise¹
 The Romans helden eke the same
 And in the worshippe of her name
 To every god in speciall
 They made a temple forth withall
 And eche of hem his yeres day
 Attitled hadde. And of array
 The temples weren than ordeigned
 And eke the people was can-
 streigned

To come and done her sacrifice.
 The prestes eke in her office
 Solempne maden thilke festes.
 And thus the Greke's lich to bestes
 The men in stede of God honour,
 Which mighten nought themself
 soccour

While that they were alive here.
 " And over this as thoushalt here
 The Grekes fulfilled of fantasy
 Sain eke that of the hilles high
 The godde's ben in speciall,
 But of her name in generall
 They hoten alle Satiry.

" There ben of Nimphes proprely
 In the beleve of hem also :
 Oreades they saiden tho
 Attitled ben to the montaignes.
 And for the wades in demeines'
 To kepe' tho ben Driades ;
 Of fresshe welles Naiades ;
 And of the nimphes of the see
 I finde a tale in proprete,
 How Dorus whilom king of Grece,
 Whiche had of infortune a pece,
 His wife forth with his doughter alle
 So as the happes shulden falle
 With many a gentilwoman there
 Dreint in the salte see they were.
 Wherof the Grekes that time saiden
 And such a name upon hem paiden,

¹ Apprise, teaching.

Nereides that they ben hote,
 The nimphés whiche that they note
 To regne upon the stremés salte.
 Lo now, if this belevé halte.
 But of the nimphés as they telle,
 In every place where they dwelle
 They ben all redy obeisaunt
 As damisellés attendaimt
 To the goddesses, whose servfse
 They mote obey in alle wise,
 Wherof the Grekes to hem beseke
 With tho that ben goddesses eke,
 And have in hem a great credence.
 And yet without experience
 Saufe onely of illusion,
 Which was to hem dampnacidn.

" For men also that weré dede
 They hadden goddés as I rede,
 And tho by name Manes highten,
 To whom ful great honour they
 dighten,

So as the Grekes lawé saith,
 Which was ayein the rights' feith.

" Thus have I tolde a great partie,
 But all the hote progenie
 Of goddés in that ilké time
 To longe it were for to rime.
 But yet of that which thou hast herde
 Of misbeleve, howe it hath ferde,
 There is a great diversite."—

" My fader, right so thenketh me.
 But yet o thinge I you beseche,
 Which stant in alle mennés speche,
 The God and the Goddessse of Love,
 Of whom ye nothing here above
 Have told, ne spoken of her fare,
 That ye me woldé now declare,
 How they first comé to that name."—

" My sone, I have it left for shame,
 Because I am her owné prest.
 But for they stonde nigh thy brest
 Upon the shrifte of thy matere,
 Thou shalt of hem the sothe here,
 And understond now well the cas.
 Venus Saturnés doughter was,

Which alte Daunger put away
 Of Love and found to lust a wey,
 So that of her in sondry place
 Diversé men fell into grace,
 And such a lusty life she ladde,
 That she diverse children hadde,
 Now one by this, now one by that.
 Of her it was that Mars begat
 A child which cleped was Armene,
 Of her cam also Andragene,
 To whom Mercurie father was.
 Anchises begat Eneas
 Of her also, and Ericon
 Biten begatte, and therupon
 Whan that she sigh ther was none
 other

By Jupiter her owne brother
 She lay, and he begat Cupide.
 And thilké sone upon a tide,
 Whan he was come unto his age,
 He had a wonder fair visdge
 And founde his mother amorous,
 And he was also lecherous.
 So whan they weren bothe alone,
 As he whiche eyen haddé none
 To se reson, his mother kist,
 And she also that nothing wist
 But that whiche to his lust be-
 longeth,

To bene her love him underfongeth.
 Thus was he blinde and she unwis.
 But nethéles this cause it is
 Which Cupide is the god of love,
 For he his mother derste love,
 And she, which through her lustes
 fonde

Diverse lovés toke on honde
 Wei mo than I the tellé here.
 And for she wolde her selve skere,¹
 She made comun that disporte
 And set a lawe of such a porte
 That every woman mighte take
 What man her list and nought
 forsake

¹ *Skere*, clear, free.

To ben as comun as she wolde.
 She was the first also which tolde
 That women shulde her body selle.
 Semiramis so as men telle
 Of Venus kepte thilke apprise.
 And so did in the samé wise
 Of Romé faire Neabddie,
 Which lift her body to Regolie.
 She was to every man felawe
 And held the lust of thilké lawe
 Which Venus of her self beganne,
 Wherof that she the name wanne
 Why men her clepen the Goddesse
 Of Love and eke of gentillesse,
 Of worldes lust and of plesaunce.

"Se now the foule miscreaunce
 Of Grekes in thilké time tho,
 Whan Venus toke her name so.
 Therasas no cause under the mone
 Of which they hadden tho to done
 Of wel or wo where so it was,
 That they ne token in that cas
 A god to helpe or a goddesse,
 Wherof to také my witsesse,

"The king of BragmanDindimus
 Wrote unto Alisaundre thus
 In blaminge of the Grekés feith
 And of the misbeleve he saith
 How they for every membre hadden
 A sondry god, to whom they
 spradden

Her armes and of help besoughten.

"Minerve for the hede they
 soughten,
 For she was wise, and of a man
 The wit and reson which he can
 Is in the cellés of the brain,
 Wherof they made her sovereign.

"Mercurie, which was in his
 dawes

A great speker of false lawes,
 On him the keping of the tunge
 They laiden, whan they speke or
 sunge.

"For Bachus was a gloten eke

Him for the throte they beseke,
 That he it worldé wasshen ofte
 With suote drinkés and with softe.

The god of shulders and of armes
 Was Hercules, for he in armes
 The mightieste was to fight,
 To him tho limmes they behight.
 The god whom that they clepen Mart
 The brest to kepe hath for his part,
 For with the herte in his ymage
 That he addresse to his corage.
 And of the galle the goddesse,
 For she was ful of hastinesse,
 Of wrath and light to greve also,
 They made and said, it was Juno.

"Cupide, which the brondof fire
 Bare in his hond, he was the sire
 Of the stomach, which boileth ever,
 Wherof the lustes ben the lever.

"Thus was dispers in sondry
 wise

The misbeleve as I devise
 With many an ymage of entaile¹
 Of suche as might hem nought
 availle.

For they withoute lives chere
 Unmighty ben to se or here
 Or speke or do or elles fele,
 And yet the fooles to hem knele
 Whiche is her owne handes werke.
 Ha lord, how this beleve is derke
 And fer fro resondble wit,
 And netheles they don it yit.
 That was o day a ragged tre
 To morwe upon his mageste
 Stant in the temple wel besein ;
 How might a mannds reson sain,
 That such a stock may helpe or
 greve ?

But they that ben of such beleve
 And unto suche goddés calle,
 It shall to hem right so befallé
 And failen atté moste nede.
 But if thee list to taken hede

¹ Graven image.

And of the first ymágé wite,
 Petronius therof hath write
 And eke Nigargorus also,
 And they afferme and write so,
 That Promethéús was to-fore
 And founde the first craft therfore,
 And Cirophdnes, as they telle,
 Through counseil which was take
 in helle,

In remembraunce of his lignage
 Let setten up the first ymage.
 Of Cirophdnes saith the boke
 That he for sorwe which he toke
 Of that he sigh his sone dede,
 Of comfort knew none other rede
 But let do make in remembraunce
 A faire ymágé of his semblaunce
 And set it in the market place,
 Which openly to-fore his face
 Stood every day to done him ese.
 And they that thanne wolde plesse
 The fader, shulden it obey¹
 Whan that they comen thilke wey.

" And of Minus king of Assire
 I rede, how that in his empire
 He was, next after, the secound
 Of hem that first ymdges found.
 For he right in semblidde cas
 Of Belus, which his fader was
 Fro Nembroth in the righte line,
 Let make of gold and stonés fine
 A precidus ymágé riche
 After his fader evenliche,
 And therupon a law he sette
 That every man of puré dette
 With sacrifice and with truage
 Honoure shulde thilk ymage,
 So that withinne time it felle
 Of Belus cam the name of Belle,
 Of Bel cam Belzebub and so
 The misbeleve wente tho.

" The thrid ymágé next to this
 Was whan the king of Grece, Apis,
 Was dede, they maden a figure

¹ Make obeisance to.

In resembraunce of his stature.
 Of this king Apis saith the boke,
 That Serapis his namé toke,
 Inwhom through longcontinuaunce
 Of misbelevef a great creaunce
 They hadden and the reverence
 Of sacrifice and of encence
 To him they made. And as they
 telle

Among the wonders that befelle,
 Whan Alisaundre fro Candace
 Cam ridend in a wilde place
 Under an hille a cave he fond,
 And Candalus, whiche in that lond
 Was bore and was Candaces sone,
 Him told, how that of comun wone
 The goddés were in thilke cave.
 And he that wolde assay and have
 A knouelching if it be soth,
 Light of his hors and in he goth
 And fond therinne that he sought.
 For through the fendes sleight him
 thought

Amonges other goddés mo
 That Serapis spake to him tho,
 Whom he sigh there in great array.
 And thus the fend fro day to day
 The worship of ydolatrie
 Drough forth upon the fantasie
 Of hem that weren thanne blinde
 And couthen nought the trouthe
 finde.

Thus hast thou herd in what degre
 Of Grece, and Egipte and Caldee
 The misbeleves whilom stood,
 And how so that they be nought
 good

Ne trewe, yet they sprongen oute,
 Wherof the wide worlde aboute
 His parte of misbeleve toke.
 Til so befelle, as saith the boke,
 That God a people for him selve
 Hath chose of the ligndges twelve,
 Wherof the sothé redely,
 As it is write in Genesy,

I thenké telle in suche a wise,
That it shall be to thin apprise.

“**After the flood**, fro which Noe
Was sauf, the worlde in his degré
Was made as who saith new ayein
Of flour, of fruit, of gras, of grein,
Of beest, of brid and of mankinde,
Whiche ever hath be to God unkinde.
For nought withstanding all the fare
Of that this world was made so bare,
And afterward it was restored,
Among the men was nothing mored¹
Towardes God of good living,
But all was torned to liking
After the flessch, so that foryete
Was he which yaf hem life and mete,
Of heven and erthe creatour.
And thus cam forth the great errour,
That they the highe God ne knewe,
But maden other goddés newe,
As thou hast herd me said to-fore.
There was no man that timé bore,
That he ne had after his chois
A god to whom he yaf his vois,
Wherof the misbeleve cam
Into the time of Abraham.
But he found out the righté wey,
Howe only men shulden obey
The highe God, which weldeth all
And ever hath done and ever shall
In heven, in erth and eke in helle,
There is no tunge his might may telle.
This patriarch to his lignage
Forbad that they to none ymage
Ending sholden in no wise,
But her offrende and sacrificie
With all the holé hertés love
Unto the mighty God above
They shulde yive and to no mo.
And thus in thilke timé tho
Began that sect upon this erthe,
Whiche of belevés was the ferthe.
Of rightwisnesse it was conceived,
So must it nedés be received

1 *Mored*, increased.

Of him that alle right is inne,
The highe God, which wolde winne
A people unto his owne feith.
On Abraham the ground he laith
And made him for to multiply
Into so great a progeny,
That they Egipte all over spradde.
But Pharaon with wrong hem ladde
In servitude ayein the pees,
Til God let sende Moises
To make the deliveraunce.
And for his people great vengeaunce
He toke, which is to here a wonder.
The king was slain, the lond put
under,

God bad the Redde See devide,
Which stood upright on every side
And yaf unto his people a wey
That they on foot it passed drey
And gone so forth into desert,
Where for to kepe hem in covert
The daies whan the sonne brent
A large cloude hem over went,
And for to wissen hem by night
A firy piller hem alight.
And whan that they for hunger
pleigne,

The mighty God began to reine
Manna fro heven down to ground,
Wherof that eche of hem hath founde
His foode such right as him list.
And for they shuld upon him trist
Right as who set a tonne abroche
He percedé the harde roche
And spronge out water all at wille,
That man and beste hath dronk his
fille.

And afterward he yaf the lawe
To Moises, that hem withérawe
They shulde nought fro that he bad.
And in this wise they be lad,
Til they toke in possession
The londés of promission,
Where that Caleph and Josue
The marches upon such degré

Departen¹ after the lignage
That eche of hem as heritage
His purparty² hath underfonge.
And thus stood this beleve longe,
Whiche of prophetés was governed.
And they had eke the people lerned
Of great honour that shuld hem
falle,

But atte mosté nede of alle
They faileden, whan Crist was bore.
But how that they her feith have lore
It nedeth nought to tellen all,
The matere is so generall.

"Whan Lucifer was bestin heven
And oughté most have stonde in
even,

Towardes God he toke debate,
And for that he was obstinate
And wolde nought to trouth encline
He fel for ever into rufne.

"And Adam eke in Paradis,
Whan he stood most in all his pris
After the state of innocence,
Ayein the God brake his defence '
And fell out of his place away.
And right by such a maner wey
The Jewes in her bests' plite,
Whan that they sholden most parfite
Have stonde upon the prophecy,
Tho fellen they to most foly
And him which was fro heven come
And of a maid his flesh hath nome
And was among hem bore and fed,
As men that wolden nought be sped
Of Goddés Sone, with o vois
They heng and slough upon the
crois,

Wherof the parfite of her lawe
Fro thenné forth hem was with-
drawe,

So that they stonde of no merit,
But in a truage⁴ as folk subgit

¹ *Departen*, divide. ² *Purparty*, share.

³ *His defence*, his prohibition (that which was defendu).

⁴ *Truage*, homage.

Withouté propreté of place
They liven oute of Goddes grace,
Dispers in allé londés oute.
And thus the feith is come aboute,
That whilome in the Jewes stood,
Whiche is nought parfitliché good.
To speke as it is now befallé
There is a feith aboven alle,
In which the trouthe is compre-
hended,

Wherof that we ben all amended.

"The high almighty magesté
Of rightwisnesse and of pité
Thesinné which that Adam wrought,
Whan he sigh time, ayein he bought
And send His Sone fro the heven
To setté mannés soule in even,
Which thannd was so sore fall
Upon the point which was befall
That he ne might him self arise.

"**Gregoiré saith** in his apprise:
It helpeth nought a man be bore,
If Goddés Soné were unbore,
For thanné through the firste sinne,
Which Adam whilom brought us
inne,

There shulden allé men be lost;
But Crist restoreth thilke lost
And bought it with his flesshe and
blood.

And if we thenken how it stood
Of thilké raunson which he paid,
As saint Gregoire it wrote and said,
All was behovely to the man.
For that wherof his wo began
Was after cause of all his welth,
Whan he which is the welle of
helth,

The highé creatour of life,
Upon the nede of such a strife
So wolde he for his creature
Take on him self the forfeiture
And suffre for the mannés sake,
Thus may no reson wel forsake¹

¹ *Forsake*, deny.

That ilké sinne original
 Ne was the cause in speciall
 Of mannés worship atte last
 Which shall withouten ende last.
 For by that cause the godhede
 Assembled was to the manhede
 In the Virgine, where he nome
 Our flesshe and verray man become
 Of bodely fraternity
 Wherof the man in his degre
 Stant moré worth, as I have told,
 Than he stood erst by many fold,
 Through baptisme of the newelawe,
 Of which Crist lord is and feldwe.
 And thus the Highé goddés might,
 Which was in the Virgine alight,
 The mannés soule has reconciled,
 Which hadde longe ben exiled.
 So stant the feith upon beleve
 Withoute which may non acheve.
 But this beleve is so certain
 To biggé mannes soule ayein,
 So full of grace and of vertu,
 That what man clcpe² to Jesti
 In clene life forth with goode dede,
 He may nought faile of Heven mede
 Which taken hath the righté feith.
 For ellés, as the gospel saith,
 Salvacion there may be none.
 And for to preche therupon
 Crist bad to his apostles alle,
 The whos power as now is falle
 On us that ben of holy chirche,
 If we the gode dedes werche ;
 For feith onty sufficed' nought
 But if good dede also be wrought.

"Now were it good, that thou
 forthy,

Which through baptisme proprely
 Art unto Cristés feith professed,
 Beware that thou be nought op-
 pressed

With anticristes Lollardie.
 For as the Jewes prophecie

1 Bigge, buy. 2 Whatever man calls. '

Was set of God for avauntage,
 Right so this newe tapinage¹
 Of Lollardie goth aboute
 To setté Cristes feith in doubte.
 The saints that weren us to-fore,
 By whom the feith was first up bore
 That holy chirche stood releved,
 They oughten better be beleved
 Than these whiche that men knowe
 Nought holy, though they feigne
 and blowe

Her Lollardy in inclinés ere.
 But if thou wolt live out of fere
 Such newe lore I rede escheue,
 And hold forth right the wey and sue
 As thin auncéstrés did er this,
 So shalt thou nought beleve amis.
 Crist wroughte first and after taught
 So that the dede his word araught,
 He yaf ensample in his persdne
 And we tho wordes have alone,
 Like to the tree with leves grene
 Upon the which no fruit is sene.

"The prest Thoas, which of
 Minerve

The temple haclde for to serve
 And the Palladion of Troy
 Kept under keie, for monaie
 Of Anthenor whiche he hath nome
 Hath suffred Anthenor to come
 And the Palladion to stele,
 Wherof the worship and the wele
 Of the Troians was overthrowe.
 But Thoas atte same throwe,
 Whan Anthenor this juele toke,
 Winkende cast away his loke
 For a deceipte and for a wile,
 As he that shuld him self beguile
 He hid his eyen fro the sight
 And wende wel that he so might
 Excuse his false conscience.
 I wot nought if thilke evidence
 Now at this time in her estates
 Excuse mighté the prelates,

¹ Tapinge, secret skulking.

Knowend how that the feith dis-
ceseth

And allé moral vertu ceseth
Wherof that they the keies bere.

But yet hem liketh nought to stere
Her gostlich eye for to se

The worlde in his adversite;
They wol no laboure undertake

To kepé that hem is betake.¹
Crist deide him self for the feith,

But now our ferful prelate saith ;
'The life is swete,' and that he

kepeth

So that the feith unholpe slepeth,
And they unto her ese entenden

And in her lust her life despenden,
And every man doth what him list.

Thus stant this world fulfilled of
mist,

That no man seeth the righté wey.
The wardés of the chirché key

Through mishandlingé ben mis-
wreint,²

The worldés wawe³ hath welnigh
dreint

The ship which Peter hath to stere,
The forme is kept, but the matere

Transformed is in other wise.
But if they weren gostly wise

And that the prelats weren good,
As they by olde daies stood,

It werd thanne litel nede
Among the men to taken hede

Of that they heren Pseudo⁴ telle,
Which now is come for to dwelle

To sowe cockel with the corn
So that the tilthe is nigh forlorn,

Which Crist sew first his ownd hond.
Now stant the cockel in the lond,

Where stood whilom the gode
greine,

For the prelats now, as men sain,

Forslouthen¹ that theysholden tille.
And that I trowé be the skille -

Whan there is lacke in hem above,
The people is straungéd to the love

Of trowth in cause of ignoraunce.
For where there is no purveaunce

Of light, men erren in the derke.
But if the prelats wolden werke

Upon the feith which they us teche,
Men sholden nought her waie seche

Withoute light as now is used;
Men se the charge all day refused

Whiche holy chirche hath under-
take.

But who that wolde ensample
take,

Gregoire upon his Omelie
Ayein the Slouthe of Prelacie

Compleigneth him and thus hesaith:
'Whan Peter, fader of the feith,

At domesday shall with him bring
Judeam, which through his sprechfng

He wan, and Andrew with Achay
Shall come his dette for to pay,

And Thomas eke with his beyete
Of Ynde, and Paul the routés grete

Of sondry londes to present,
And we fulfilled of londe and rent

Whiche of this worlde we holden
here,

With voidé hondés shall appere,
Touchend our cure spirituall

Whiche is our charge in special,
I not what thing it may amounte

Upon thilke ende of our accompte
Where Crist him self is auditour,

Which taketh none hede of vein
honour.

Thoffice of the chauncellerie
Or of the kinges tresorie

Ne for ne write ne for ne taile³
To warrant may nought than avail.

¹ Betake, entrusted.

² Miswrent, wrenched out of shape.

³ Wawe, wave. ⁴ Pseudo, false.

¹ Forslouthen, Waste by their slouth.

² Skille, reason.

³ Tail, tally, used for checking of accounts.

The world which now so welwe trow
 Shall make us thanné but a mowe,
 So passé we withoute mede,
 That we none otherwise spedde
 But as we rede that he spedde,
 Thewhic behis lordés besant¹ hadde
 And therupon gat none encres.
 But at his time netheles
 What other man his thank deserve
 The world so lusty is to serve
 That we with him ben all accorded,
 And that is wist and well recorded
 Through out this erthe in allé londes;
 Let knights winné with her hondes,
 For ouré tungé shall be still
 And stande upon the flessches will;
 It were a travail for to preche
 The feith of Crist, as for to teche
 The folke painim; it woll nought be:
 But every prelate holde his see
 With alle such as he may gete
 Of lusty drinke and lusty mete,
 Wherof the body fat and full
 Is unto gostly labour dull
 And slough to handle thilké plough.
 But ellés we ben swifte inough
 Toward the worldés Avarice.
 And that is as a sacrifice,
 Which after that thapostle saith
 Is openly ayein the feith
 Unto the ydols yove and graunted,
 But netheles as it is now haunted
 And vertue chaunged into vice,
 So that Largesse is Avarice,
 In whose chapitre now we trete."—
 "My fader, this matere is bete
 So far, that ever while I live
 I shall the better hedé yive
 Unto my self by many wey.
 But over this now wolde I prey
 To wité, what the braunches are
 Of Avarice, and how they fare
 Als well in love as otherwise."—
 "My sone, and I the shall devise

¹ *Besant*, a gold coin of Byzantium ; talent.

In suche a maner as they stonde,
 So that thou shalt hemunderstonde.

"**Dame Avarice** is nought so-
 leine,¹

Which is of gold the capiteine.
 But of her Courte in sondry wise
 After the scole of her apprise
 She hath of servaunts many one,
 Wherof that Covetise is one,
 Which goth the large worlde about
 To seche thavauntedges out
 Where that he may the profit winne
 To Avarice and bringeth it inne.
 That one halt and that other draweth,
 There is no day which hem be-
 daweth²

No more the sonne than the mone,
 Whan there is any thing to done,
 And namely with Covetise,
 For he stant out of all assise
 Of resondble mannes fare
 Where he purposeth him to fare
 Upon his lucre and his beyete.
 The smallé path, the largt' strete,
 The furlonge and the longé mile,
 All is but one for thilké while.
 And for that he is such one holde,
 Dame Avarice him hath witholde³
 As he which is the principall
 Outward,⁴ for he is over all
 A purveious and an espy.
 For right as of an hungry py
 The starvé bestés ben awaited,
 Right so is Covetise affaited
 To loké where he may purchase,⁵
 For by his will he wolde embrace
 All that this wide world beclippeth,
 But ever he somewhat overhippeth⁶
 That he ne may nought all fulfille
 The hastés of his gredy wille.
 But where it falleth in a londe,

¹ *Soleine*, single.

² *Bedaweth*, awakes.

³ *Witholde*, held with.

⁴ *Outward*, watcher outside.

⁵ *Purchase*, get booty.

⁶ *Overhippeth*, hops over.

That Covetise in mighty honde
Is set, it is full hard to fede.
For than he taketh none other hede
But that he may purchase and gete,
His conscience hath all foryete
And nought what thing it may
amounte

That he shall afterwarde accompte.
But as the luce¹ in his degre
Of tho that lasse ben than he
The fisshes greedily devoureth,
So that no water hem soccoureth,
Right so no lawe may rescowe
Fro him that woll no right allowe.
For where that such one is of might,
His will shall stonde in stede of right.
Thus be the men destrued full ofte,
Till that the grete God alofte
Ayein so great a Covetise
Redresse it in his owne wise.
And in ensample of alle tho
I finde a tald write so,
The which for it is good to lere
Herafterward thou shalt it here.

"**When Rome stood** noble
plite,

Virgile, which was tho partite,
A Mirrour made of his clergie -
And sette it in the townes eye
Of marbre on a pillér without,
That they by thritty mile about
By day and eke also by night
In that Mirrour beholde might
Her ennemies, if any were,
With all her ordenaunce there
Which they ayein the citee cast.
So that while thilke Mirrour last,
Ther was no lond which might
acheve

With werre Rome for to greve,
Wherof was great envie tho.
And fell that ilke timé so,
That Romé hadde werreds stronge
Ayein Cartdge, and stoden longe

¹ Luce, pike.

² By his learning.

The two citees upon debate.
Cartage sigh the strong estate
Of Rome in thilke mirrour stonde,
And thought all prively to fonde
To overthrowe it by some wile.
And Hanibal was thilké while
The prince and leader of Cartdge,
Which haddé set all his cordinge
Upon knighthode in such a wise
That he by worthy and by wise
And by none other was counselled,
Wherof the world is yet merveiled
Of the maistrids that he wrought
Upon the marches which he sought.
And fell in thilké time also,
The kinge of Puile, which was tho,
Thought ayein Rome to rebelle,
And thus was také the quarelle,
How to destruie the Mirrour.
Of Rome tho was emperour
Crassus, which was so covetous,
That he was ever desirous,
Of gold to gete the pilage,
Wherof that Puile and eke Cartage
With philosophres wise and great
Beginne of this matere to treat.
And atté last in this degre
There weren philosophres thre
To do this thing whiche undertoke;
And therupon they with hem toke
A great trespere of gold in cofres
To Rome, and thus these philo-
sophres
To-gider in compaignie went,
But no man wiste what they ment.
Whan they to Rome comé were,
So prively they dwelte there
As they that thoughten to deceive;
Was none that might of hem per-
ceive
Till they in sondry stedes have
Her gold under the erth begrave
In two tresors that to beholde
They sriolden seme as they were
olde.

And so forth than upon a day
 All openly in good array
 To themperour they hem present
 And tolden it was her entent
 To dwellen under his servfse ;
 And he hem axeth in what wise.
 And they him told in such a plite¹
 That eche of hem had a spirite
 The which slepénd anight appereth
 And hem by sondry dremés lereth
 After the world that hath betid,
 Under the grounde if ought be hid
 Of old tresdr at any throwe,
 They shall it in her swevenes²
 knowe.

And upon this conditi6n
 They sain, what gold under the town
 Of Rome is hid, they woll it finde,
 There shulde nought beleft behinde
 Be so that he the halvé dele
 Hem graunt, and he assenteth wele.
 And thus cam Sleighte for to dvvelle
 With Covetise as I the telle.
 This emperour bad redely,
 That they be loged faste by,
 Where he his owne body lay.
 And whan it was at morwe day,
 That one of hem saith that hemette³
 Where he a gold hord shulde fette,
 Wherof this emperour was glad.
 And therupon anone he bad
 His minours for to go and mine,
 And he him self of that covine
 Goth forth withall, and at his honde
 The tresor redy there he fonde
 Where as they said it shuldé be.
 And who was thanné glad but he ?

" Upon that other day secounde
 They have an other gold hord founde.
 Which the seconde maister toke
 Upon his sweven and undertoke.
 And thus the soth experience
 To themperour yaf such credence,

That all his trust and all his feith
 So sikerliche on hem he laith
 Of that he found him so releved,¹
 That they ben parfitly beleved,
 As though they weré goddes thre,
 Now herkeneth the subtilite
 The thridde maister shulde mete,
 Whiche as they saiclen was unmete-
 Above hem all, and couthé most,
 And he withoute noise or bost
 All privelich, so as he wolde,
 Upon the morwe his swevenes tolce
 To themperour right in his ere
 And said him, that he wiste wheic
 A tresor was so plenteous
 Of golde and eke so precious
 Of jeuellés and of rich stones,
 That unto all his hors at ones
 It were a chargé suffisaunt.
 This lord upon this covaunt
 Was glad and axeth where it was :
 The maister said, under the glas.
 He tolde him eke as for the mine
 He wolde ordeigne such engine,
 That they the werk shulde under-
 sette

With timber, and withoute lette
 Men may the tresor saufly delve,
 So that the Mirroure by him selve
 Without empeirément shal stonde.
 All this the maister upon honde
 Hath undertake in alle wey.
 This lord, whiche had his wit away
 And was with Covetise blent,
 Anone therto yaf his assent.
 And thus they miné forth withall,
 The timber set up over all,
 Wherof the pillar stood upright;
 Till it befell upon a night
 These clerkes, whan they weré ware
 How that the timber only bare
 The pillar where the Mirroure
 stood,—

1 Plite, promise. 2 Swevenes, dreams.

3 Mette, dreamed.

¹ Releved, enriched, as by reliefs and fines,
² Unmete, immeasurably

Her sleighte no man understood,—
 They go by night unto the mine
 With pitch, with sulphre and rosine,
 And whan the citee was aslepe,
 A wilde fire into the depe
 They cast among the timber werke,
 And so forth while the night was
 derke

Desguised in a pouer array
 They passeden the towne er day.
 And whan they come upon an hille,
 They sighen how the Mirroure felle,
 Wherof they made joy inough,
 And eche of hem with other lough
 And saiden, ' Lo, what Covetise
 May do with hem that be nought
 wise !'

And that was proved afterwarde,
 For every lond to Rome warde,
 Whiche hadde be subgit to-fore,
 Whan this Mirroure was so forlore
 And they the wonder herde say,
 Anone begunné disobey
 With werrés upon every side.
 And thus hath Romé lost his pride
 And was defouled over all.
 For this I finde of Hanibal,
 That he of Remains in a day
 Whan he hem found out of array,
 So great a multitude slough,
 That of gold ringes which he drough
 Of gentil hondés that ben dede
 Busshellés fulle thre I rede
 He filled, and made a brigge also
 That he might over Tiber go
 Upon the corps that dedé were
 Of the Remains whiche he slough
 there.

" But now to speke of the juise,
 The which after the Covetise
 Was take upon this emperour,
 For he destruiéd the Mirroure,
 It is a wonder for to here.
 The Remains maden a chaire
 And set her emperour therinne

And saiden, for he woldé winne
 Of gold the superfluity ,
 Of golde he shulde such plente
 Receivé till he saidé 'ho.'
 And with gold which they hadde tho
 Boilendé hot within a panne,
 Into his mouth they poure thanne.
 And thus the thirst of gold was
 queint

With gold whiche haddé benatteint.
 "Wherof, my soné, thou might
 here,

Whan Covetise hath lost the stere
 Of resonable governaunce,
 There falleth ofte great grevaunce.
 For there may be no worse thing
 Than Covetise about a king.

If it in his persone be
 It doth the more adversité;
 And if it in his counseil stonde
 It bringeth all day mischéfe to
 honde

Of comun harme; and if it growe
 Within his court, it woll be knowe,
 For thanné shall the king be pilled.¹
 The man, whiche hath his londe
 tilled,

Awaiteth nought more redély
 The hervest, than they gredily
 Nemaken thanné warde and wacche
 Where they the profit mighteu
 cacche.

And yet full oft it falleth so,
 As men may sene among hem tho,
 That he which most coveiteth fast
 Hath leest avauntage até last.
 For whan fortune is there ayein,
 Though he coveite it is in veine,
 The nappés ben nought allé liche,
 One is made pouer, an other riche,
 The court to some it doth profite,
 And some ben ever in o plite.
 And yet they both aliché sore
 Coveité, but fortune is more

1 *Pilled*, fleeced.

Unto that o part favourable;
 And though it be nought resondble,
 This thing a man may sene al day,
 Wherof that I the telte may
 After ensample in remembraunce,
 How every man may take his
 chaunce

Or of richesse or of pouerte,
 How so it stonde of the deserte.
 Here is nought every thing acquit,
 For oft a man may se this yit
 That who best doth lest thank shal
 have;

It helpeth nought, the world to
 crave,

Whiche out of reule and of mesure
 Hath ever stonde in aventure
 Als well in court as ellés where;
 And how in olde dalés there
 It stood so as the thingés felle,
 I thinke a talé for to telle.

“**In a croniqué** this I rede:

About a kinge as it must nede
 There was of knightés and squiers
 Great route and eke of officers.
 Some of long time him had den served
 And thoughten that they have de-
 served

Avauncément and gone withoute;
 And some also ben of the route
 That comen but a while agone,
 And they avauncéd were anone.
 These oldd men upon this thing
 So as they durst ayein the king
 Among hem self compleignen ofte.
 But there is nothing said so softe,
 That it ne cometh out at last.

The king it wist anone als fast
 As he which was of high prudence.
 He shope therfore an evidence
 Of hem that pleignen in that cas,
 To knowe in whose default it was.
 And all within his owne entent,
 That no man wisté what it ment
 Anone he let two cofres make

Of one semblaunce and of o make,
 So lich that no life thilké throwe¹
 That one may fro that other knowe.
 They were into his chambre
 brought,
 But no man wot why they be
 wrought.

And nethéles the king hath bede,
 That they be set in prive stede,
 As he that was of wisdom sligh.
 Whan he therto his timé sigh
 All privelich, that none it wist,
 His owne hondés that o kist
 Of fine golde and of fine perrie,
 The which out of his tresorie
 Was take, anone he filde full,
 That other cofre of strawe and mull²
 With stones meind he filde also.

Thus be they fulle bothé two.
 So that erliche upon a day
 He bad withinne where he lay
 There shulde be to-fore his bedde
 A borde up set and fairé spredde.
 And than he let the cofres fet,
 Upon the borde and did hem set.³
 He knew the names well of tho,
 The whiche ayein him grucché so
 Both of his chambre and of his
 halle,

Anone and sendé for hem alle
 And saide to hem in this wise :
 'There shall no man his hap
 despise;

I wot well ye have longé served,
 And God wot what ye have de-
 served.

But if it is along on me
 Of that ye unavaunced be
 Or ellés it belonge on you,
 The sothé shall be proved now
 To stoppé with your evil worde.
 Lo here two cofres on the borde,

¹ Nobody at that time.

² Mull, dirt, rubbish.

³ And caused them to be set upon the board.

Chese whiche you list of bothe two
 And witeth well, that one of tho
 Is with tresor so full begon
 That if ye happé therupon
 Ye shal be riché men for ever.
 Now chese and take whiche you is
 lever.

But be well ware, er that ye take,
 For of that one I undertake
 There is no maner good therinne
 Whereof ye mighten profit winne.
 Now goth to-gider of one assent
 And taketh your advisement,
 For but I you this day avaunce
 It stant upon your owné chaunce:
 All only in default of grace
 So shall be shewed in this place
 - Upon you allé well and fine,
 That no default shall be mine.'

"They knelen all and with one
 vois

The king they thonken of this chois.
 And after that they up arise
 And gon aside and hem avise
 And atté lasté they accorde,
 Wherof her talé to recorde
 To what issue they be falle
 A knight shall speke for hem alle.
 He kneleth down unto the king
 And saith, that they upon this thing
 Or for to winne or for to lese
 Ben all avised for to chese.

" Tho toke this knight a yerd on
 hond

And goth there as the cofres stond
 And with thassent of everychone
 He lai'th his yerde upon one
 And saith the king how thilké same
 They chese in reguerddn by name,
 And preith him that they might it
 have.

The king, which wold his honour
 save,

When he hath herd the comun vois
 Hath graunted hem her owné chois

And toke hem therupon the key.
 But for he wolde it were say
 What good they have as they sup-
 pose,

He bad anone the cofre uncloze,—
 Which was fulfilled with straw and
 stones,

Thus be they served all at ones.
 This king than in the samé stede
 Anone that other cofre undede,
 Where as they sighen great richesse
 Wei more than they couthen gesse.
 ' Lo,' saith the king, 'now may ye se,
 That there is no defaulte in me,
 Forthy my self I woll acquite
 And bereth ye your owné wite'¹
 Of that fortune hath you refused,
 Thus was this wise king excused,
 And they lefte of her evil speche
 And mercy of her king beseche.

" **Somdele** to this matere like

I finde a tale, how Frederike, -
 Of Rome that time emperour,
 Herde, as he went, a great clamour
 Of two beggers upon the way,
 That one of hem began to say:
 ' Ha lord, wel may the man be riche,
 Whom that a king list for to riche.'
 That other said : ' No thinge so,
 But he is riche and well bego,
 To whom that God wol sende wele.'
 And thus they maden words fele,
 Wherof this lord hath hedé nome
 And did hem bothé for to come
 To the paleis where he shall ete,
 And bad ordeignd for her mete
 Two pastees which he let do make;
 A capon in that one was bake,
 And in that other, for to winne,
 Of floreins all that may withinne
 He let do put a great richesse,
 And even aliche as man may gesse
 Outward they weré bothé two.
 This begger was commaunded tho,

¹ Wite, blame.

He that which held him to the king,
 That he first chese upon this thing.
 Hesigh hem, but he felt hem nought,
 So that upon his owne thought
 He chese the capon and forsoke
 That other, which his felaw toke.
 But whan he wist how that it ferde,
 He said aloud, that men it herde :
 ' Now have I certainly conceived,
 That he may lightly be deceived
 That tristeth unto mannes helpe.
 But wel is him, that God wol helpe,
 For he stant on the siker side,
 Whiche diés shulde go beside.
 I se my felaw wel recouer,
 And I mot dwellé stílte pouer.
 Thus spake the begger his entent,
 Andpouerhecamandpouerhewent,
 Of that he hath richessé sought
 His infortune it wold nought.
 So may it shewe in sondry wise
 Betwene Fortune and Covetise
 The chaunce is cast upon a dee,
 But yet full oft a man may see
 Inough of suche netheles
 Which ever put hem self in pres
 To get hem good, and yet they faile.

"And for to speke of this entaile
 Touchend of Love in thy matere,
 My godé sone, as thou might here,
 That right as it with tho men stood
 Of infortune of worldes good,
 As thou hast herd me tell above,
 Right so full ofte it stant by Love;
 Though thou coveite it evermore
 Thou shalt nought have o dele the
 more,

But only that which the is shape,
 The remenaunt is but a jape.
 And nethéles inough of tho
 There ben that now coveiten so
 That where as they a woman se,
 To ten or twelvé though there be,
 The love is now so unavised
 That where the beaute stant assiscd

The mannes herte anone is there
 And rouneth¹ talcs in her ere
 And saith, how that heloveth streite.
 And thus he set him to coveite,
 An hundred though he sigh a da\,
 So wolde he more than he may.
 So for the grete Covetise
 Of soty² and of fool emprise
 In eche of hem he fint somewhat,
 That pleseth him, or this or that:
 Some one, for she is white of skinne,
 Some one, for she is noble of kinne,
 Some one, for she hath a rody cheke,
 Some one, for that she semeth meke,
 Some one, for she hath eyen grey,
 Some one, for she can laugh and pley,
 Some one, for she is longeand small,
 Some one, for she is lithe and tall,
 Some one, forshe is pale and bleche,
 Some one, for she is softe of spechc,
 Some one, for that she is camused,-'
 Some one, for she hath nought ben
 used,

Some one, for she can daunce and
 sing,

So that some thing of his liking
 He fint ; and though no more he
 fele

But that she hath a litel hele,
 It is inough, that he therfore
 Her love; and thus an hundred score,
 While they be new, he wolde he had,
 Whomheforsaketh she shall be bad.
 The blinde man no colour demeth,
 But all is one right as him semeth ;
 So hath his lust no jugement
 Whom Covetise of Love blent.⁴

Him thinketh, to his Covetise,
 How all the world ne may suffice,
 For by his will he wolde have all,
 If that it mighte so befall.
 So is he comun as the strete,

¹ Rouncth, whisper. ² Soty, folly.

³ Camttsed, with a curve in the nose.

⁴ Blent, blinés.

I sette nought of his beyete.
My sone, hast thou such cove-
tise? "—

"Nay fader, such love I despise,
And while I live shal don ever,
For in good feith yet had I lever
Than to coveite in suche a wey
To ben for ever till I deie .
As potier as Job and loveles
Out taken one, for haveles
His thonkés¹ is no man alive,
For that a man shulde all unthrive
There ought no wisé man coveite,
The lawe was nought set so streite.
Forthy my self withall to save
Suche one there is I wolde have
And none of all this other mo."—

My sone, of that thou woldest so,
I am nought wroth; but over this
I woll the tellen howe it is.
For there be men which other wise
Right only for the covetise
Of that they seen a woman riche,
There wol they all her love affiche.
Nought for the beauté of her face,
Ne yet for vertu, ne for grace,
Which she hath elles right inough,
But for the parke and for the plough
And other thing which therto
longeth,

For in none other wise hem longeth
To lové but² they profit finde.
And if the profit be behinde,
Her³ love is ever lesse and lesse,
For after that she hath richesse
Her love is of proportion.
If thou hast such condition,
My sone, tell right as it is."—

"Min holy fader, nay iwis,
Concion such have I none.
For truly fader, I love one
So well, with all min hertés thought,

That certes though she hadde
nought

And were as pouer as Medea",
Which was exited for Creusa",
I wolde her nought the lassé love ;
Ne though she were at her above
As was the riché quene Candace,
Which to deservé love and grace
To Alisaundre that was king
Yaf many a worthy riché thing;
Or diés as Pantasilee,
Which was the quene of Feminee
And great lichessed with her nam
Whan she for love of Hector cam
To Troy in rescousse of the town ;
I am of such condicioun,
That though my lady of her seh c
Were al so riche as suché twelve,
I couthe nought though it were so
No better love her than I do.
For I love in so pleine¹ a wise,
That for to speke of Covetise
As for pouerte or for lichesse
My love is nouthur more ne lesse.
For in good feith I trowe this,
So covetous no man there is
For why and he my lady sigh
That he through loking of his eye
Ne shuld have such a stroke withinne
That for no gold he mighte winnc
He shuldé nought her love asterte
But if he lefté there his herte :
Be so it were such a man
That couthe skille of a women.
For there ben men so rude some
Whan they among the women come
They gon under protection,
That love and his affection
Ne shal nought take hem by the sieve
For they ben out of that beleve ;
Hem lusteth of no lady chere,
But ever thenken there and here
Where that her golde is in the cofre
And wol none other love profer.

¹ Hareles his thioitkes, wanting possession,
with his own good will.

² But, unless.

³ Her their.

1 Pleine, full.

But who so wot what love amounteth
 And by resdn truliche accompteth,
 Than may he knowe and taken hede
 That all the lust of womanhede
 Which may ben in a ladies face
 My lady hath, and eke of grace,
 If men shuld yiven her apprise
 They may wel say how she is wise
 And sober and simple of coun-
 tenaunce,

And all that to good governaunce
 Belongeth of a worthy wight
 She hath plainly. For thilke night
 That she was bore as for the nones
 Naturé set in her at ones
 Beaut with bounté so besein,
 That I may well afferme and sain,
 I sigh yet never creature
 Of comlyhede and of feture
 In any kingés region

Be liche her in comparisdn.
 And therto, as I have you tolde,
 Yet hath she more a thousand folde
 Of bounte, and shortty to telle
 She is the puré hede and welle
 And mirrour and ensample of good;
 Who so her vertues understood
 Me thenketh it ought inough suffise
 Withouten other Covetise
 To lové suche one and to serve,
 Which with her chéré can deserve
 To be belovéd better iwis
 Than she par cas that richest is
 And hath of golde a million.
 Suche hath be min opini6n
 And ever shall. But nethéles¹
 I say she is nought haveles,¹
 That she nis riche and well at ese
 And hath inough wherwith to plesse
 Of worldés good whom that her list.
 But o thing wold I wel ye wist,
 That never for no worldes good
 Min hert unto ward hiré stood,
 But only right for pure love,

¹ *HavcleS*) wanting possessions.

That wot the highd God above.
 Now fader, what say ye therto ?"—

" My sone, I say it is wel do.
 For take of this right good beleve,
 What man that wol him self releve
 To love in any other wise
 He shall wel finde his Covetise
 Shall sore greve him atté laste,
 For such a lové may nought laste.
 But now men sain in ouré daies
 Men maken but a few assaies
 But if the causé be lichesse,
 Forthye the love is well the lesse.
 And who that wold ensamples telle
 By olde daies as they felle,
 Than might a man wel understonde
 Such lové may nought longé stonde.
 Now herken, sone, and thou shalt
 here

A great ensample of this matere.

To frete upon the cas of love,
 So as we tolden here above,
 I finde write a wonder thing.
 Of Puil whilom was a king,
 A man of high complexion
 And yong, but his affection
 After the nature of his age
 Was yet not falle in his corage
 The lust of women for to knowe.
 So it betid upon a throwe,
 This lord fell into great sikenesse.
 Phisique hath done the besinesse
 Of sondry curés many one
 To make him hole, and therupon
 A worthy maister which there was,
 Yaf him counseil upon this cas,
 That if he wolde have parfite hele,
 He shuldé with a woman dele.
 For than he said him redely,
 That he shal be al hole therby,
 And other wise he knew no cure.
 The king, which stood in aventure
 Of life and deth for medicine,
 Assented was, and of covine
 His steward, whom he trusteth well,

He toke and told him every dele,
How that this maister haddé said.
And therupon he hath him praid
And charged upon his legeaunce,
That he do make purveaunce
And badde him, how that ever it
stood,

That he shall spare for no good,
For his will is right well to pay.
The steward said, he wolde assay.

" But now here after thou shalt
wite,

As I finde in the bokes write,
What Covetise in Lové doth.
This steward, for to telle soth,
Amonges all the men alive
A lusty lady hath to wive,
Which nethéles for gold he toke
And nought for love, as saith the
boke.

A riché marchaunt of the londe
Her fader was, and he her fonde
So worthély and such richesse
Of worldes good and such largesse
With her he yaf in mariage,
That only for thilke avauntde
Of good the steward hath her take,
For lucre and nought for lovés sake.
And that was afterward wel sene.
Nowe herken, what it woldé mene.
This steward in his owne hert
Sigh that his lord may nought astert
His maladie but he have
A lusty woman him to save,
And tho he wolde yive inough
Of his tresor; wherof he drough
Great Covetise into his minde
And set his honour fer behinde.
Thus he whom gold hath oversette
Was trapped in his owne nette.
The gold hath made his witts lame,
So that sechénd his ownd shame
He rouneth in the kingés ere
And said him that he wiste where
A gentil and a lusty one

Tho was, and thider wold he gone,
But he mote yivé yeftés great,
For but it be through great beyete
Of gold, he said, he shuld nought
spede.

The king him bad upon the nede
That take an hundred pound he
sholde

And yive it where that he wolde,
Be so it were in worthy place.
And thus to stonde in lovés grace
This king his gold hath abandoned.
And whan this tale was full rouned,
The steward toke the gold and went¹
Within his herte and many a went¹
Of covetise than he caste,

Wherof a purpos atte laste
Ayein love and ayein his right
He toke and saide, how thilke night
His wife shall liggé by the king.
And goth thenkend upon this thing
Toward his inn till he cam home
Into the chambre, and than he nome
His wife and tolde her al the cas.
And she, which red for shame was,
With bothe her hondes hath him
praid

Knelénd and in this wise said,
That she to reson and to skill
In what thing that he bidde will
Is redy for to done his heste
But² this thing that were nought
honéste,

That he for gold her shulde selle.
And he tho with his wordés felle
Forth with his gastly countenaunce
Saith, that she shall done obeisaunce
And folwe his wille in every place.
And thus through strength of his
mandce

Her innocence is overladde,
Wherof she was so sore adradde,
That she his will mot nede obey.
And therupon was shape a wey.

¹ Went, turn.

² But, except.

When it was nigh upon the day
The steward thanné where she lay
Cam to the bed and in this wise
Hath biddé that she shulde arise.
The king saith : ' Nay, she shall
nought go.

The steward said ayein: ' Nought so,
For she mot gone er it be knowe,
And so I swore at thilké throwe,
Whan I her feud to you here.'

The king his tald wol nought here
And saith how that he hath her
bought

Forthy she shall departe nought,
But who she was he knew nothing.
Tho cam the steward to the king
And praid him that withoute shame
In saving of her gode name

He mighte leaden home ayeine
This lady, and hath told him pleine
How that it was his owne wife.

The king his ere unto this strife
Hath leid, and whan that he it herde,
Well nigh out of his wit he ferde
And said : ' Ha, caitif most of alle,
Where was it ever er this befallé,
That any cokard in this wise
Betoke his wife for covetise.

Thou hast bothe her and me beguiled
And eke thin own estate reviled,
Wherof that buxom unto the
Here after shall she never bé
For this avow to God I make

After this day, if I the take,
Thou shalt behonged and to-drawe.
Now loke anone thou be withérawc,
So that I se the never more !'

This steward thanne drad him sore,
With all the haste that he may
And fled away the samé day,
And was exiled out of lond.

Lo, there a nicd husdbond,
Which thus hath loste his wife for
ever.

But netheles she hadde a lever;

The king her weddeth and honour-
eth,

Wherof her name she soccoureth,
Which erst was lost through covetise
Of him that lad her other wise
And hath him self also forlore.

" My soné, be thou ware therfore,
Where thou shalt love in any place,
That thou no Covetise embrace,
The which is nought of Love's kinde.
But for all that a man may finde
Now in this time of thilke' rage

Full great disese in mariâge,
Whan venim medleth with the sucre
And maridge is made for lucre
Or for the lust or for the hele,
What man that shall with other dele
He may nought faile' to repent."—

" My fader, such is min entent.
But nethe'les good is to have,
For good may ofte time save
The love which shulde die's spille.
But God which wot min hertes wille

I dar wel take to witnesse,
Yet was I never for richesse
Beset with maridgd none,
For all min herte is upon one
So frely that in the persone
Stant all my worldes joy alone.

I axe nouthér park né plough,
If I her hadde, it were inough,
Her love shulde me suffice
Withouten other Covetise.

Lo now, my fader, as of this
Touchend of me right as it is
My shrifte I am beknowe plein,
And if ye wol ought cles sain
Of Covetise if there be more
In Love, agropeth out the sore.

My soné, thou shalt under-
stonde,

How Covetise hath yet on honde
In speciall two counseilors,
That ben also his procurors.
The first of hem is Fals Witnesse,

Which ever is redy to witesse
What thing his maister woll him
hote.¹

Perjurie is the second hote,²
Which spareth nought to swere an
othe

Though it be fals and God be
wrothe,

That ond shall fals witesse bere,
That other shall the thing forswere
When he is charged on the boke.
So what with hoke and what with
croke

They make her maister ofte winne
And woll nought knowd what is sinne
For Covetise, and thus men sain
They maken many a fals bargain.
There may no trewd quarel arise
In thilke queste of thilke assise
Where as they two the people en-
forme.

For they kepe ever o³ maner forme,
That upon golde her⁴ conscience
They founde and take her evidence.
And thus with Fals Witesse and
othes

They winne hem meté, drink and
clothes.

Right so there be, who that hem
knewe,

Of these lovers ful many untrevve.
Now may a woman finde inow,
That eche of hem whan he shall
wowe

Anone he woll his hand down lain
Upon a boke and swere and sain
That he woll feith and trouthe bere.
And thus he profreth him to swere
To serven ever till he deie,
And all is verray trechery.
For whan the soth him selventrieth,
The more he swereth the more he
lieth,

¹ Hote, command.
² O, one.

² Hote, called.
⁴ Her, their.

Whan he his feith maketh allther-
mest,¹

Than may a woman trust him lest,
For till he may his will acheve,
He is no lenger for to leve.

Thus is the trouth of love exiled,
And many a goodwomen beguiled.

" And eke to speke of Fals Wit-
nesse

There be now many such I gesso,
That lich unto the provisours
They make her prive procurours
To tell how there is such man,
Which is worthy to love and can
All that a good man shulde conne,
So that with lesing is begonnc
The cause, in which they woll
precede.

And al so siker as the Crede
They make of that they knowen fals,
And thus full oft about the hals²
Love is of false men embraced.
But lové which is so purchased,
Cometh afterward to litel prise.
Forthy, my sone, if thou be wise,
Now thou hast herd this evidence,
Thou might thin owne conscience
Oppose, if thou hast be such one."—

" Nay God wot, fader, I am none
Ne never was, for, as men saith,
Whan that aman shall make his feith
His hert and tunge must accorde.
For if so be that they discorde
Than he is fals, and elles nought,
And I dare say as of my thought
In love it is nought discorddble
Unto my word, but accordeble.
And in this wise, fader, I
May righté well swere and saufly,
That I my lady lové well,
For that accordeth every dele ;
It nedeth nought to my soth sawe
That I witness shulde drawe

¹ Alltherwst, most of all.
² Hals, neck.

Into this day, for ever yit
 Ne might it sinke into my wit
 That I my counseil should say
 To any wight or me bewrey¹
 To sechen helpe in such manere,
 But onely for my lady dere.
 And though a thousand men it wiste
 That I her love, and than hem liste
 With me to swere and to witnésse,
 Yet weré that no fals witnésse.
 For I dare unto this trowth dwelle,
 I love her more than I can telle.
 Thus am I, fader, giletes,
 As ye have herde, and netheles
 In youre dome I put it all."

"My soné, wite in speciall
 It shall nought comunliché fail,
 All though it for a time availe
 That Fals Witnesse his cause spede
 Upon the point of his falshede ;
 It shall well afterward be kid,
 Wherof so as it is betid
 Ensamplé of such thingés blinde
 In a croniqué write I finde.

The goddesse of the see Thetis,
 She had a sone, and his name is
 Achilles, whom to kepe and warde,
 While he was yonge, and into warde
 She thought him saufly to betake
 As she which draddé for his sake
 Of that was said of prophecie,
 That he at Troié sholdd deie
 Whan that the citee was belein.
 Forthy so as the bokés sain,
 She cast her wit in sondry wise,
 How she him mighté so disguise
 That no man shuld his body knowe.
 And so befell that ilké throwe
 While that she thought upon this
 dede,

There was a king, which Lichomede
 Was hote, and he was well begone
 With fairé daughters many one
 And dwelté fer out in an ile.

1 *Me bewrey*, disclose myself.

Now shalt thou here a wonder wile.
 This quené which the mother was
 Of Achilles, upon this cas
 Her sone as he a maiden were
 Let clothen in the samé gere,
 Which longeth unto womanhede,
 And he was yonge and toke none
 hede

But suffreth all that she him dedc,
 Wherof she hath her women bede
 And chargeth by her othés alle,
 How so it afterward befalle,
 That they discovernought this thing,
 But feigne and make a knouleching
 Upon the counseil which was nome,
 In every placé where they come
 To telle and to witnssé this,
 Howe he her ladies doughter is.
 And right in such a maner wise
 She bad they shuld her don servise,
 So that Achilles underfongeth
 As to a yong lady belongeth
 Honour, service and reverence.
 For Thetis with great diligence
 Him hath so taught and so affaited
 That, how so that he were awaited,
 With sobre and goodly contaunce
 He shuld his womanhede avaunce
 That none the sothé knowe might,
 But that in every mannés sight
 He shulde seme a pure maide.
 And in such wise as she him said
 Achilles, which that ilké while
 Was yonge, upon him selfe to smile
 Began, whan he was so besein.
 And thus after the bokes sain
 With frette of perle upon his hede
 All fresshé betwene white and red,
 As he which tho was tender of age,
 Stood the colovtr in his visdge,
 That for to loke upon his cheke
 And seen his childly maner eke
 He was a woman to beholde.
 And than his moder to him tolde,
 That she him hadde so begone

By cause that she thoughte gone
 To Lichomede at thilké tide,
 Where that she said, he shulde abide
 Amonge his daughters for to dwelle.
 Achilles herd his moder telle
 And wiste nought the causé why.
 And netheles full buxomty
 He was red to that she bad,
 Wherof his moder was right glad.
 To Lichomede and forth they went,
 Andwhan the kingkneweherentent
 And sigh this yongé daughter there,
 And that it came unto his ere
 Of such recdrd, of such witesse,
 He haddé right a great gladnése
 Of that he bothe sigh and herde,
 As he that wot nought how it ferde
 Upon the conseil of the nede.
 But for all that king Lichomede
 Hath toward him his daughter take
 And for Thetis his moder sake
 He put her into compaigny
 To dwelle with Deidamy,
 His own daughter the eldest,
 The fairest and the comliest
 Of al his daughters which he had.
 Lo, thus Thetis the cause lad
 And lefté there Achilles feigned,
 As he which hath him selfrestreigned
 In all that ever he may and can
 Out of the maner of a man
 And toke his womanisshé chere,
 Wherof unto his beddfere
 Deidam he hath by night,
 Where kinde will him selvé right
 After the philosophres sain,
 There may no wight be there ayein.
 And it befell that ilké throwe
 At Troie, where the siegd lay
 Upon the cause of Menelay
 And of his quene dame Heleine,
 The Gregois hadden mochel peine
 All day to fight and to assaile.
 But for they mighten nought availe
 So noble a citee for to winne

A privé conseil they beginne
 In sondry wise where they treat
 And atte laste among the great
 They fellen unto this accorde,
 That Protheus of his recorde,
 Which was an astronomien
 And eke a great magicien,
 Shulde of his calculatidn
 Sechen of constellatidn
 How they the citee mighten gette;
 And he, which haddé nought foryete
 Of that belongeth to a clerke,
 His study set upon this werke.
 So longe his wit about he caste,
 Till that he founde out atte laste,
 But if they hadden Achilles
 Her werre shall ben enddles.
 And over that he tolde hem pleine
 In what manér he was beseine
 And in what place he shall be founde;
 So that within a litel stounde
 Ulixes forth with Diomede
 Upon this point to Lichomede
 Agamenon to-gider sente.
 But Ulixes, er he forth wente,
 Which was one of the moste wise
 Ordeined hath in such a wise,
 That he the mosté riche array
 Wherof a woman may be gay
 With him he toke manifolde;
 And overmore, as it is tolde,
 An harneis for a lusty knight,
 Which burnéd was as silver bright,
 Of swerde, of plate, and eke of maile.
 As though he shulde do bataile,
 He toke also with him by ship.
 And thus to-gider in felaship
 Forth gone this Diomede and he
 In hope till they mighten se
 The place where Achilles is.
 The wind stood thanne nought amis,
 But every topsailecole² it blewe,
 Till Ulixes the marches knewe,

¹ Stounde, interval of time, hour.

² Topsailecole. Cole, in Godefroy's *Dictionnaire de l'Ancienne Latigite Francaise* is an

Where Lichomede his regne had.
The stiresman so well him lad
That they ben comen sauf to londe,
Where they gone out upon the
stronde

Into the burgh, where that they
founde

The king; and he which hath
facounde,¹

Ulixes, dide the message.

But the counseile of his contge,²

Why that he came, he toldé nought,

But underneth he was bethought

In what maneV he might aspie

Achilles fro Deidamy

And fro these other that there were,

Full many a lusty lady there.

" They plaide hem there a day
or two,

And as it was fortunéd so,

It fell that time in suche a wise

To Bachus that a sacrifice

These yongé ladies shulden make.

And for the straungé mennés sake

That comen fro the siege of

Troy,

They maden well the more joy.

There was reveal, there was daunc-

for

And every life³ which couthe sing

Of lusty women in the route

A fressh caroll hath song aboute.

But for all this yet nethéles

The Grekes unknowe of Achillés

So weren, that in no degre

They couthen wité which was he

Ne by his vois, ne by his pas.

Ulixes than upon the cas

A thing of high prudence hath
wrought.

unexplained word illustrated by this passage :
"Se mistrent en barges, et alerent aux sa-
Jndres, et en prisrent les xvii. et Tune, echapa,
qui estoit a la cole."

¹ *Facoude*, eloquence.

² *Cordge*, thought in his heart.

³ *Life*, body.

For thilk array which he hath
brought

To yive among the women there

He let do fetten¹ all the gere

Forth, with a knightes harneis eke.

In all the contré for to seke

Men sholden nought a fairer se.

And every thing in his degre

Endelong upon a bourde he laide.

To Lichomede and than he preide,

That every lady chesé sholde

What thing of alls' that she wolde

And take it as by way of yift,

For they hem self it shulde shift

He saide after her owne wille.

Achilles thanné stood nought stille,

Whan he the brighté helm behelde,

The swerd, the hauberk and the
shelde,

His herte fell therto anone,

Of all that other wold he none;

The knightés gere he underfongeth

And thilke array which that be-
longeth

Unto the women he forsoke.

And in this wise, as saith the boke,

Theyknowenthannéwhichehewas,

For he goth forth the greté pas

Into the chambre where he lay,

Anone and made no delay,

He armeth him in knightly wise,

That better can no man devise.

And as fortune shulde falle,

He came so forth to-fore hem alle

As he which tho was glad enough.

But Lichomédé nothing lough²

Whan that he sigh how that it ferde.

For than he wisté well and herde

His daughter haddé be forlain.

But that he was so oversein

The wonder overgoth his wit.

For in cronique is writé yit

Thing which shall never be foryete,

1 *Let dofetten*, caused to be fetched.

2 *Lough*, laughed.

How that Achilles hath begete
 Pirrus upon Deidamy,
 Wherof came out the trechery
 Of fals Winesse when he saide
 How that Achilles was a maide.
 But that was nothing send tho,
 For he is to the siegē go
 Forth with Ulixes and Diomedē.

"Lo, thus was proved in the dede
 And fully spoke at thilke while,
 If o woman an other beguile
 Where is there any sikernesse,
 Whan Thetis which was than god-
 desse

Diclamy hath so bejaped,
 I not how it shall bene escaped
 With tho women whose innocence
 Is now al day through such credence
 Deceivdd ofte as it is sene
 With men that such untrouthe mene.
 For they ben sligh in suche a wise,
 That they by sleight and by queintise
 Of fals winesse bringen inne
 That doth hem oftē for to winne
 Where they ben nought worthy
 therto.

Forthy, my sone, do nought so."—

"My fader, as of fals winesse
 The trouth and the matere expresse
 Touchēd of love, howe it hath ferde,
 As ye have tolde I have well herde.
 But for ye saiden other wise,
 How thilke Vice of Covetise
 Hath yet Perjune of his accorde,
 If that you list of some recorde
 To tellen an other tale also
 In Loves cause of time ago,
 What thing it is to be forswore,
 I woldd preie you therfore,
 Wherof I might ensample take."—

"~~My~~ gode sone, and for thy
 sake

Touchend of this I shall fulfill
 Thin axing at thin owne will
 And the matere I shall declare

How the women deceived are
 Whan they so tendre hertēs bere
 Of that they heren men so swere.
 But whan it cometh unto thassay,
 They finde it fals another day,
 As Jason did unto Medee,
 Which stant yet of auctorite
 In token and in memorial],
 Wherof the tale in speciall
 Is in the boke of Troie write,
 Which I shall do the for to wite.

"In Greed whilom was a king,
 Of whom the fame and knoueleching
 Beleveth¹ yet, and Peleüs
 He hightē, but it fell him thus,
 That his Fortune her whele so lad,
 That he no childe his owne had
 To regnen after his decess.
 He had a brother netheles,
 Whose righte name was Eson,
 And he the worthy knight Jason
 Begat, the which in every londe
 All other passed of his honde
 In armes, so that he the best
 Was named and the worthiest.
 He soughte worship over all.
 Now herken, and I tellē shall
 An adventure that he sought,
 Which afterward full dere he bought.

There was an ile, which Colchos
 Was cleped, and therof aros
 Great speche in every londe aboute,
 That such merveile was none oute
 In all the wide world no where
 As tho was in that ile there.

There was a shepe, as it was tolde,
 The which his flees bare all of
 golde,

And so the goddēs had it sette
 That it ne might away be fette
 By power of no worldes wight.
 And yet full many a worthy knight
 It had assaied as they dorste,
 And ever it fell hem to the worste.

¹ Beleveth, remains.

But he that wolde it nought forsake
 But of his knighthode undertake
 To do what thing therto belongeth,
 This worthy Jason, sore alongeth
 To se the straungé regions
 And knowd the conditions
 Of other marches where he went.
 And for that cause his hole entent
 He sette Colchos for to seche
 And therupon he made a speche
 To Peleus his eme¹ the king.
 And he wel paid was of that thing
 And shope anone for his passage
 And such as were of his lignge
 With other knightéswhichehechees
 With him he toke, and Hercules
 Which full was of chivdlerie
 With Jason went in compaignie,
 And that was in the month of May
 Whan colde stormes were away ;
 The wind was good, the ship was
 yare,

They toke her leve and forth they fare
 Towdrd Colchos. But on the way
 What hem befelle is long to say,
 How Lamedon the king of Troy,
 Which oughté well have made hem
 joy

Whan they to rest a while him preide,
 Out of his lond he them congeide.
 And so fell the dissention
 Whiche after was destruction
 Of that citee, as men may here.
 But that is nought to my matere,
 But thus the worthy folk Gregois
 Fro that king which was nought
 curtois

And fro his londe with sail updrawe
 They went hem forth, and many a
 sawe

They made and many a great
 manáce;

Till atte last into that place
 Which as they sought they arrive,

¹ Eme, uncle.

And stricken sail and forth as blive¹
 They sent unto the king and tolden
 Who weren there and what they
 wolden.

Oetés, which was thanné king,
 Whan that he herde this tiding
 Of Jason which was comen there,
 And of these other what they were,
 He thoughte done hem great
 worship.

For they anone come out of ship
 And straught unto the king they
 wente

And by the honde Jason he hente,
 And that was at the paleis gate,
 So fer the king came on his gate
 Toward Jason to done him chere.
 And he, whom lacketh no manere,
 Whan he the king sigh in presence
 Yaf him ayein such reverence
 As to the kinges state belongeth.

And thus the king him under-
 fongeth

And Jason in his arme he caught
 And forth into the hall he straught,
 And there they sit and speke of
 thinges.

And Jason tolde him tho tidinges
 Why he was come, and faire him
 preide

To haste his time, and the king saide:

' Jason, thou art a worthy knight,
 But it lieth in no mannés might
 To done that thou art come fore.
 There hath bene many a knight
 forlore

Of that they wolden it assaie.'

But Jason wolde him nought esmaie
 And saide : ' Of every worldés cure
 Fortuné stant in aventure,
 Paraunter² well, paraunter wo.

But how as ever that it go,
 It shall be with min honde assaied.

¹ As blive, quickly.

² Paraupter, peradventure

The king tho helde him nought
wel paied,

For he the Grekes sore dredde,
In aunter if Jason ne spedde
He mighté therof bere a blame,
For tho was all the worldés fame
In Grece as for to speke of armes.
Forthy he drad him of his harmes
And gan to prechen and to prey.
But Jason woldé nought obey,
But said, he wolde his purpos holde
For ought that any man him tolde.
Theking whan he these wordés herde
And sigh how that this knight
answerde,

Yet for he wolde make him glad,
After Medea one he bad,
Which was his doughter, and she
cam

And Jason, which good hede nam,
Whan he her sigh ayein her goth.
Andshe, which washimnothingloth,
Welcomed him into that londe
And softé toke him by the honde
And down they setten bothe same.¹
She had herd spoken of his name
And of his grete worthinesse,
Forthy she gan her eye impresse
Upon his face and his stature
And thought, how never creature
Was so welfarend as was he.
And Jason right in such degré
Ne mighté nought witholde his loke,
But so good hede on her he toke
That him ne thought under the
heven

Of beauté sigh he never her even
With all that felle to womanhede.
Thus eche of other token hede
Though there no word was of re-
corde,

Her hertés both of one accorde
Ben sette to loven, but as tho
There mighten ben no wordes mo.

1 *Bothe same, both together.*

The king made him great joy and
fest,

To all his men he yaf an hest,
So as they wolde his thank deserve
That they shulde allé Jason serve
While that he woldé theré dwelle.
And thus the day, shortly to telle,
With many merthés they dispent,
Till night was come, and tho they
went;

Echone of other toke his leve,
Whan they no lenger mighten leve.¹
I not² how Jason that night slepe,
But well I wot, that of the shepe
For which he cam into that ile
He thoughte but a litel while;
All was Medea that he thought,
So that in many wise he sought
His wit, wakénd er it was day,
Some time ye, some time nay,
Some timé thus, some time so,
As he was steréd to and fro
Of love and eke of his conquest,
As he was holde of his behest.
And thus he rose up by the morwe
And toke him self seint John to
borwe³

And saide, he woldé first beginne
At love, and after for to winne
The flees of gold for which he come,
And thus tohimgood herte henome.

" Medea right the same wise
Till day cam, that she must arise,
Lay and bethought her all the night
How she that noble worthy knight
By any waié mighté Avedde.
And wel she wist, if he ne spedde
Of thing which he had undertake,
She might her self no purpose take.
For if he deiede of his bataile,
She muste than algaite faile

¹ *Leve, remain.*

² *Not, know not.*

³ *Seint John to borive, St. John for surety, a common way of invoking a saint in the Middle Ages. Jason swore, like a good knight, by St. John.*

To geten him, whan he were dede.
 Thus she began to sette rede
 And torne about her wittés all
 To loke how that it mighte fall,
 That she with him had a leisir
 To speke and telle of her desir.
 And so it fell the samé day
 That Jason with that sweté may ¹
 To-gider set and hadden space
 To speke, and he besought her
 grace.

And she his tale goodly herde
 And afterward she him answerde
 And saide: 'Jason, as thou wilt
 Thou might be sauf, thou might
 be spilt,

For witté well, that never man,
 But if he couthe that I can,
 Ne mighte that fortune acheve,
 For which thou comest. But as I
 leve,

If thou wolt holdé coveuant
 To love of all the remenaunt,
 I shall thy life and honour save,
 That thou the flees of gold shalt
 have.'

He said: "Al at your owne wille,
 Madame, I shall truty fulfille
 Your heste, while my life may last.
 Thus longe he praid and atté last
 Shegraunteth, and behight him this,
 That whan night cometh and it
 time is

She wolde him sende certainly
 Such one that shulde him prively
 Alone into her chambre bringe.
 He thonketh her of that tidfng,
 For of that grace is him begonne
 Him thinketh al other thinges
 wonne.

"The day made ende and lost
 his sight
 And comen was the derke night,
 Whiche all the daies eye blent.

¹ May, maid.

"Jas6n toke leve and forth he
 went,
 And whan he cam out of the prees
 He toke to counseil Hercules
 And tolde him how it was betid,
 And praide it shulde well ben hid,
 And that he woldé loke about
 The whilés that he shall be out.
 Thus as he stood and hede name,
 A maiden fro Medea came.
 The fairest and the wisest eke.
 And she with simple chere and
 meke,

Whan she him sigh, wax all ashamed.
 Tho was her talé newe entamed
 For sikernesse of maridge,
 She fette forth a riche ymage,
 Was the figure of Jupitér,
 And Jason swore and saide there,
 That also wis god shuld him helpe,
 That if Medea did him helpe,
 That he his purpose mighte winne,
 They shulde never part atwinne,
 But ever while him lasteth life,
 He woldé holde her for his wife.
 They hadden bothe what they wolde.
 And than at leiser she him tolde
 And gan fro point to point enforme
 Of this bataile and all the forme,
 Whiche as he shuldé finde there,
 Whan he to thild¹ comé were.

She saide, at entré of the pas
 How Mars, which God of Armés was
 Hath set two oxen sterneanéstoute,
 That casten fire and flame aboute
 Both atté mouth and at the nase,
 So that they setten all on blase
 What thing that passeth hem be-
 twene.

And furthermore upon the grene
 There goth, the flees of gold to kepe,
 A serpent which may never slepe.
 Thus who that ever it shulde winne,
 The fire to stoppe he mot beginfie

¹ Thile, the island.

Which that the fierce bestés caste,
And daunt he mot hem atte laste,
So that he mayhem yoke and drive,
And there upon he mot as blive
The serpent with such strength
assaile

That he may sleen him by bataile,
Of which he mot theteeth outdrawe,
As it belongeth to that lawe.

And than he must the oxen yoke
Til they have with a plough to-broke
A furch of lond, in which arow
The teeth of thadder he must sow.
And therof shull arisé knightes
Well armed at alte rightes;
Of hem is nought to taken hede,
For eche of hem in hastihede
Shall otherslee with dethéswounde.
And thus whan they ben laid to
grounde

Than mot he to the goddés pray
And go so forth and take his pray.
But if he faile in any wise
Of that ye here me devise,
There may be set non other wey,
That he ne must alगतés deie.

' Now have I told the peril all
I woll you tellen forth withall,'
Quod Meded to Jason tho,
' That ye shull knowen er ye go
Ayein the venim and the fire
What shall be the recoverire.
But, siré, for it is nigh day,
Ariseth up, so that I may
Deliver you what thing I have
That may your life and honour save.'

Tho toke she forth a riche tie¹
Made all of gold and of perrie,
Out of the which she nam a ring,
The stone was worth all other thing.
She saide, while he wold it were,²
There mighté no peril him dere ;
In water may it nought be dreint,
Where as it cometh the fire is quaint,

1 Tie, casket. 2 Dere, injure.

It daunteth eke the cruel heste,
There may none quad¹ that man
areste,

Where so he be on see or londe,
That hath this ring upon his honde.
And over that she gan to sain,
That if a man will ben unsein,
Within his hond hold close the
stone

And he may invisible gone.
The ring to Jason she betaught²
And so forth after she him taught
What sacrifice he shuldé make.
And gan out of her cofre take
Him thought an heavenly figure,
Which all by charme and by conjure
Was wrought, and eke it was through
writ

With names which he shuldé wite,
As she him taughte tho to rede,
And bad him as he wolde spede
Without rest of any while,
Whan he were loded in that ile,
He shuldé make his sacrifice
And rede his carect³ in the wise
As she him taught, on knees down
bent

Thre stonés⁴ toward orient.
For so shuld he the goddes plesse
And win him selven mochel ese.
And whan he had it timés radde
To open a buist⁵ she him badde,
That she there toke him in present,
And was full of such oignement
That there was fire ne venim none
That shuldé fastné him upon
Whan that he were anoint withall.
Forthy she taught him how he shall
Anoint his armes all aboute,
And for he shulde nothing doubte
She toke him than a maner⁶ glue
The which was of so great vertue

1 Quad, evil.

2 Betaught, entrusted.

3 Carect, written charm.

4 Sithes, times.

5 Buist, box,

6 A maner, a kind of.

That where a man it shuldé cast
 It shuldé binde anon so fast
 That no man might it done away.
 And that she bad by alle way
 He shulde into the mouthés throw
 Of tho twein oxen that fire blow,
 Therof to stoppen the malice
 The glue shall serve of that office.
 And over that, her oignement
 Her ring and her enchauntément
 Ayein the serpent shulde him were,¹
 Till he him slee with swerd or spere.
 And than he may saufly inough
 His oxen yoke into the plough
 And the teeth sowe in such a wise
 Till he the knightes se arise,
 And eche of other down be laide
 In suche a maner as I have saide.

" Lo, thus Medea for Jason
 Ordeineth, and praieth therupon
 That he nothing foryeté sholde,
 And eke she praieth him that he
 wolde,

Whan he hath all his armes done,
 To grounde knele and thonkeanone
 The godds, and so forth by ese
 The flees of golde he shuldé sese.
 And whan he had it sesed so,
 That than he weré sone ago
 Withouten any tarieng.

Whan this was said, into weping
 She fel, as she that was through-
 nome

With love and so fer overcome
 That all her worlde on him she
 sette.

But whan she sigh there was nolette,
 That he mot nedes part her fro,
 She toke him in her armes two
 An hunderd times and gan him kisse
 And said: 'O, all my worlde's blisse,
 My trust, my lust, my life, min hele,
 To ben thin helpe in this quarele
 I pray unto the goddés alle !'

¹ Were, protect.

And with that word she gan clown
 falle

Of swoune, and he her uppe nam,
 And forth with that the maiden cam,
 And they to bed anone her brought,
 And thanné Jason her besought
 And to her saide in this manere :
 ' My worthy lusty lady dere,
 Comforteth you, for by my trouth
 It shall nought fallen in my slouth
 That I ne woll throughout fulfille
 Your hestés at your owne wille.
 And yet I hope to you bringe
 Within a white such tidinge,
 The which shall make us bothe
 game.'

" But for he wolde kepe her name,
 Whan that he wist it was nigh day,
 He saide, ' Adewe my sweté may.'
 And forth with him he nam his gere
 Which as she haddé takehim there,
 And straught unto his chambre went
 And goth to bedde and slepe him
 hent¹

And lay that no man him awoke,
 For Hercules hede of him toke,
 Till it was underne² high and more.
 And than he gan to sighé sore
 And sodeinlich he braide of slepe,
 And they than token of him kepe ;
 His chamberleins ben sone there
 And maden redy all his gere,
 And he arose and to the king
 He went and said how to that thing
 For which he cam he worldé go.
 The king therof was wonder wo
 And for he wolde him fain witheraw,
 He told him many a dredefull sawe.
 But Jason wolde it nought recorde
 And atté lasté they accorde.
 Whan that he wolde nought abide,
 A bote was redy atté tide,

¹ Hent, seized.

² Underne, time of a light refreshment be-
 tween breakfast and dinner, or between dinner
 and supper.

In which this worthy knight of Grece,
Full armed up at every piece
To his bataile which belongeth,
Toke ore in hond and sore him
longeth

Till he the water passed were.

"Whan he cam to that ile there,
He set him on his knees down
straught

And his carecte. as he was taught,
He rad and made his sacrifice
And sith anoint him in that wise
As Medea" him hadde bede;
And than arose up fro that stede,
And with the glue the fire he queint;
And anone after he atteint
The grete serpent and him slough.
But erst he hadde sorwe inough,
For that serpent made him travaile
So hard and sore of his bataile,
That now he stood and now he fell,
For longé time it so befell
That with his swerd and with his
spere

He mighté nought that serpent dere,
He was so sherded¹ all aboute
It held all egg tole² withoute,
He was so rude and hard of skin
There might no thinge go therein.
Venim and fire to-gider he cast,
That he Jason so sore ablact
That if he were his oignément,
His ring and his enchaument,
Which Medea" toke him before,
He hadde with that worm be lore.³
But of vertu which therof cam
Jason the dragon overcam
And he anone the teeth out drough
And set his oxen in his plough,
With which he brake a piece of lond
And sewe hem with his owné hond.
Tho might he great merveilé se,
Of every toth in his degre

Sprong up a knight with spere and
sheld,

Of which anone right in the feld
Echone slough other, and with that
Jason Medea not foryat,

On both his knees he gan down falle
And yaf thank to the goddes alle.

The flees he toke and goth to bote,
The sonne shineth bright and hote,

The flees of gold shone forth with
all,

The water glistred over all.

Medea wept and sighed ofte

And stood upon a toure alofte;

All privély within her selve,

There herd it nouthen ten ne twelve,

She praid and said: 'O, god him
spede,

The knight, which hath my maiden-
hede.'

And ay she loketh toward thile,

But whan she sigh within a while

The flees glistrénd ayein the sonne,

She said: 'Ha lord, now all is
wonne,

My knight the feld hath overcome,

Now wolde god, he were come.

Ha lord, I wold he were alonde.'

But I dare také this on honde,

If that she hadde winges two,

She wold have flowe unto him tho

Straught there he was unto the bote.

The day was clere, the sonne hote,

The Gregois weren in great doubt

The while that her lord was out,

They wisten nought what shuld
betide,

But waited ever upon the tide

To se what endd shuldé falle.

There stoden eke the nobles alle

Forthwith the comunés of the town,

And as they loken up and down,

They weren ware within a throwe

Where cam the bote which they
wel knowe,

1 Sherded, scaled. ² Egge tole, edge tools.
Lore, lost.

And sigh how Jason brought his prey.
 And tho they gonnen allé say
 And criden alle with o Steven :¹
 'Ha, where was ever under the heaven
 So noble a knight, as Jason is ?'
 And \vel nigh alle saiden this,
 That Jason was a faire knight,
 For it was never of mannes might
 The flees of gold so for to winne,
 And thus to tellen they beginne.
 With that the king cam forth anone
 And sighthe flees, how that it shone.
 And whan Jason cam to the londe,
 The kinge him selve toke his honde
 And kist him and great joy him
 made.
 The Gregois weren wonder glade
 And of that thing right merry hem
 thought
 And forth with hem the flees they
 brought,
 And eche on other gan to ligh.²
 But wel was him that might's nigh
 To se there of the propreté,
 And thus they passen the citee
 And gone unto the paleis straught.
 " Medea, which foryat her
 nought,
 Was redy there and said anon :
 ' Welcome, O worthy knight Jason !'
 She wolde have kist him wonder fain,
 But shamé tornéd her ayein,
 It was nought the manere as tho,³
 Forth she dorsté nought do so.
 She toke her leve, and Jason went
 Into his chambre and she him sent
 Her maiden to sene how he ferde.
 The which whan that she sigh and
 herde,
 How that he hadde faren out
 And that it stood well all about,
 She tolde her lady what she wist,
 And she for joy her maiden kist.

³ Steven voice. ³ Ligh, laugh.
³ Tho, then.

The bathes weren than araied
 With herbes tempred and assaied
 And Jason was unarmed sone
 And dide as it befell to done;
 Into his bathe he went anane
 And wisshe him clene as any bone,
 He toke a soppe and out he cam
 And on his best array he nam
 And kempt his hede whan he was
 clad,
 And goth him forth all merry and
 glad
 Right stiaught into the kinges halle.
 The king cam with his knightés alle
 And maden him glad welcoming.
 And he hem tolde tho tiding
 Of this and that, how it befell,
 Whan that he wan the shepds fell,
 Medea whan she was asent¹
 Come sone to that parlément,
 And whan she mighte Jason se,
 Was none so glad of all as she.
 There was no joie for to seche,
 Of him made every man a speche,
 Some man said one, some said other,
 But though he were godde's brother
 And mighte maké fire and thonder,
 There mighté be no moré wonder
 Than was of him in that citee.
 Echone taught other ' This is he
 Whiche hath in his powr withinne
 That all the world ne mighte winne!
 Lo, here the best of allé good !'
 Thus saideu they, that there stood
 And eke that walked up and down
 Both of the court and of the town,
 " The time of souper cam anon,
 They wisshen and therto they gon ;
 Medea was with Jason set,
 Tho was there many a deinte fet
 And set to-fore hem on the bord,
 But none so liking as the word
 Which was there spoke among hem

two,

¹ Asent) sent for.

So as they dorste speke tho.
 But though they hadden litel space,
 Yet they accorden in that place
 How Jason shulde come at night,
 Whan every torche and every light
 Were out, and than of other thinges
 They speke aloud for súpposinges
 Of hem that stoden there aboute,
 For love is evermore in doubte,
 If that it be wisly governed
 Of hem that ben of love lerned.
 Whan al was done, that dissh and
 cup

And cloth and bord and all was up,
 They waken while hem list to wake,
 And after that they leve take
 And gon to bedde for to reste.
 And whan him thoughté for the
 beste,

That every man was fast a slepe,
 Jason, that wolde his timé kepe,
 Goth forth stalkend all prively
 Unto the chambre and redely
 There was a maide, which him kept,
 Medea woke and no thing slept,
 So that they hadden joy inow.
 And tho they setten whan and how
 That she with him away shal stele,¹
 With wordes such and other fele.
 Whan al was treted to an ende,
 Jason toke leve and gan forth wende
 Unto his owné chambre in pees.
 There wist it non but Hercules.

"He slept and ros, whan it was
 time,

And whan it fel towards prime,
 He toke to him such as he triste
 In secre, that none other wiste,
 And told hem of his counseil there.
 And saidé that his wille were,
 That they to ship had alle thing
 So privelich in thevening,
 That no mau might her² dede asprie
 But tho that were of compaignie,

¹ Fele, many.

² Per, their.

For he woll go withouté leve
 And lenger woll he nought beleve,¹
 But he ne wolde at thilke throwe
 The king or quene shulde it knowe.
 They said, all this shall well be do.
 And Jason truste well therto.

" Medea in the mené while,
 Which thought her fader to beguile,
 The tresor which her fader hadde
 With her all prively she ladde
 And with Jason at time set
 Away she stale and found no let
 And straught she goth her into ship
 Of Grece with that felaship.
 And theyanone drough up the saile,
 And all that night this was counseil;
 But erly whan the sonne shone
 Men sigh how that they were gone
 And come unto the kinge and tolde.
 And he the sothe knowe wolde
 And axeth, where his daughter was.
 There was no word, but 'Out alas,
 She was ago.'² The moder wept,
 The fader as a wodeman lept
 And gan the time for to warie³
 And swore his othe he wold nought
 tarie,

That with galiote and with galey
 The same cours the same wey
 Which Jason toke he wolde take,
 If that he might him overtake.
 To this they saiden allé ye.
 Anone as they were atté see
 And all as who saith at one worde,
 They gone withinne shippersborde,
 The sail goth up, and forth they
 straught,

But none exploit therof they caught,
 And so they tornen home ayein,
 For all that labour was in vein.
 Jas6n to Grece with his pray
 Goth through the see the righté
 way.

¹ Beleve, remain. ² Ago, gone.
³ Warie, curse

Whan he there come and men it tolde,

They maden joie yong and olde.

"Eson whan that he wist of this,

How that his sone comen is

And hath achevéd that he sought

And home with him Medea brought,

In all the wide world was none

So glad a man as he was one.

To-gider ben these lovers tho,

Till that they hadden sonés two

Wherof they weren bothé glade,

And olde Eson great joid made

To seen thencrees of his lignage,

For he was of so great an age

That men awaiten every day

Whan that he shulde gone away.

Jason, which sigh his fader olde,

Upon Medea made him bolde

Of art magique which she couth,

And praieth her that his faders youth

She wolde make ayeinward newe.

And she that was toward him trewe

Behight him that she wolde it do,

Whan that she timé sigh therto.

But what she did in that matere

It is a wonder thing to here,

But yet for the novellerie

I thenke telle a great partie.

"Thus it befell upon a night,

Whan there was nought but sterre light,

She was vanfsshed right as her list,

That no wight but her self it wist.

And that was atté midnight tide;

The world was still on every side,

With open hede and foot all bare

Her hair to-sprad she gan to fare,

Upon her clothés gert she was

All spechéls and on the gras

She glode forth as an adder doth.

None other wisé she ne goth,

Till she came to the fresshe flood,

And there a while she withstood,

Tildés she tornéd her aboute

And thries eke she gan down loute,

And in the flood she wete her hair,

And thriés on the water there

She gaspeth with a drecching¹ onde¹

And tho she toke her speche on honde.

First she began to clepe and calle

Upwarde unto the sterres alle,

To winde, to air, to see, to londe

She preide and eke helde up her honde

To Sénatés and gan to crie,

Whiche is goddessse of sorcerie,

She saide, 'Helpeth at this nede,

And as ye maden me to spede

Whan Jason came the flees to seche,

So help me now, I you beseche !'

With that she loketh and was ware,

Down fro the sky there came a chare,

The which dragons aboutd drowe.

And tho she gan her hede down bowe

And up she stighe and faire and well

She drove forth by chare and wheel

Above in thaire among the skies ;

The londe of Crete in tho parties

She sought, and faste gan her hie,

And therupon the hulles high

Of Othrin and Olimpe also

And eke of other hulles mo

She founde and gadreth herbes suote,

She pulleth up some by the rote

And many with a knife she shereth

And all into her char she bereth.

Thus whan she hath the hulles sought,

The floodés there foryate she nought

Eridian and Amphisos,

Peneie and eke Spercheidos,

To hem she went and there she nome

Both of the water and of the fome,

The sonde and eke the smallé stones

¹ *Drecching onde*, troubled breath.

Whiche as she chese out for the
nones,

And of the Reddé See a part
That was behovelich to her art
She toke, and after that about
She soughte sondry sedés out
In feldés and in many greves
And eke a part she toke of leves.
But thing which might her most
availe

She found in Crete and in Thessaile.
In daies and in nightes nine,
With great travaile and with great
peine

She was purveyed of every piece
And torneth homward into Grece.
Before the gates of Eson
Her chare she let away to gone
And toke out first that was therinne,
For tho she thoughté to beginne
Such thing as semeth impossible
And made her selven invisible,
As she that was with thaire enclosed
And might of no man be desclosed.
She toke up turves of the londe
Withoute helpe of mannys honde
And heled¹ with the grené gras,
Of whiche an alter made there was
Unto Echates the goddessse
Of art magique and the maistresse.
And este an other to invent,
As she which did her hole intent,
Tho toke she feldwode² and ver-
veine,

Of herbes ben nought better tweine,
Of which anone withoute let
These alters ben aboute set.
Two sondry pittes faste by
She made, and with that hastily
A wether which was black she
slough,

And out therof the blood she drough
And did into the pittés two,
Warm milk she put also therto

¹ Heled, covered.

² Felwood gentian.

With hony meind,¹ and in such wise
She gan to make her sacrifice
And cried and praidé forth withall
To Pluto the god infernal
And to the quene Proserpine.
And so she sought out all the line
Of hem that longen to that craft,
Behinde was no namé last,
And praid hem all, as she well couth,
To graunt Eson his firsté youth.
This olde Eson brought forth was
tho ; 2

Away she bad all other go
Upon peril that mighte falle,
And with that word they wenten alle
And left hem theré two alone.
And tho she gan to gaspe and gone
And madé signés many one
And said her wordes therupon,
And with spellinge and her charmes
She toke Eson in both her armes
And made him for to slepe fast
And him upon her herbes cast.
The blacke wether tho she toke
And hew the flesshe as doth a coke,
On either alter part she laide,
And with the charmés that shesaide
A fire down fro the sky alight
And made it for to brenné light.
And whan Medea sigh it brenne,
Anone she gan to sterte and renne
The firy alters all about.
There was no beste which goth out
More wildd than she semeth there.
Aboute her shulders heng her hair
As though she were oute of her minde
And torned to another kinde.
Tho lay there certain wode cleft
Of which the pieces now and eft
She made hem in the pittés wete
And put hem in the firy hete
And toke the bronde with all the
blase

And thriés she began to rase

¹ Meind, mixed.

² Tho, then.

About Es6n there as he slept.
 And eft with water which she kept
 She made a cercle about him thries
 And eft with fire of sulphre twies,
 Full many another thing she dede,
 Whiche is nought writen in the
 stede.

But tho she ran so up and doune
 She madd many a wonder sounne,
 Somtimé lich unto the cock,
 Somtime unto the laverock,
 Somtimé caceth as an hen,
 Somtimé speketh as don men.

And right so as her jargon straungeth
 In sondry wise her forme chaungeth,
 She semeth faire and no womán,
 For with the craftes that she can
 She was as who saith a goddésse,
 And what her liste more or lesse
 She did, in bokés as we finde,
 That passeth over mannes kinde.
 But who that woll of wonders here,
 What thing she wrought in this
 matere

To make an ende of that she gan,
 Such merveú herdé never man.

"Apointed in the newd mone,
 When it was timd for to done,
 She set a caldron on the fire,
 In which was al the hole attire
 Whereon the medicind stood,
 Of juse, of water, and of blood,
 And let it boile in suche a plite
 Till that she sigh the spums' white.
 And tho she cast in rinde and rote
 And sode and floure that was for
 bote,

With many an herbe and many a.
 stone

Wherof she hath there many one.
 And eke Cimpheius, the serpdnt,
 To her hath all her scalds lent,
 Chelidre her yafe her adders skin,
 And she to boilen cast hem in,
 And parte eke of the hornéd oule,

The which men here on nightes
 houles,

And of a raven which was tojde
 Of nine hundred winter olde
 She toke the. hede with all the bille.
 And as the medicine it wille
 She toke her after the bowele
 Of the seewolf and for the hele
 Of Eson, with a thousand mo
 Of thingés that she haddé tho.
 In that qaldron to-gider as blive
 She put and toke than of olive
 A drie braunche hem with to stere,¹
 The which anon gan floure and bere
 And waxe all fresshe and grierie
 ayqin.

Whan she this vertue haddé sene,
 She let the leesté droppe of alle
 Upon the bare floure² down falle :
 Anon there sprpng up floure and gras
 Where as the droppé fallen was,
 And waxe anone all medow grene
 So that it mighté well be sene.
 Medea thanne knewe and wist
 Her medicine is for to trist³
 And goth to Eson there he lay
 And toke a swerd was of assay,
 With which a wounde upon his side
 She madd, that there out may slide
 The blood withinné which was olde
 And sike and trouble and feble and
 colde.

And tho she toke unto his use
 Of herbes all the besté juse
 And po.uréd it into his wounde,
 That made his Vernés full and sounde.
 And tho she made his wqundes close,
 And toke his honde, and up he rose,
 And tho she yaf him drinke a
 draught

Of which his youth ayein he caught,
 His hede, hte herte and his visage
 Lich unto twenty winter age,

¹ Stere., stir. - Bare' floure, bare ground,
³ To trist, to be trusted,

His hore haïres were away,
And lich unto the fresshe May
Whan passed benthcolde shoures,
Right so recovered! he his, floures,

"Lo, what might any man devise
A woman shewe in any wise
More hertely love in any stede
Than Medeá to Jason dede.
Firstshemadehimthefleestowinne,
And after that fro kith and kinne
With great tresor with him she stale,
And to his fader forth with all
His elde hath torned into youthe,
Which thing none other woman
couthe.

But how it was to her aquit,
The rdmembraúncé dwelleth yit.

King Peletis his eme was dede,
Jason Dare croune upon his hede,
Medea hath fulfilled his will,
But whan he shuld of right fulfill
The trothé which to her afore
He had in thile of Colchos swore,
Tho was Medea most deceived.
For he an other hath received
Which doughter was to king Creon,
Creusá she hight, and thus Jason,
As he that was to love untrewé,
Medea left and toke a newe;
But that was after sone about.¹
Medea with her art hath wrought
Of cloth of golde a mantel riche,
Which semeth worth akingesriche,²
And that was unto Creusa sent
In name of yeft and of present,
For susterhode hem was betwene.
And whan that yongé fresshe quene
That mantel lappéd her aboute,
Anon therof the fire sprang oute
And brent her bothé flessheandbon.
Tho cam Medea to Jason
With both his sones on her honde
And said, 'O thou of every londe
The most untrewé creature,

¹ About, paid for ² Richc, kingdom.

Lo, this shall be thy forfeiture.'
With that she both his sanés slough
Before his eye, and he out drough
His swerd and. wold have slain her
tho,—

But farewell, she was ago
Unto Pallas the court above,
Where as she pleigneth upon love,
As she that was with that goddesse,
And he was lefte in great distresse.

"Thus might thou se, what sorwe
it doth

To swere an oth, which is nought
soth,

In Loves cause namely.
My sond, be well ware forthy
And kepe that thou be nought for-
swore.

For this, whiche I have told to-fore,
Ovide telleth every dele."—

"My fader, I may leve it wele,
For I have herde it ofte say,
How Jason toke the flees away
Fro Colchos, but yet herde I nought,
By whom it was first thider brought.
And for it were good to here,
If that you list at my praïere
To telle I woldd you beseche."—

"My sone, who thatwoll itseche,
In bokes he may finde it write.
And netheles, if thou wolt wite
In the maner as thou hast preide,
I shall the tell, how it is saide.

The fame of thilké shepes felle
Whiche in Colchos, as it befelle,
Was all of gold, shal never deie,
Wherof I thenke for to say,
Howe it cam first into that ile.
There was a king in thilké while
Towardés Grece, and Athemas
The cronique of his name was.
And had a wif, which Philen hight.
By whom, so as Fortune it dight,
He had of children yonge two.

Frixitis the firste was of tho,

A knave¹ child right faire with all.
 A doughter eke the which men call
 Hellen, he hadde by his wife.
 But for there may no mannés life
 Endure upon this erthé here,
 This worthy quene, as thou might
 here,

Er that the children were of age,
 Toke of her ende the passage
 With great worship and was be-
 grave.²

What thing it liketh God to have
 It is great reson to ben his.
 Forthy this king, so as it is,
 With great suffrance it under-
 fongeth.

And afterward, as him belongeth,
 Whan it was time for to wedde,
 A newe wife he toke to bedde,
 Whiche Yno hight and was a maide
 And eke the doughter as men saide
 Of Cadme", whiche a king also
 Was holde in thilke daies tho.

Whan Yno was the kinges make
 She cast how that she mighte make
 These children to her fader loth
 And shope a wile ayein hem both,
 Which to the king was all unknowve.
 A yere or two she let do sowe
 The lond with sode whete aboute,
 Wherof no corn may springen oute.
 And thus by sleight and by covine
 Aros the derth and the famine
 Throughout the londe in such a wise,
 So that the king a sacrifice
 Upon the point of this distresse
 To Ceres, which is the goddessse
 Of corne, hath shape him for to yive,
 To loke, if it may be foryive
 The mischefe which was in his londe.
 But she, which knewe to-fore the
 honde³

The circumstance of all this thing,

¹ *Knave, boy.* ² *Begrave, buried.*
To-fore the honde, beforehand.

Ayein the coming of the king
 Into the temple hath shape so
 Of her accord, that alle tho
 Which of the temple prestes were,
 Have said and full declared there
 Unto the king, but if so be
 That he deliver the centre
 Of Frixus and of Hellen bothe,
 With whom the goddés ben so
 wrothe

That while tho children ben with-
 inne

Such tilths shall no man beginne
 Wherof to get him any corne ;
 Thus was it said, thus was it sworne
 Of all the prestes that there are.
 And she which causeth all this fare,
 Said eke thertowhat that shewolde.
 And every man than after tolde
 So as the quene had hem preide.

" The king, which hath his ere
 leide

And leveth¹ all that ever he herde,
 Unto her tales thus answerde
 And saith, that lever him is to chese
 His children bothé for to lese
 Than him and all the remenaunt
 Of hem which are appertenaunt
 Unto the lond whiche he shall kepe.
 And bade his wifé to take kepe
 In what manere is best to done,
 That they delivered were sone
 Out of this worlde. And she anone
 Two men ordeineth for to gone,
 But first she made hem for to swere
 That they the children shuldé bere
 Unto the see, that none it knowe,
 And hem therinné bothé throwe.
 The children to the see ben lad,
 Where in the wise as Yno bad
 These men be redy for to do.
 But the goddessé which Juno
 Is hote appereth in the stede
 And hath unto the men forbede

¹ *Leveth, believes.*

That they the children nought ne
slee,

But bad hem loke into the see
And taken hede of that they sighen.
There swam a shepe to-fore her eyen,
Whose flees of burned gold was all.
And this goddess forth with all
Commaundeth that withoute let
They shulde anon the children set
Above upon the shepés back.
And all was do, right as she spak,
Wherof the men gone home ayein.

"And fell so, as the boko's sain,
Hellen the yonge maiden tho,
Whiche of the see was wo bego,
For pure drede her hert hath lore,
That fro the shepe which hath her
bore,

As she that was swounende feint,
She fell and hath her self adreint.
With Frixus and this shepe forth
swam,

Till he to thile of Colchos cam,
Where Juno the goddesse he fonde,
Which toke the shepe unto the londe
And set it there in such a wise,
As thou to-fore hast herd devise,
Wherof cam after all the wo,
Why Jason was forsworé so
Unto Medee, as it is spoke."—

"My fader, who that hath to-broke
His trouth, as ye have tolde above,
He is nought worthy for to love
Ne be belovéd, as me semeth.
But every newe lové quemeth
To him that newe fangel is.
And netheles now after this,
If that you list to taken hede
Upon my shrifte to precede
In Lovés cause ayein the Vice
Of Covetise and Avarice,
What there is more I wolde wite."—

"My sone, this I finde write,
There is yet one of thilké brood,
Which only for the worldes good

To make a tresor of money
Put allé conscience away.
Wherof in thy confessidn
The name and the conditi6n
I shall here afterward declare,
Which maketh one riche an other
bare.

Upon the bench sitténd on high
With Avarice Usure I sigh,
Ful clothéd of his owne suite,
Which after gold maketh chase and
suite

With his brocours, thatrenne aboute
Liche unto racches¹ in a route.
Such lucre is none above grounde,
Which is nought of tho racches
founde.

For where they se beyete sterte,
That shall hem in no wise asterolte
But they it drive into the net
Of lucre, whiche Usure hath set.

Usúre with the riché dwelleth,
To all that ever he bieth and selleth
He hath ordeined of his sleight
Mesúré double and double weight.
Outward he selleth by the lasse
And with the more he maketh his
tasse,²

Wherof his hous is full withinne.
He recheth nought be so he winne,
Though that there leseten ortwelve.
His love is all toward him selve
And to none other but he se
That he may winne suché thre.
For where he shall ought yive or lene
He woll ayeinward take a bene
There he hath lent the smallé pese.³
And right so there ben many of these
Lovers, that though they love a lite⁴
That scarsly wolde it weie a mite,
Yet wol they have a pound ayein,
As doth Usure in his bargain.

¹ *Racches*, scenting hounés.

² *Tosse*, heap.

³ Will take a bean where he has lent a pea.

⁴ *Lite*, little.

But certes such Usure unliche
It falleth more unto the riche
Als well of love as of beyete
Than unto hem that ben nought
grete,

And as who saith ben simple and
pouer;

For selden is whan they recouer
But if it be through great deserte,
And nethéles men se pouerte
With pursulte of contenaunce¹
Full ofte make a great chevatince
And take of love his avauntage
Forth with the helpe of his brocdge
That maken seme where it is nought.
And thus full ofte is lové bought
For litel what, and mochel take
With falsé weighted that they make.

"Now sone, of that I saide above
Thou wost what Usure is of Love.
Tell me forthy what so thou wilt,
If thou therof hast any gilt?"—

"My fader nay, for ought I here.
For of tho points ye tolden here
I will you by my trouth assure,
My weight of love and my inesure
Hath be more large and more cer-
teine

Than ever I toke of love ayeine,
For so yet couth I never of sleighte
To take ayein by double weighte
Of love more than I have yive.
For also wis mote I be shrive
And have remissidn of sinne,
And so yet couth I never winne
Ne yet so mochel soth to sain,
That ever I might have half ayein
Of so full love as I have lent.
And if mine hap were so well went,
That for the hole I might have half,
Me thenketh I were a goddes half.
For where Usuré wold have double,
My conscience is nought so trouble,

¹ Pursutte of contenaunce, continued per-
severance.

I biddé never as to my dele
But of the hole an halven dele.
That is none excess as methenketh,
But netheles it me forthenketh.

For well I wot that wol nought be,
For every day the better I se
That how so ever I yive or lene
My love in placé that I mene,
For ought that ever I axe or crave
I can nothing ayeinwarde have.
But yet for that I wol nought lete
What so befall of my beyete,
That I ne shall her yive and lene
My love and all my thought soclene,
That toward me shall nought be-
leve.¹

And if she of her godé leve
Rewarde wol me nought ayein,
I wot the last of my bargein
Shall stonde Upon so great a lost,
That I may never more the cost
Recouer in this world till I deie,
So that touchénd of this partie
I may me well excuse and shall;
And for to speke forth withall,
If any brocour for me went
That point comen ever in min entent,
So that the more me merveiléth
What thing it is my lady eileth,
That all min herte and all my time
She hath, and do no better by me.

"I have herd said, that thought
is free

And nethéles in priveté
To you, my fader, that bene here
Min hole shrifté for to here,
I dare min hené well disclose
Touchend Usurie, as I suppose,
Whiche, as ye telle, in love is used.
My lady may nought ben excused
That for o loking of her eye
Min holé herté till I deie
With all that ever I may and can
She hath me wonné to her man,

¹ Believe, remain.

Wherof me thenketh good reson
wolde

That she somdele rewards' sholde,
And yive a part there she hath all.
I not what falle hereafter shall,
But into now yet dare I sain
Her listé never yive ayein
A goodly word in such a wise
Wherof min hope might arise
My greté love to recompense.
I not how she her conscience
Excuse wol of this Usure
By largé weight and great mesure.
She hath my love and I have nought
Of that which I have dere abought,
And with min herte I have it paide,
But all this is aside laide,
And I go lovélés aboute.
Her oughthe stonde in fuh great
double,

Till she redresse suche a sinne
That she wol al my love winne
And yiveth me nought to livé by.
Nought al somochas 'grauntmercy'
Her list to say, of which I might
Some of my grete peine alight.
But of this point, lo, thus I faie,
As he that paieth for his chaffare
And bieth it dere and yet hath none,
So mote he nedés pouver gone.
Thus bie I dere and have no love,
That I ne may nought come above
To winne of lové none encrease.
But I me willé nethélese
Touchend Usure of love aquite,
And if my lady be to wite¹
I pray to God such grace her sende
That she by time it mot amende."—

" My sone, of that thou hast an-
swerde

Touchend Usure I have al herde,
How thou of love hast wonnd smale.
But that thou tellest in thy tale
And thy lady therof accusest,

Me thenketh tho wordes thou mis-
usest.

For by thin owné knoueleching
Thou saist, how she for one looking
Thy hold hert fro the she toke,
She may be such that her o loke
Is worth thine herte many folde,
So hast thou well thin herté solde
Whan thou hast that is more
worthe.

And eke of that thou tellest forthe,
How that her weight of love uneven
Is unto thine, under the heaven
Stood never in even that balaunce
Which stont in lovés governaunce.
Such is the statute of his lawe,
That though thy lové more" drawe
And peise in the balauncé more,
Thou might nought axe ayein ther-
fore

Of duéte, but all of grace.

For Love is Lorde in every place,
There may no lawe him justify,
By reddour ne by compaigny¹,
That he ne wol, after his wille,
Whom that him liketh spede or
spille.

To love a man may well beginne,
But whether he shall lese or winne
That wot no man, til atté last.
Forthy coverté nought to fast,
My soné, but abide thin ende,
Parcas all may to goodd wende.
But that thou hast me tolde and
saide

Of o thing I am right well paide,
That thou by sleighté ne by guile
Of no brocour hast otherwhile
Engméd love, for suché dede
Is sore" vengéd as I rede.

"Brocours of lové, that deceiven,
No wonder is though they receiven
After the wrong that they deserven.
For whom as ever that they serven

¹ To wite, to blame.

¹ By force or fellowship.

And do plesaunce for a while,
Yet atté last her owne guile
Upon her owne hede descendeth,
Which God of his vengeaunce
sendeth.

As by ensample of time ago
A man may finde it hath be so.

" It fell some time, as it was
sene,

The highe goddesse and the quene
Juno tho had in compaigny
A maiden full of trechery.

For she was ever in accorde
With Jupiter, that was her lorde,
To get him other loves newe
Through such brocage, and was
untrewe

All other wise than him nedeth.
But she, the which no shame dredeth,
With queinte wordes and with slie
Blent in such wise her ladies eye
As she to whom that Juno trist,
So that therof she nothing wist.
But so prive may be nothing,
That it ne cometh to knouleching,
Thing done upon the derke night
Is after knowe on daies light.

So it befell, that atté last
All that this slight maiden cast
Was overcast and overthrowe.
For as the sothé mot be knowe,
To Juno it was done understonde,
In what manere her husebonde
With fals brocage hath take usure
Of lové more than his mesure,
Whan he toke other than his wife ;
Wherof this maiden was giltife,
Whiche haddé ben of his assent.
And thus was all the gamd shent.
She suffred him, as she mot nede,
But the brocoúr of his misdede,
She which her counseil yaf therto,
On her is the vengeaunce do ;
For Juno with her wordes hote
This maiden, which Ecchowashote,

Reproveth and saith in this wise:

" O traiteresse, of which service
Hast thou thin ownd lady served,
Thou hast great peind well deserved
That thou canst maken it so queint.
Thy slighd wordés for to peint
Towardés me that am thy quene,
Wherof thou madest me to wene,
That my husbondd trewd were
Whan that he loveth ellés where
All be it so him nedeth nought.
But upon the it shall be bought
Whiche art prive to tho dofnges,
And me full ofte of thy lesmgés
Deceived hast. Nowe is the day,
That I thy wild quidm may,
And for thou hast to me conceled
That my lorde hath with other deled,
I shall the sette in suche a kinde
That ever unto the worlde's ende
All that thou herest thou shalt telle
And clappe it out as doth a belle.
And with that word she was for-
shape,

There may no vois her mouthe es-
cape:

What man that in the wodes crieth,
Withouten faile Eccho replieth ;
And what word that him lust to sain,
The same word she saith ayein.
Thus she, which whilome haddéleve
To dwelle in chambre, mot beleve¹
In wodés and on hillés both,
For such brocage as wives loth,
Which doth her lordés hertes
chaunge

And love in other places straunge.

" Forth if ever it so befallé
That thou, my sone, amongés alle
Be wedded man, hold that thou hast,
For than all other love is waste ;
O wife shal wel to the suffice,
And than if thou for covetise
Of love wildest axe more,

¹ *Belevi*, remain.

Thou shuldest don ayein the lore
Of alle hem that trewe be."—

" My fader, as in this degré
My conscience is nought accused,
For I no such brocdge have used
Wherof that lust of love is wonne.
Forthy speke forth, as ye begonne,
Of Avarice upon my shrifte."—

" My sone, I shall the braunches
shifte

By order so as they ben set,
On whom no good is wel beset.

Blind Anarice of his lignage
For counseil and for cousinage
To be witholde ayein Largesse
Hath one, whose name is said
Scarsnesse,

The which is keper of his hous
And is so throughout avarous,
That he no good let out of honde;
Though God him self it woldéfonde,
Of yifté shuld he no thing have.
And if a man it wolde crave,
He musté thanne failé nede
Where God him selve may nought
spede.

And thus Scarsnesse in every place
By reson may no thank purchase.
And nethéles in his degré
Above all other most privé
With Avarice stant he this.
For he governeth that there is
In eche estate of his office
After the reule of thilké vice
He taketh, he kepeth, he halt, he
bint,

That lighter is to flé the flint
Than gete of him in hard or neisshe
Only the value of a reisshe
Of good in helping of an other,
Nought though it were his owné
brother.

For in the cas of yift and lone
Stant every man for him alone.

¹*File, flay.*

Him thenketh, of his unkinéship,
That him nedeth no felaship
Be so the bagge and he accorden,
Him reccheth nought what men
recorden

Of him, or be it evil or good,
For all his truste is on his good;
So that alone he falleth ofte,
Whan he best weneth stonde alofte,
Als well in love as other wise.
For love is ever of some reprise
To him that woll his lové holde.
Forthy my sone, as thou art holde
Touchend of this tell me thy shrifte,
Hast thou be scarce or large of yifte
Unto thy lové, whom thou servest.
For after that thou well deservest
Of yifté, thou might be the bet.
For that good holde I well beset
Forwhich thou might the betterfare,
Than is no wisdom for to spare.
For thus men sain in every nede,
He was wise that first madé mede.
For where as medé may nought
spede,

I not what helpeth other dede.
Full ofte he faileth of his game,
That will with idel¹ hond reclame
His hawke, as many a nicé doth.
Forthy my soné, tell me soth
And say the trouth, if thou hast be
Unto thy love or scarce or fre ?"—

" My fader, it hath stondé thus,
That if the tresor of Cresus
And all the golde of Octavien,
Forth with the richesse of Yndien
Of perlés and of riché stones
Were all to-gider min at ones,
I set it at no more accompt
Than wolde a bard straw amount
To give it her all in a day,
Be so that to that sweté may
It mighté like or more or lesse.
And thus because of my scarsnesse

¹ *Idel, empty.*

Ye may well understand and leve
That I shall nought the worse
acheve

The purpos which is in my thought,
But yet I yaf her never nought
Ne therto durst a profre make.
For well I wot she woll nought take,
And yive woll she nought also,
She is escheue of bothé two.

And this I trowe be the skill
Towardes me, for she ne will
That I have any cause of hope,
Nought al so mochel as a drope.
But toward other as I may se
She taketh and yiveth in such degre,
That as by wey of frendelyhede
She can so kepe her womanhede
That everyman speketh of her wele.
But she wol take of me no dele,
And yet she wot wel that I wolde
Yive and do bothé what I sholde
To plesen her in all my might,
By reson this wote every wight.

For that may by no wey asterte,
There she is maister of the herte
She mot be maister of the good.
For god wot wel that all my mood
And allmin herte and all my thought
And all my good while I have ought,
Als frely as God hath it yive,
It shall be hers, the while I live,
Right as her list her self commaunde.
So that it nedeth no demaunde
To axe me if I have be scarce
To lové, for as to tho parse¹—
I will answeren and say no."

"My soné, that is right well do.
For often timés of scarsnesse
It hath ben seen, that for the lesse
Is lost the more, as thou shalt here
A talé, lich to this matere.

Scarsnesse and Love accor-
den never,

For every thing is wel the lever

¹ *Tho parse*, those charms,

Whan that a man hath bought it
dere.

And for to speke in this matere
For sparing of a litel cost
Full ofté time a man hath lost
The large? coté for the hood.
What man that scarce is of his good
And wolnoughtyive, heshall nought
take,

With yift a man may undertake
The highé God to plesé and queme,
With yift a man the world mayderne.
For every creaturé bore
If thou him yive is glad therfore,
And every gladship, as I finde,
Is comfort unto lovés kinde
And causeth ofte a man to spede ;
So was he wise that first yaf mede.
For Medé kepeth Love in hous,
But where the men ben coveitoús
And sparen for to yive a parte,
They knowen nought Cupides arte.
For his fortune and his apprise
Disdeigneth allé covetise
And hateth alle nigardie.

And for to loke of this partie
A sothe ensample, howe it is so,
I findé write of Babio,
Which had a love at his menúge,
There was no fairer of her age
And highte Viola by name,
Which full of youth and full of game
Was of her selfe and large and free.
But such an other chinche¹ as he
Men wisten nought in all the londe,
And had affaited to his honde
His servant, the which Spodius
Was hote. And in this wisé thus
The worldés good of suffisaunce
Was had, but liking and plesatince
Of that belongeth to richesse
Of lové stode in great distresse,
So that this yongé lusty wight
Of thing which fell to lovés right

¹ *Chinche*, miser.

Was evil served over all,
 That she was wo bego withall.
 Til that Cupide and Venus eke
 A mediciné for the seke
 Ordeiné wolden in this cas ;
 So as fortuné thanné was
 Of love upon the destiné
 It fell right as it shulde be.
 A fresshe, a free, a frendly man,
 That nought of Avaricé can,
 Which Croceus by namé hight,
 Toward this swete cast his sight
 And there she was cam in presence;
 She sigh him large of his despense
 And amorous and glad of chere,
 So that her liketh well to here
 The goodly wordés which he saide,
 And therupon of love he praide.
 Of lové was all that he ment,
 To love and for she shulde assent
 He yaf her yiftés ever among.
 But for men sain that 'Mede is
 strong'

It was well sene at thilke tide,
 For as it shulde of right betide
 This Viola largesse hath take
 And the nigard she hath forsake.
 Of Babio she will no more,
 For he was giucchend evermore,
 There was with him none other fare,
 But for to pinche and for to spare,
 Of worldés muck to get encres.
 So goth the wrecche loveles
 Bejaped for his Scarsité:
 And he that largé was and fre
 And set his herté to despense,
 This Croceus his bowé bende
 Which Venus toke him for to holde,
 And shot as ofte as ever he wolde.

"Lo, thus departeth love his lawe,
 That what man woll nought be
 felawe

To yive and spende, as I the telle,
 He is nought worthy for to dwelle
 In Lovés Court to be relieved.

Forth my sone, if I be leved,
 Thou shalt be large of thy de-
 spense."—

"My fader, in my conscience
 If there be any thinge amis,
 I wolde amende it after this
 Toward my love namely."—

"My soné, well and redely
 Thou saist, so that well paid withall
 I am, and further if I shall
 Unto thy shrifté specific
 Of Avarice the progenie,
 What Vice sueth after this,
 Thou shalt have wonder how it is
 Among the folke in any regne,
 That such a Vied mighté regne,
 Whiche is comilne at all assaies,
 As men may finde now a daies.

The Vice like unto the Fende,
 Which never yet was mannes frende,
 And cleped is Unkindeship,
 Of covine and of felaship
 With Avarice he is witholde.
 Him thenketh he shuld nought ben
 holde

Unto the moder which him bare.
 Of him may never man beware,
 He wol nought knowé the merite
 For that he wolde it nought aquite,
 Which in this worlde is mochelused,
 And fewé ben therof excused.

To tell of him is endéles,
 But thus I saie netheles,
 Where as this Vicé cometh to londe
 There taketh no man his thanke
 on honde;

Though he with all his mightés
 serve

He shall of him no thank deserve;
 He taketh what any man will yive
 But while he hath o day to live
 He wol no thing rewarde ayein,
 He grucbeth for to yive o grein
 Where he hath take a berné full.
 That maketh a kindé herté dull,

To set his trust in such freneshp
 There as he fint no kindeshp.
 And for to spaké wordés pleine,
 Thus here I many a man compleigne
 That now on dales thou shalt finae
 At nedd fewé frendés kinde.
 What thou hast done for hem tofore

It is foryeten as it were lore.¹
 The bokés speken of this Vice
 And telle how God of his justice
 By way of kinde, and eke nature
 And every liflich creature,
 The lawe also, who that it can,
 They dampnen an unkindé man.

"It is all one, to say Unkinde,
 Asthingwhichéoneisayein Kinde,²
 For it with Kinde never stood
 A man to yelden evil for good.
 For who that woldé taken hede,
 A beste is glad of a good dede
 And loveth thilké creature
 After the lawe of his nature
 And doth him ese. And for to se
 Of this matere auctorite,
 Full ofté time it hath befallé;
 Wherof a tale amongés alle,
 Which is of olde ensamplarie,
 I thenké for to specific.

To speke of an unkinde man
 I finde, how whilome Adrian
 Of Romé, which a great lorde was,
 Upon a day as he par cas
 To wodé in his hunting went,
 It hapneth at a sodein went,
 After the chase as he pursueth,
 Through happé, which no man
 escheueth,

He felle unware into a pit,
 Where that it mighté nought be let.
 The pit was depe, and he fell lowe,
 That of his men none mighte knowe
 Where he became, for none was nigh

¹ Lore, lost.² Kinde, nature.

Which of his fall the mischefe sigh.
 And thus aloné there he lay
 Clepende and criend all the day
 For socoure and deliverance,
 Till ayein eve it fell per chance,
 A while er it began to night,
 A pouer man which Bardus hight
 Cam forthe walkend with his asse
 And hadde gadered him a tasse¹
 Of grené stickés and of drie
 To selle whom that wolde hem bie,
 As he which had no livelode
 But whan he mighté suche a lode
 To towné with his asse carie.
 And as it fel him for to tarie
 That ilke timé nigh the pit
 And hath the trusse faste knit,
 Heherde avois, which cried dimme,
 And he his eré to the brimme
 Hath leide and herde it was a man,
 Which saide, 'O helpe here Adrian,
 And I will yive half my good !'
 The pouer man this understood
 As he that woldé gladly win,
 And to this lord which was within
 He spake and said, 'If I the save,
 What sikernessé shall I have
 Of covenant, that afterwarde
 Thou wolt me vivé such rewarde,
 As thou behightest now before ?'
 That other hath his othes swore
 By heven and by the goddés alle,
 If that it mighte so befallé
 That he out of the pit him brought,
 Of all the goodes which he ought²
 He shall have even halven dele.

This Bardus said, he wolde wele.
 And with this worde his asse anon
 He let untrussé, and therupon
 Down goth the corde into the pit,
 To whiche he hath at ende knit
 A staff, wherby, he saide, he wolde
 That Adrian him shuldé holde.
 But it was tho per chauncé falle,

¹ Tasse, heap.² Ought, owned.

Into that pit was also falle
 An Ape, which at thilke throwe,
 Whan that the cordé cam down lowe,
 All sodeinly therto he skipte
 And it in both his armés clipte.
 And Bardus with his asse anone
 Him hath up draw, and he is gon.
 But whan he sigh it was an Ape,
 He wend all hadde ben a jape
 Of faierie, and sore him dradde.
 And Adrian eft soné gradde
 Forhelpeand cride andpreide faste.
 And he eftsone his corde caste.
 But whan it came unto the grounde,
 A great serpent it hath bewounde,
 The which Bardus anone updrough.
 And than him thoughté wel inough,
 It was fantasme that he herde
 The vois, and he therto answerde:
 'What wight art thou in goddés
 name ?'

' I am,' quod Adrian, ' the same,
 Whose good thou shalt have even
 halfe.'

Quod Bardus ' Than a goddes halfe
 The thridde time assaie I shall,'
 And cast his cordé forth withall
 Into the pit, and whan it came
 To him, this lord of Rome it name
 And therupon him hath adressed
 And with his hond ful ofté blessed.
 And than he bad to Bardus ' Hale!'¹
 And he, which understood his tale,
 Betwene him and his asse all softe
 Hath drawe and set him up a lofte
 Withouten harm all esely.
 He saith not onés 'graunt mercy,'²
 But straught him forth to the citee
 And let this pouer Bardus be.
 And nethéles this simple man
 His covenaut, so as he can,
 Hath axéd. And that other saide,
 If so be that he him upbraide

¹ *Hah, "Haul up!"*

² *Graunt mercy, thank you.*

Of ought that hath be spoke or do,
 It shall be venged of him so
 That him were better to be dede.
 And he can tho no other rede;
 But on his asse ayein he cast
 His trusse and hieth homward fast.
 And whan that he came home to bed,
 He tolde his wife how that he sped.

" But finally, to speke ought more
 Unto this lorde he drad him sore,
 So that a word ne durst he sain.
 And thus upon the morwe ayein
 In the maner as I recorde,
 Forth with his asse and with his
 corde

To gader wode, as he did er,
 He goth, and whan that he cam ner
 Unto the place where he wolde,
 He gan his Ape anone beholde,
 Which had gadred al aboute
 Of stickés here and there a route
 And leide hem redy to his honde,-
 Wherof he made his trusse and
 bonde.

Fro daie to daie and in this wise
 This Apé profreth his servise,
 So that he had of wode inough.
 Upon a time and as he drough
 Toward the wode, he sigh beside
 The greate gastly serpent glide
 Till that she cam in his presence,
 And in her kinde a reverence
 She hath him do, and forth withall
 A stone more bright than a cristall
 Out of her mouth to-fore his way
 She let down fall and went away,
 For that he shall nought ben adrad.

"Tho was this pouer Bardus glad,
 Thonkéndé God, and to the stone
 He goth and taketh it up anone
 And hath great wonder in his witte
 How that the beste him hathaquitte
 Where that the mannes sone hath
 failed

For whom he hadde most travailed.

But all he put in Goddes honde
And torneth home, and what he
fonde

Unto his wife he hath it shewed
And they, that weren bothe lewed,
Accorden that he shulde it selle,
And he no lenger woldd dwelle¹
But forth anone upon the tale
The stone he profreth to the sale;
And right as he him selfe it sette,
The jueller anone forth fette
The golde and made his payment,
Therof was no delaïement.

Thus whan this stone was bought
and sold,

Homward with joie many fold
This Bardus goth, and whan he cam
Horn to his hous and that he nam
His gold out of his purs withinne,
He fonde his stone also therinne,
Wherof for joy his herte plaide,
Unto his wife and thus he saide,
'Lo, here my golde,—lo, here my
stone!'

His wife hath wonder therupon,
And axeth him how that may be.
'Now by my trouth, I not,' quod he,
'But I dare swere upon a boke
That to my marchant I it toke,
And he it hadde whan I went.
So know I nought to what entent
It is now here, but it be grace.
Forthy to morwe in other place
I will it found³ for to selle,
And if it woll nought with him
dwelle,

But crepe into my purse ayein,
Than dare I saufly swere and sain,
It is the vertue of the stone,'

"The morwe came, and he is gone
To seche about in other stede
His stone to selle, and so he dede
And lefte it with his chapman there.

² Not, know not¹ Dwelle, delay. Foundt, try.

But whan that he came elles where,
In presence of his wife at home,
Out of his purs and that he nome
His golde, he founde his stone withal.
And thus it felle him overal
Where he it solde in sondrie place,
Such was the fortune and the grace.
But so well may nothing be hid,
That it nis atté lasté kid.¹
This famd goth aboute Rome
So ferforth, that the wordes come
To themperour Justiniún,
And he let sendd for the man
And axed him, how that it was.

"And Bardus tolde him all the cas,
How that the worme and eke the
beste,

Al though they madé no beheste,
His travaile hadden wellQUIT.
But he which had a mannes wit
And made his covenant by mouth
And swore therto all that he couth
To parte and yivd half his good
Hath now foryete how that it stood,
As he which wol no trouthe holde.
This emperour al that he tolde
Hath herde and thilke unkindnesse,
He said, he wolde him self redresse.
And thus in court of jugement
This Adrian was than assent,²
And the quardll in audience
Declared was in the presence
Of themperour and many mo ;
Wherof was mochel speche tho
And great wondring among the
press.

But atte laste nethéless,
For the partie which hath pleigned
The law hath demdd and ordeigned
By hem that were avised wele,
That he shal have the halven dele
Throughout of Adrianés good.
And thus of thilke unkindd blood
Stant the memoire unto this day,

¹ Kid, made known. ² Assent, sent for.

Where that every wise man may
 Ensamplen him and take in minde
 What shame it is to ben unkinde,
 Ayein the which reson debateth
 And every creature it hateth.

"Forthy my sone, in thy office
 I redd flee that ilké Vice.
 For right as the cronique saith
 Of Adrian, how he his feith
 Foryat for worldés covetise,
 Ful oft in suche a maner wise
 Of lovers now a man may se
 Ful many that unkindd be,
 For wel behote and evil last
 That is her life,¹ for atte last
 Whan that they have her wille do
 Her love is sone aftér ago.
 What saist thou, sond, to this
 cas ?"—

"My fader, I wil say, Helas,
 That ever such a man was bore
 Which whan he hath his trouthe
 swore
 And hath of love what he wolde,
 That he at any time sholde
 Ever after in his herte finde
 To falsen and to ben unkinde.

"But, fader, as touchend of me,
 I may nought stond in that degre.
 For I toke never of love why
 That I ne may wel go therby
 And do my profile ellés where
 For any spede I finde there,
 I dare wel thenken, all about.
 But I ne dare nought speke it out,
 And if I dorst I wolde pleigne,
 That she for whom I suffre peine
 And love her ever aliché hote,
 That nouthur yivd ne behote
 In rewarding of my service
 It list² her in no maner wise.
 I wol nought say that she is kinde,
 And for to say she is unkinde

¹ Well promised and ill performed, that is
 their life.

² List, pleases.

That dare I nought by God above
 Which demeth every herte of love,
 He wot that on min ownd side
 Shall none unkindeship abide ;
 If it shall with my lady dwelle,
 Therof dare I no mord telle.

Now, godé fader, as it is
 Tell me, what thenketh you of
 this ?"—

My sone, of that unkindeship,
 The which toward thy ladisship
 Thou pleignest, for she woll the
 nought,
 Thou art to blamen of thy thought.
 For it may be that thy desire,
 Though it brenne ever as doth the
 fire,

Par cas to her honour misset,
 Or ellés timé come nought yet
 Which stant upon thy destine.
 Forthy my sone, I rede the
 Think well, what ever the befallé.,
 For no man hath his lustés alle.
 But as thou toldest me before
 That thou to love art nought for-
 swore

And hast done non unkindenesse,
 Thou might therof thy grace blessc
 And levd nought that cdtinudnce,
 For there may be no such grevance
 To love as is Unkindeship.
 Wherof to kepe thy worship,
 So as these olde bokes tale,
 I shall the telle a redy tale.
 Now herken and be ware therby,
 For I will telle it openly.

"Winos, as telleth the podte,
 The which wilom was king of
 Crete,

A sond had and Androchee
 He hight. And so befell that he
 Unto Athenés for to lere
 Was sent, and so he bare him there
 For that he was of high ligndge,
 Such pride he toke in his corgde,

That he foryeten hath the scoles,
And in riot among the fooles
He diddē many thingés wronge
And uséd thilké life so longe,
Til atté last of that he wrought
He found the mischefe which he
sought,

Wherof it fell that he was slain.
His fader, which it herde sain,
Was wroth, and all that ever he might
Of men of armés he him dight
A strong powér and forth he went
Unto Athenés, where he brent
The pleiné contré al aboute.
The cites stood of him in doubte¹
As they that no defend had
Ayein the power which he lad.
Egéus which was there king
His counseil toke upon this thing,
For he was than in the citee,
So that of pees into trettee
Betwene Minés and Egeus
They fell, and bene accorded thus,
That king Minos fro yere to yere
Receive shal as thou shalt here
Out of Athenés for trudge
Of men that were of mighty age
Personés nine, of which he shall
His wilte don in speciall
For vengeaunce of his sonés deth,
None other grace there ne geth
But for to take² the juise,
And that was don in suche a wise.
Upon which stood a wonder cas.
For thilké time so it was,
Wherof that men yet rede and sing,
King Minos had in his keping
A cruel monster, as saith the gest.
For he was half man and half beste,
And Minotaurus he was hote,
Which was begotten in a riote
Upon Pasiphe, his owné wife,
Whil he was out upon the strife
Of thilké greaté siege at Troie.

¹ Doubte, fear.

- Juise, judgment.

But she which lost hath alle joie
Whan that she sigh this monsterbore
Bad men ordeigne anon therfore.
And fell that ilke time thus,
There was a clerke, one Dedalus,
Which hadde ben of her assent¹
Of that her world was so miswent;
And he made of his owné wit,
Wherof the remembraunce is yit,
For Minotaurd suche a hous
That was so stronge and merveilous
That what man that withinne went,
There was so many a sondry went
That he ne shulde nought come out,
But gone amased all about.
And in this hous to locke and warde
Was Minotaurus put in warde,
That what life² that therinne cam,
Or man or beste, he overcam
And slough, and fed him therupon.
And in this wise many one
Out of Athenés for truage
Devoured weren in that rage.
For every yere they shope hem so,
They of Athenés er they go
Toward that ilké wofull chaunce
As it was set in ordenaunce,
Upon Fortune her lot they cast;
Till that Theseus atte laste,
Which was the kingés soné there
Amongés other that there were,
In thilke yere as it befell
The lot upon his chaunce fell.
He was a worthy knight withall,
And whan he sigh his chaunce fall,
He ferde as though he toke none
hede,

But all that ever he might spede
With him and with his felaship
Forth into Crete he goth by ship,
Where that the king Minos he sought
And profreth all that he him ought
Upon the point of her accorde.

¹ *Offer assent, sent for by her*

² *Life, body; what life, whoever.*

This sterne king, this cruel lorde,
 Toke every day one of the nine
 And put into the discipline
 Of Minotaure to be devoured.
 But Theseus was so favoured
 That he was kept till atté last,
 And in the meane while he cast
 What thing him were best to do.
 And fell, that Ariadné tho,
 Which was the doughter of Minés,
 And hadde herd the worthy los¹
 Of Theseus and of his might
 And sigh he was a lusty knight,
 Her hold herte on him she laide.
 And he also of love her praide
 So ferforth that they were alone,
 And she ordeineth than anone
 In what maner she shuld him save.
 And shope so, she did him have
 A clue of threde of which withinne
 First atte dore he shall beginne
 With him to také that one ende,
 That whan he wold aye inward wende
 He mighte go the samé wey.
 And over this so as I say,
 Of pitch she toke him a pelote,²
 The which he shulde into the throte
 Of Minotaure casté right.
 Such wepon also for him she dight,
 That he by reson may nought faile
 To make an ende of his bataile.
 For she him taught in sondry wise
 Till he was knowe of thilke emprise
 How he this besté shuldé quelle.
 And thus short tale for to telle,
 So as this maiden him had taught
 Theseus with this monster faught
 And smote of his hede, the whiche
 he nam,
 And by the thred, so as he cam
 He goth ayein, til he were out.
 So was great wonder all about;
 Minés the tribute hath relesed,

¹ Lot, praise.² Toke him a pelote, gave him a ball.

And so was all the werre cessed
 Betwene Athenes and hem of Crete.

" Butnow to speke of thilké swete
 Whose beauté was withoute wan,
 This faire maiden Adriane,
 Whan that she sigh Theseus sounde
 Was never yet upon this grounde
 A gladder wight than she was tho.
 Theseus dwelt a day or two
 Where that Minés great chere him
 ded.

Theseus in a prive sted
 Hath with this maiden spoke and
 rouned,¹

That she to him was abandouned ;
 For he so faird tho behight²
 That ever while he livé might
 He shuld her také for his wife
 And as his ownd berths life
 He wolde her love and trouthe bere.
 And she, which mighte nought for-
 bere,

So soré loveth him ayein,
 That what as ever he wold sain
 With all her herte she beleveth.
 And thus his purpos he acheveth,
 So that assured of his trouthe
 With him she went, and that was
 routhe.

Fedra her yongé sustér eke,
 A lusty maide, a sobre, a meke,
 Fulfilled of all curtesie,
 For susterhode and compaignie
 Of lové which was hem betwene,
 To sen her suster made a quene
 Her fader lefte and forth she went
 With him which all his first entent
 Forayt within a litel throwe,³
 So that it was all over throwe
 Whan she best wend it shuldé stonde.
 The ship was blowe fro the londe,
 Wherinné that they sailend were.
 This Ariadne had mochel fere

¹ Roured' whispered.² Tho behight, then promised.³ Thrawe, space of time.

Of that the wind so loude blewe,
 As she which of the see ne knewe,
 And praide for to reste a while.
 And so fell that upon an ile
 Which Chio highte they ben drive,
 Where he to her hath levé yive,
 That she shall lond and take her
 rest,

But that was nothing for her best.
 For whan she was to londe brought,
 She, which that timé thoughte
 nought

But alle trouth and toke no kepe,
 Hath laid her softe for to slepe,
 As she which longe hath ben for-
 wacched.

But certés she was evil macched
 And fer from allé loves kinde.
 For more than the beste¹ unkinde
 Theseus, which no trouthe kept,
 While that this yonge lady slept,
 Fulfilled of all unkindeship
 Hath all foryete the godeship,
 Whiche Ariadne him hadde do,
 And bad unto the shipmen tho
 Hale up the saile and nought abide,
 And forth he goth the samé tide
 Towarde Athenes, and her on londe
 He lefte, which lay nigh the stronde
 Slepende til that she awoke.

But whan that she cast up her loke
 Toward the stronde and sigh no
 wight,

Her herte was so sore aflight²
 That she ne wisté what to thinke
 But drough her to the water brinke,
 Where she beheld the see at large.
 She sigh no ship, she sigh no barge
 Als ferforth as she mighté kenne.
 'Ha lord,' she saidd, 'which a senne,
 As all the world shall after here,
 Upon this wofull woman here
 This worthy knight hath done and
 wroughit,

¹ Eeste, beast.

² Aflight, afflicted.

I wend I had his love bought,
 And so deserved atté nede,
 Whan that he stood upon his drede,
 And eke the love he me behight.
 It is great wonder, how he might
 Towardés me now ben unkinde,
 And so to let out of his minde
 Thing which he said his own motith.
 But after this, whan it is couth
 And drawe into the worldes fame,
 It shall ben hindring of his name.
 For well he wote, and so wote I,
 He yafe his trouthe bodily
 That he min honour shuldé kepe.'
 And with that word she gan to wepe
 And sorweth more than inough.
 Her fairé tresses she to-drough
 And with her self toke such a strife,
 That she betwene the deth and life
 Swounende lay full oft amonge.
 And' all was this on him alonge,
 Which was to love unkindd so,
 Wherof the wrong shall evermo
 Stondin cronique of remembraunce.
 And eke it axeth a vengeance
 To ben unkinde in loves cas
 So as Theseús thanne was,
 All though he were a noble knight.
 For he the lawe of loves right
 Forfeited hath in alle way,
 That Ariadne he put away,
 Which was a great unkinde dede,
 And after this, so as I rede,
 Fedra, the which her suster is,
 He toke in stede of her, and this
 Fell afterward to mochel tene.
 For thilke Vice of whiche I mene,
 Unkindeship, where that it falleth
 The trouthe of manneshert it palleth
 That he can no good dede acquite,
 So may he stonde of no merite
 Towardes God and eke also
 Men clepen him the worldés fo,
 For he no more than the Fendc
 Unto none other man is frende,

But all toward him self alone.

"Forthy my sone, in thy persone
This Vice above all other fle."—

My fader, as ye techen me,
I thenke don in this matere.
But over this now wold I here,
Wherof I shall me shrive more."

"My godé sone, as for thy lore,
After the reule of Covetise,
I shall the propreté devise
Of every Vice by and by.
Now herke and be wel ware therby.

"In the *lignage* of Avarice,
My sond, yet there is a Vice,
His right name it is Ravine,
Which hath a route of his covinc.
Ravine among the maisters dwel-
ieth,

And with his servants as mentelleth
Extorcion is now witholde.

Ravine of other mennés folde
Maketh his larder and paieth
nought.

For where as ever it may be sought
In his hous there shall no thing
lacke,

And that ful ofte abieth the packe
Of pouer men that dwelle aboute ;
Thus stant the comune people in
doubte,

Which can do none amendement.
For whan him faileth paiement,
Ravine maketh non other skille,
But taketh by strength al that he
wille.

So ben there in the same wise
LoveVs, as I the shall devise,
That whan nought elles may availe,
Anone with strength they assaile
And get of love the sesine
Whan they se timé, by ravine.

"Forthy my soné, shrive the
here,

If thou hast ben a ravinere
Of love."—"Certes, fader, no,

For I my lady lové so

For though I were as was Pompéy
That all the world me wolde obey,
Or elles such as Alisaundre,
I woldd nought do suche a sclaunder.

It is no good man, which so doth."—

"In gode feith, sone, thou saist
soth.

For he that woll of purveance
By such a wey his lust avance
He shall it after sore abie,
But if¹ these olde ensamples lie."—

"Now, gode fader, tell me one,
So as ye connen many one,
Touchénd of love in this matere."—

"Now list, my sone, and thou
shalt here

So as it hath befall er this
In lovés cause how that it is,
A man to take by ravine
The preie which is feminine.

There nms a roial noble kingc,
A riche of allé worldes thinge,
Which of his propre enheritaunce
Athenés had in governaunce,
And whoso thenke therupon,
His name was king Pandion.
Two daughters had he by his
wife,

The which he loved as his life.
The firste daughter Progne hight,
And the seconde, as she well might,
Was cleped faire Philomene,
To whom fell after mochel tene.:-

The fader of his purveance
His daughter Progne wolde avance,
And yafe her unto maridge
A worthy king of high ligndge,
A noble knight eke of his honde,
So was he kid³ in every londe.
Of Tracé he hight Tereús,
The clerke Ovide telleth thus.

¹ But if, unless.

² Tene, sorrow.

³ Kid, made known, renowned.

This Tereus his wife home lad,
 A lusty life with her he had
 Till it befell upon a tide,
 This Progne, as she lay him beside,
 Bethought her how it might be
 That she her suster mighte se;
 And to her lorde her will she saide
 With goodly wordés and him praide
 That she unto her mighte go,
 And if it likéd him nought so,
 That than he wolde him selve wende,
 Or diés by some other sende
 Which might her deré suster grete
 And shape how that they mighten
 mete.

Her lorde anone to that he herde
 Yaf his accorde and thus answdrde:
 'I woll,' he saide, 'for thy sake,
 The wey after thy suster take
 My self and bring her, if I may,'
 And she with that, there as she lay,
 Began him in her armés clippe
 And kist him with her softld lippe
 And saide: 'Siré, graunt mercy.'
 And he sone after was red
 And toke his leve for to go.

In sory time did he so.
 This Tereus goth forth to shippe
 With him and all his felashippe.
 By sea the righté cours he nam
 Unto the contre till he cam
 Where Philoméne was dwelling,
 And of her suster the tiding
 He tolde and tho they weren glad
 And mochel joie of him they made.
 The fader and the moder bothe
 To leve her doughter werd lothe
 But if they weren in presence,
 And netheles at reverence
 Of him that wolde him self travaile,
 They woldé nought he shuldé faile,
 And that they praiden yive her leve,
 And she that woldé nought beleve¹
 In allé haste made her yare²

¹ Beleve, stay behind. - Yare, ready.

Toward her suster for to fare
 With Tereus and forth she went.
 And he with al his hole entent
 Whan she was for her frendes go
 Assoteth of her lové so
 His eye might he nought witholde
 That he ne must on her beholde,
 And with the sight he gan desire
 And set his owne hert a fire.
 And fire whan it to tow approacheth
 To him anon the strength accro-
 cheth,¹
 Till with his hete it be devoured,
 The tow ne may nought be soc-
 coured.

And so the tirann ravinere,
 Whan that she was in his powere,
 And he therto sigh time and place,
 As he that lost hath all his grace,
 Foryate he was a wedded man,
 And in a rage on her he ran
 Right as a wolf that taketh his pray.
 And she began to crie and pray:
 'O fader dere, o moder dere,
 Now help!' But they ne might it
 here,

And she was of to litel might
 Defence ayein so rude a knight
 To maké whan he was so wode
 That he no reson understode.
 But whan she to her selvé come
 And of her mischefe nedé nome
 And knewe how that she was no
 maide,

With wofull herté thus she saide:
 'O thou of allé men the worst,
 Where was there everman that dorst
 Do such a dede as thou hast do?
 That day shall falle, I hopd so,
 That I shall tell out all my fille
 And with my speche I shall fulfille
 The widé worlde in brede and
 length

That thou hast do to me by strength.

¹ Acciocheth, increaseth.

If I among the people dwelle
 Unto the people I shall it telle;
 And if I be withinné wall
 Of stones closed, than I shall
 Unto the stonés clepe and crie,
 And tellen hem thy felonie ;
 And if I to the wadés wende,
 There shall I tellé tale and ende
 And crie it to the briddés out,
 That they shall here it all about :
 For I so loude it shall reherce,
 That my vois shall the heven perce,
 That it shall souné in Goddes ere.
 Ha falsé man, where is thy fere ?
 O more cruel than any beste,
 How hast thou holden thy behest
 Which thou unto my suster madest?
 O thou, which alls' love ungladest
 And art ensample of all untrewé,
 Now woldé god my suster knewe
 Of thin untrouthe, how that it stood!¹
 And he than as a leon wode¹
 With his unhappy hondés strong
 He caught her by the tresses long
 With whiche he bonde both her
 armes,

That was a feble dede of armes,
 And to the groundé anone her cast,
 And out he clippeth also fast
 Her tunge with a paire of sheres.
 So what with blode and what with
 teres,

Out of her eyne and of her mouth,
 He made her faire face uncouth.
 She lay swounénd unto the dethe,
 There was unnethes any brethe.
 But yet whan he her tungé refte,
 A litel part therof he lefte.
 But she withall no word may souné
 But chitre² and as a brid jargoune.
 And nethéles that wodé hounde
 Her body hent up fro the groundé
 And sent her there as by his will
 She shulde abide, in prison still

i Wode madly raging. ² Chitre-, chirp.

For ever mo. But now take hede
 What after fell of this misdede.
 Whan all this mischefe was befallé,
 This Tereus, that foule him fallé,
 Unto his centré home he tigh,¹
 And whan he cam his paleis nigh,
 His wife alredy there him kept.
 Whan he her sigh, anon he wept,
 And that he dide for deceit,
 For she began to axe him streit:
 'Where is my suster?' And he saide
 That she was dede, and Progne
 abraide,

As she that was a wofull wife,
 And stood betwene her deth and life
 Because she herdé such tiding.
 But for she sigh her lord weping,
 She wendé nought but alle trouth
 And haddé wel the moié routh.
 The perils weré tho forsake
 To her and blacké clothes take,
 As she that was gentil and kinde.
 In worship of her susters minde²
 She made a riche enterement,³
 For she found none amendément
 To sighen or to sobbé more,
 So was there guile under the gore.
 "Now levé we this king and
 quene,

And torne ayein to Philomene.
 As I began to tellen erst,
 Whan she cam into prison ferst,
 It thought a kingés doughter
 straunge

To make so sodefn a chaunge
 Fro welth unto so great a wo.
 And she began to thenkd tho,
 Though she by mouthé nothing
 praide,

Within her herté thus she saide :
 'O thou, almighty Jupiter,
 That highé sittest and lokest fer,

¹ Tigh, drew.

² In reverence to her sister's memory.

³ Enterement, interment, funeral pomp.

Thou sufftest many a wrong domg,
 And yet it is nought thy willing.
 To the there may nothing ben hid,
 Thou wost¹ how it is me betid.
 I wolde I hadde nought be bore.
 For than I haddé nought forlore
 My speche and my virgnite.
 But gode lord, all is in the,
 Whan thou therof wolt do ven-
 geaúnce

And shapé my deliveraunce !'
 And ever among this lady wepte
 And thought that she never kepte
 To be a worldés woman more,
 And that she wissheth evermore.
 But ofte unto her suster dere
 Her herté speketh in this manere
 And saide: 'Ha suster, if ye knewe
 Of min estate ye wolde rewe
 I trowe, and my deliveraunce
 Yewoldé shape, and do vengeaunce
 On him that is so fals a man.
 And netheles, so as I can,
 I woll you send some tokening,
 Wherof ye shall have knouleching
 Of thing I wot that shall you loth
 The which you toucheth and me
 both,'

And tho within a while als tite²
 She wafe a cloth of súke all white
 With letters and ymagery,
 In which was all the felony,
 Which Tereus to her hath do,
 And lappéd it to-gider tho
 And set her signet therupon
 And sent it unto Progne anon.
 The messenger which forth it bare,
 What it amounteth is nought ware,
 And nethéles to Progne he goth
 And privély taketh her the cloth
 And went ayein right as he cam,
 The Court of him none nedé name.

"Whan Progne of Philomené
 herde

1 Wost, knowest. 2 Als tite, promptly.

She woldé knowe how that it ferde,
 And openeth that the man hath
 brought

And wot therby what hath be
 wrought

And what mischeffe there is befallé.
 In swoune tho she gan down falle,
 And eft arose and gan to stonde,
 And eft she taketh the clothe on
 honde,

Beheld the letters and thymáges,
 But afté last of suche outrages
 She said, 'Wepfng is nought the
 bote,'¹

And swereth, if that she livé mote
 It shall be vengéd other wise.
 And with that she gan her avise,
 How first she might unto her whine
 Her suster, that no man withinne,
 But only they that were swore,
 It shuldé knowe, and shope ther-
 fore,

That Tereús nothing it wist,
 And yet right as her selven list
 Her suster was delivered sone
 Out of prison, and by the mone
 To Progné she was brought by
 night.

Whan eche of other had a sight
 In chambre there they were alone,
 They maden many a pitous mone.
 But Progné most of sorwe made,
 Which sigh her suster pale and fade
 And specheles and deshounourel
 Of that she haddé be defloured,
 And eke upon her lord she thought
 Of that he so untruely wrought
 And had his espousaile broke,
 She maketh a vow it shall be wroke.
 And with that word she kneleth
 down

Weping in great devocioún,
 Unto Cupide and to Venus
 She praid and saidé thann thus :

1 Bote, remedy.

'O ye, to whom no thing asterte¹
 Of Love may, for every herte
 Ye knowe, as ye that ben above
 The God and the Goddésse of Love,
 Ye witen well, that ever yit
 With al min herte and all my wit
 I have ben trewe in my degre
 And ever thought for to be,
 And never love in other place
 But all onty the king of Trace
 Whiche is my lord and I his wife.
 But now alas this wofull strife,
 That I him thus ayeinward finde
 The most untrewé and most un-
 kinde

That ever in ladies armes lay,
 And wel I wot that he ne may
 Amend his wronge, it is so great,
 For he to litel of me lete
 Whan he min owné suster toke
 And me that am his wife forsoke.'

Lo, thus to Venus and Cupide
 She praid, and furthermore she cride
 Unto Apollo the highest
 And said : 'O mighty god of rest,
 Thou do vengeance of this debate,
 My suster and all her estate
 Thou wost, and I shall bere a blame
 Of that my suster hath a shame,
 That Tereus to her I sent.
 And well thou wost, that min entent
 Was all for worship and for good.
 O lord, that yivest the livés food
 To every wight, I pray the here
 These wofull susters that ben here,
 And let us nought to the ben loth,
 We ben thin owne women both,'
 Thus pleigneth Progne and axeth
 wreche,

And though her suster lacke speche,
 To him that allé thinges wote
 Her sorwe is nought the lassé hote.
 But he that thanné herd hem two
 Him ought have sorwed evermo

For sorwe which was hem betwene.
 With signed pleigneth Philomene,
 And Progné saith : 'It shal be
 wreke,

That all the world therof shal speke.'
 " And Progne tho sikenessé
 feigned,

Wherof unto her lord she pleigned
 And preith she mote her chambre
 kepe

And as her liketh wake and slepe.
 And he her graunteth to be so.

And thus to-gider ben they two,
 That wold him but a litel good.

Now herke hereafter, how it stood
 Of wofull auntrés that befelle.

These susters, that ben bothe felle,
 And that was nought on hem alone

But only on the greате wronge
 Which Tereus hem hadde do,

They shopen for to venge hem tho.
 This Tereus by Progne his wife

A soné hath, which as his life

He loveth, and Ithis he hight.

His moder wisté well she might

Do Tereús no moré greve

Than sleé his child which was so
 leve.

Thus she that was as who saith mad
 Of wo which hath her overlad,

Without insight of moderhede

Foryat pité and loste drede

And in her chambre privély

This childé without noise or cry

She slough and hewe him all to
 pieces.

And after with diversé spieces

The flessch whan it was so to-hewe,
 She taketh and maketh therof a

sewe,¹

With which the fader at his mete

Was served till he had him ete

That he ne wist how that it stood.

But thus his owné flessch and blood

1 Asterte, escape,

1 Sewe, broth, stew.

Him self devoureth ayeine kinde,
 As he that was to-fore unkinde.
 And than er that he were arise,
 For that he shuldé bene agrise
 To shewen him the child was dede,
 This Philomené toke the hede
 Betwene two disshes, and all wrothe
 Tho camen forth the susters bothe
 And setten it upon the bord.
 And Progné than began the word
 And saide : ' O werst of alle wicke,
 Of consciencé whom no pricke
 May sterde, lo, what thou hast do,
 Lo, here ben now we susters two.
 O raviner, lo here thy prey,
 With whom so falslich on the wey
 Thou hast thy tirannfe wrought,
 Lo, now it is somedeale abought
 And beter it shall, for of thy dede
 The world shall ever sing and rede
 In remembraunce of thy defame,
 For thou to love hast done such
 shame,
 That it shall never be foryete.'
 With that he sferte up fro the mete,
 And shove the bord into the flore,
 And caught a swerdanone and swore
 That they shulde of his hondés deie.
 And they unto the goddés crie
 Begunné with so loude a Steven,
 That they were herde unto the
 heven,
 And in the twinkeling of an eye
 The goddés that the mischefe sigh
 Her formés chaungéd allé thre.
 Echone of hem in his degré
 Was torned into a briddés kinde
 Diversélich as men may finde.
 After thestate that they were inne
 Her formés weré set a twinne,
 And as it telleth in the tale
 The first in to a nightingale
 Wasshape, and that was Philomene,
 Which in the winter is nought sene,
 For thanné ben the levés falle

And naked ben the bussches alle.
 For after that she was a brid
 Her will was ever to ben hid
 And for to dwelle in prive place,
 That no man shuldé sen her face
 For shame which may nought ben
 lassed

Of thing that was to-foré passed,
 And halt her clos the winter day.
 But whan the winter goth away
 And that naturé the goddesse
 Woll of her owné fre largesse
 With herbés and with flourés bothe
 The feldés and the medewes clothe,
 And eke the wodes and the greves
 Ben heled¹ all with grené leves,
 So that a brid her hidé may
 Betwené March, Aprille and May,
 She that the winter² held her clos
 For pure shame and nought aros,
 Whan that she sigh the bowés thicke
 And that there is no baré sticke
 But all is hid with leves giene,
 To wode cometh this Philomene
 And maketh her firsté yerés flight,
 Where as she singeth day and night,
 And in her song all openly
 She maketh her pleint and saith:
 ' O why,

O why ne were I yet a maide ?'
 For so these oldé wise saide
 Which understoden what she ment,
 Her notés ben of suche entent.
 And eke they said, how in her songe
 She maketh great joy and merth
 amonge
 And saith : ' Ha, now I am a brid,
 Ha, now my facé may ben hid !'
 Thus medleth she with joié wo
 And with her sorwé merth also,
 So that of lovés maladie
 She maketh diversé melodie
 And saith : ' Love is a wofull blisse,

¹ Greves . . heled, groves . . covered.

² The winter, during winter.

A wisdom, which can no manwisse,
A lusty fever, a woundé softé.
This note she reherseþ ofte
To hem which understonde her tale.

"Now have I of this nightingale,
Which erst was clepéd Philomene,
Told all that ever woldé mene
Both of her forme and of her note,
Wherof men may the story note.
And of her suster Progne I finde,
How she was tornéd out of kinde
Into a swalwe swift of wing,
Which eke in winter lith swouning
There as she may no thing be sene,
But whan the world is wox grene
And comen is the somer tide,
Than fleeth she forth and ginneth
to chide

And chitereth out in her langage
What falshede is in mariage;
And telleth in a maner speche
Of Tereus the spouse breche.
She wol nought in the wodes dwelle,
For she wold openliche telle,
And eke for that she was a spouse,
Among the folk she cometh to house
To do these wives understonde
The falshode of her husebonde,
That they of hem beware also,
For there be many untrewé of tho.

"Thus ben the susters briddes
both

And ben toward the men so loth,
That they ne woll for puré shame
Unto no mannas honcl be tame,
For ever it dwelleth in her minde
Of that they found a man unkinde,
And that was falsé Tereus.
If suché one be amonge us
I not, but his condition
Men say in every region
Withinne town and eke without
Now regneth comunlich about.
And nethéles in remembraunce
I woll declare what vengeaunce

The goddes hadden him ordeigned,
Of that the susters had den pleigned.
For anone after he was chaunged
And from his owné kindestraunged,
A lappewinke made he was
And thus he hoppeth on the gras,
And on his heed there stont upright
A crest in token of a knight,
And yet unto this day, men saith,
A lappewinke hath lost his feith
And is the brid falsest of alle.

"Beware, my sone, er the so falle,
For if thou be of such covine
To get of love by ravine
Thy lust, it may the falle thus,
As it befell of Tereus."—

"My fader, nay, Goddés forbode,
Me were lever be fortrode,
With wildé hors and be to-drawe,
Er I ayein love and his lawe
Did any thing, or loude or still.
Which were nought my ladies will.
Men saien that every love hath
drede,

So folweth it that I her drede,
For I her love, and who so
dredeth,—

To plesé his love and serve, him
nedeth.

Thus may ye known by this skill,
That no Ravine done I will
Ayein her will by such a wey.
But while I live I will obey,
Abiding on her courtesie
If any mercy wolde her plie.¹

"Forthy my fader, as of this
I wot nought I have do amis.
But furthermore I you beseche,
Some other point that ye me teche,
And axeth forth if there be ought,
That I may be the better taught."—

"**Whan Govetise** in pouer
estate
Stont with him self upon debate

¹ *Plie*, bend, turn.

Through lacke of his misgovern-
aunce,
That he unto his sustenaunce
Ne can non other waie finde
To get him good, than as the blinde
Which seeth nought what shal after
fall,

That *ilke* Vice which men call
Of Robbery he taketh on honde,
Wherof by water and by londe
Of thing which other men beswinke¹
He get him cloth and mete and
drinke,

Him reccheth nought what he be-
ginne

Through thefteso that he may winne.
Forth to maken his purchés
He lith awaitend on the pas,
And what thing that he seeth ther
passe

He taketh his parte or more or lasse
If it be worthy to be take,
He can the packés well ransake.
So prively bereth none about
His gold that he ne tint it out,
Or other juell what it be
He taketh it as his proprete
In wodés and in feldes eke.
Thus Robberie goth to seke
Where as he may his purchas finde.
And right so in the samé kinde
My gode sone, as thou might here,
To speke of love in the matere
And make a verray resemblance
Right as a thefe maketh chevesance
And robbeth mennés goodes about
Inwodeand felde where he goth out,
So be there of these lovers some
In wildd stedés² where they come
And finden there a woman able
And therto place covendble,
Without leve er that they fare
They take a parte of that chaffare.

* 1 Biswinke, obtain by labour.

2 Stedes,, places.

But therof wot nothing the wife
At home, which loveth as her life
Her lord and sit all day wisshing
After her lordes home coming.
But whan he cometh home at eve
Anone he maketh his wife beleve,
For she nought diés shulde knowe
He telleth her, how his hunt hath
blowe

And howe his houndés have well
ronne,

And how there shone a mery sonne,
And ho\v his havvkes flowen wele.
But he wol telle her never a dele,
How he to love untrewre was
Of that he robbed in the pas
And toke his lust under the shawe
Ayein Love and ayein his lawe.

" Which thing, my sone, I the
forbode,

For it is an ungodly dede.

For who that taketh by robberie
His love, he may nought justitie
His cause, and so ful ofte sithe¹
For ones that he hath ben blithe
He shall ben after sory times.
Ensamples for such robberies
I finde write as thou shalt here
Accordend unto this matere.

was rede, how whilom a
maide

The fairest, as Ovide saide,
Which was in hiré timé tho.
And she was of the chambre also
Of Pallas, which is the goddessse
And wife to Marte, of whom prow-
esse

Is yove to these worthy knightes,
For he is of so greate mightes,
That he governeth the bataile ;
Withouten him may nought availe
The strong hond, but he it helpes,
There may no knight of armes
yelpé²

1 Ofte *sith*, many limes' 2 *Yelpé* boast.

But he fight under his banere.
 But now to speke of my matere
 This fairé, fressshé, lusty may¹
 Alone as she went on a day
 Upon the stronde for to play,
 There came Neptunus in the way,
 Which hath the see in governaunce,
 And in his herté such plesaunce
 He toke whan he this maiden sigh,
 That all his hert aros on high.
 For he so sodeinlich unware
 Beheld the beauté that she bare,
 And cast anone within his hert
 That she him shall no way astert.
 This maiden which Cornix by name
 Was hote, dredend alle shame,
 Sigh that she mighte nought debate,
 And well she wist he wolde algate
 Fulfill his lust of robberie,
 Anone began to wepe and crie
 And said, ' O Pallas noble queue,
 Shew now thy might, and letbesene,
 To kepe and save min honour !'
 That word was nought so sone
 spoke,

Whan Pallas shope recoverir
 After the will and the desire
 Of hiré which a maiden was,
 And sodeinlich upon this cas
 Out of her womanisshé kinde
 Into a briddés like I finde
 She was transformed forth withall,
 So that Neptunus nothing stal
 Of such thing that he wolde have
 stole.

With fethers blacke as any cole
 Out of his armés in a throwe
 She fleigh before his eyen a crowe;
 Which was to her a more delite
 To kepe her maidenhede white
 Under the wede of fethers blacke,
 In perles white than forsake
 That² no life may restore ayein.
 But thus Neptune his hert in vein

1 May, maid. 2 That, that which.

Hath upon robberie set.
 The bird is flowe and he was let
 The faire maid him hath escaped,
 Wherof for ever he was bejaped
 And scorned of that he hath lore.

"My soné, be thou ware ther-
 fore,

So as I shall the yet devise
 Another tale therupon,
 Which fell by oldé daiés gone.

Sing Lichacū upon his wife
 A daughter had, a goodly life
 And clené maide of worthy fame,
 Calfstona whose righte name
 Was cleped, and of many a lorde
 She was besought, but her accorde
 To love mighte no man winne,
 As she whiche hath no lust thei-
 inne,

But swore within her hert and saide,
 That she woll ever ben a maide.
 Wherfore, to kepe her selfe in pees,
 With suche as Amadriades
 Were cleped, wodemaidsen tho,
 And with the nimphes eke also
 Upon the spring of fressshé welles
 She shope to dwelle and no where
 elles.

And thus came this Calistona
 Into the wode of Tegea",
 Where she virginite behight
 Unto Diane, that on a day
 Was priveliche stole away.
 For Jupiter through his queintise
 From her it toke in suche a wise,
 So that it might nought be hid.
 And therupon it is betid,
 Diané, whiche it herde tell,
 In privé place unto a welle
 With nimphes al a compaigny
 Was come and in a ragery
 She saide, that she bathé wolde,
 And bad that every maiden sholde
 With her all naked bath also.
 And tho began the prive wo.

With shame from her the nimphés
fled,

Till whanne that nature her spedde,
That of a soné, which Archas
Was naméd, she delivered was.

And tho Juno, which was the wife
Of Jupiter, wrothe and hastife
In purpose for to do vengeaunce,
Came forth upon this ilké chaunce,
And to Calistona she spake
And set upon her many a lacke
And said : ' Ha, now thou art atake,
That thou thy werk might nought
forsake.

Ha, thou ungoodly ypocrite,
How thou art greatly for to wite.
Thy grete beaute shall be torned,
Through -which that thou hast be
mistorned,

Thy large front, thy eyen gray
I shall hem chaunge in other way,
And all the feture of thy face

In such a wise I shall deface,
That every man the shall forbere.'
With that the likenesse of a bere
She toke and was forshape anone.
Within a time and therupon
Befell, that with a bow in honde
To hunte and game for to fonde
Into that wode goth to play
Her sone Archés, and in his way
It hapneth that this bere came.

And whan that she good hede name,
Where that he stood under the
bough,

She knewe him well and to him
drough,

For though she had her forme lore,
The lové was nought lost therfore
Which kinde hath set under his lawe.
Whan she under the wode shawe
Her child beheld, she was so glad
That she with both her armes sprad,
As though she were in woman-
hede,

Toward him come and toke none
hede

Of that a bow he bard bent.
And he with that an arwe hath
hent¹

And gan to teise² it in his bowe,
As he, that can none other knowe
But that it was a beste wilde.
But Jupiter, which wolde shilde
The moder and the sone also,
Ordeineth for hem bothé two
That they for ever were save.

" But thus, my sone, thou might
have

Ensample, and by other wey
In olde bokés as I rede,
Such robberie is for to drede,
And namelich of thilke good
Whiche every woman that is good
Desireth for to kepe and holde
As whilom was by daies olde.
For if thou here my tale wele
Of that was tho, thou might somdele
Of olde ensamples taken hede
How that the floure of maidenhede
Was thilké time holde in pris.
And so it was, and so it is,
And so it shall for ever stonde,
And for thou shalt it understonde,
Now herken a tale next suend,
How maidenhede is to commend.

Of Rome among the gestes olde
I find, how that Valery tolde,
That what man tho was emperour
Of Rome he sholde done honour
To the virgin, and in the wey
Where he her mete, he shulde obey
In worship of virginity,
Which tho was a great dignite
Nought onlich of the women tho,
But of the chasté men also
It was commended over all.
And for to speke in speciall
Touchend of men ensample I finde.

1 Hent, seized.

2 Teise, stretch.

" Phirins, which was of mannés kinde

Above all other the fairést
Of Rome and eke the comeliést,
That well was hire which him might

Beholde and have of him a sight.
Thus was he tempted ofte sore,
But for he woldé be no more
Among the women so coveited,
The beauté of his face streited
He hath, and thrust out both his eyne,

That allé women whiche it sein
Than afterwarde of him ne rought.
And thus his maiden hede he bought.

" So may I prové wel forth
Above all other under the sky,
Who that the vertues wolde peise,
Virginite' is for to preise,
Which as thapocalips recordeth
To Criste in heven best accordeth.
So may it shewe well therfore
As I have tolde it here to-fore,
In heven and eke in erth also
It is accept to bothe two.

Out of his flesshe a man to live
Gregoire hath this ensample yive,
And saith: It shall rather be told¹
Lich to an aungel manyfold
Than to the life of mannes kinde;
There is no reson for to finde,
But only through the grace above,
In flessché without fleshly love
A man to livé chaste here.

And nethéles a man may here
Of suche that have ben er this,
And yet there ben, but for it is
A vertue which is seldé wonne,
Now I this matter have begonne
I thenke tellen over more,
Which is, my soné, for thy lore,
If that the list to taken hede,
To trete upon the maiden hede.

¹ Told, accounted.

" The boke saith that a manned life

Upon knight hode in werre and strife
Is set among his enemies.

The freile flessch, whose nature is
Ay redy for to sporne and fall,
The first foman is of all.

For thilke werre is redy ay,
It werreth night, it werreth day,
So that a man hath never rest.
Forthy is thilké knight the best
Through might and grace of goddés sonde

Which that batailé may withstonde,
Wherof yet dwelleth the memoire
Of hem that whilome the victoire
Of thilke dedly werre hadden,
The high prowessd which they laden

Wherof the soule stood amended,
Upon this erth yet is commended.

An emperour by thilke dales
There was, and he at all assaies
A worthy knight was of his honde,
There was none such in all thelonde,
But yet for all his vassellage¹
He stood unwedded all his age,
And in cronique as it is tolde
He was an hundred winter olde.
And haddé ben a worthy knight
Both of his lawe and of his might.
But whan men wolde his knight-
hood peise

And of his dedes of armés preise
Of that he dide with his hondes,
Whan he the kingés and the londes
To, his subjection put under,
Of all that prise hath he no wonder,
For he it set of none accompte
And said, all that may nought
amounte

Aye in a point whiche he hath nome,
That he his flessch hath overcome.

¹ Vassellage, valour in arms, as in Chaucer's "Knight's Tale" and in Barbour's "Bruce."

He was a virgine, as he said;
On that bataile his pris he laid.

Lo now, my sone, avise the."—

"Ye, fader, all this may well be.

But if all other dide so,

The world of men were sone ago ;¹

And in the lawe a man may finde

How God to man by wey of kinde

Hath set the world to multiply.

And who that woll him justify,

It is inough to do the lawe.

And netheles your gode sawe

Is good to kepe, who so may,

I woll nought there ayein say nay,"

"**My soné**, take it as I say,

If rnaidenhd be take away

Withoute lawes ordenaunce,

It may nought failen of vengeaunce.

"And if thou wolt the sothe
wite,

Behold a tale which is write,

How that the king Agdmenon

Whan he the citee of Lesbon

Hath won, a maiden there he fonde

Which was the fairest of the londe

In thilke time that men wist.

He toke of bird what him list

Of thing which was most precious,

Wherof that she was daungerous.

This faire maiden cleped is

Criseid, the doughter of Crisfs,

Which was that timé speciall

Of thilké temple principal!

Where Phebus had his sacrifice,

So was it well the moré vice.

Agámenon was than in way

To Troie ward and toke away

This maiden, whiche he with him
lad,

So greate lust in her he had.

But Phebus which hath great
diedein

Of that his maiden was forlein,

Anone as he to Troie came,

1 Ago, gone.

Vengeaunce upon this dede he
name¹

And send a comune pestilence.

They soughten than her evidence

And maden calculaci6n,

To knowe in what condici6n

This deth cam in so sodeinly,

And atte lasté redely

The cause and eke the man they
founde,

And forth withal the same stounde

Agmenon opposed was,

Whiche hath beknownen all the cas

Of the folié, which he wrought.

And therupon mercy they sought

Toward the god in sondry wise

With praier and with sacrifice;

The maiden home ayein they sende

And yaf her good inough to spende

For ever while she shulde live,

And thus the sinne was foryive

And all the pestilence cessed.

"Lo, what it is to ben encrescd

Of love whiche is evil wonne.

It were better nought begonne

Than take a thing withoute leve

Which thou must after nedes levo

And yet have malgre forth with all.

Forthy to robben over all

In loves cause if thou beginne,

I not what ese thou shalt winne.

My soné, be well ware of this,

For thus of robbery it is."—

"My fader, your ensamplarie

In loves cause of robberie

I have it right well understonde.

But over this how so it stonde,

Yet wol I wite of your apprise,

What thing is more of Covetise.

With Covetisé yet I finde

A servaunt of the same kinde,

Which Stelth is hote, and micherie²

With him is ever in compaignie.

Of whom if I shall tellé soth

¹ Name, took. - Rlichcric secrecy.

He stalketh as a peacock doth
 And taketh his preie so covert,
 That no man wote it in aperte.
 For whan he wot the lord from home
 Than wolle he stalke about and come,
 And what thing he fynd in his wey
 Whan that he seeth the men away
 He steleth it and goth forth withall
 That therof no man knowe shall.
 And eke full ofte he goth anight
 Withoute mone or sterre light
 And with his craft the dore unpiketh
 And taketh therinne what him liketh.
 And if the dore be so shet,
 That he be of his entre let,
 He wolle in atte window cipe,
 And while the lord is fast aslepe,
 He steleth what thing him best list,
 And goth his wey er it be wist.
 Full ofte also by light of day
 Yet wolle he stele and make assay,
 Under the cote his honde he put
 Till he the mannes purs have kut
 And riflith that he fynd therinne.
 And thus he auntereth him to winne
 And bereth an horn and nought ne
 bloweth
 For no man of his counseil knoweth
 What he may get of his miching,
 It is all bile¹ under the wing.
 And as an hound that goth to folde
 And hath there take what he wolde
 His mouth upon the gras he wipeth,
 And so with feigned chere him
 slipeth,
 That what as ever of shepe he
 strangle
 There is no man therof shall jangle
 And for to knowen who it dede;
 Right so doth stelthe in every stede,
 Where as him list his preie take.
 He can so well his cause make
 And so well feigne and so well glose
 That there ne shall no man suppose

¹ Bile, bill.

But that he were an innocent,
 And thus a mannes eye he blent,
 So that this craft I may remeve¹
 Withouten helpe of any meve.
 There be lovers of that degre,
 Which all her lust in privete
 As who saith gotten all by stelth
 And ofte atteignen to great welth
 As for the time that it lasteth.
 For love awaiteth ever and casteth
 How he may stele and cacche his
 pray
 Whan he therto may fynde a way.
 For be it night, or be it day
 He taketh his part, whan that he may,
 And if he may no more do
 Yet wolle he stele a cuss² or two.
 "My sone, what saist thou theto,
 Telle, if thou diddest ever so."—
 "My fader, how?"—"My sone,
 thus,
 If thou hast stolen any cuss—
 Or other thing which therto longeth,
 For no man suche theves hongeth;
 Tell on forth and say the trowth."—
 "My fader, nay; and that is
 routh,
 For by my will I am a thefe,
 But she that is to me most lefe,
 Yet durst I never in privete
 Nought ones take her by the kne
 To stele of her or this or that,
 And if I durst I wot well what.
 And nethéles but if I lie
 By stelthe ne by robberie
 Of love, which fell in my thought,
 To hire did I never nought;
 But as men sain, where hert is failed
 There shall no castel be assailed,
 But though I haddé hertés ten
 And were as stronge as alle men.
 If I be nought min owne man
 And dare nought usen that I can,

¹ Remeve, change to another field of enterprise; from Money to Love,
² a Cuss, kiss.

I may my selve nought recouer
 Though I be never man so pouer.
 I here an herte and here it is,
 So that me faileth wit in this
 How that I shulde of mine accorde
 The servant lede ayein the lorde.
 For if my foot wold owhere go,
 Or that min hond wolde ellés do,
 Whan that min hert is there ayein
 The remenaunt is all in vein.
 And thus me lacketh alle wele,
 And yet ne dare I nothing stele
 Of thing which longeth unto love,
 And eke it is so high above
 I may nought well therto arecche,
 But if so be at time of speche
 Full selde if than I stele may
 A worde or two and go my way.
 Betwene her high estate and me
 Comparison there may none be,
 So that I fele and well I wote
 All is to hevy and to hote
 To set on hondé without leve.
 And thus I mot algate leve
 To stele that I may nought take,
 And in this wise I mot forsake
 To ben a thefe ayein my will
 Of thing which I may nought fulfill.

" For that serpent which never
 slept

The flees of gold so well ne kept
 In Colchos, as the tale is tolde,
 As my lad a thousand folde
 To kepe her body night and day.
 She hath a wardein redy ay,
 Which is so wounderfull a wight,
 That him ne may no mannes might
 Withswerd newithnowepondaunt,
 Ne with no sleight of charme en-
 chaunt

Wherof he might be made tame,
 And Daunger is his righté name,
 Whiche under lock and under key,
 That no man may it stele away,
 Hath al the tresor underfonge

That unto love may belonge.
 The lest loking of her eye
 May nought be stole, if he it sigh;
 And who so grucctheth for so lite
 He wolde sone set a wite
 On him that woldé stelé more.
 And that me greveth wonder sore,
 For this proverb is ever newe,
 That strongé lockes maken trewe
 Of hem that wolden stele and pike,
 For so wel can there no man slike¹
 By him ne by no other mene,
 To whom Daungér wol yive or Icne
 Of that tresor he hath to kepe.
 So though I wolde stalke and crepe
 Andwaiteon eve and eke on morwe,
 Of Daunger shal I nothing borwe,
 And stelé wot wel may I nought.
 And thus I am right wel bethought,
 While Daunger stont in his office,
 Of Stelthé, which ye clepe a Vice,
 I shall be gilty never mo.
 Therfore I wold he were ago
 So fer that I never of him herde
 How so that afterward it ferde,
 For than I mighté yet par cas
 Of love maké some purchas
 By stelth or by some other way,
 That now fro me stont fer away.

" But, fader, as ye tolde above,
 How Stelthé goth anight for love,
 I may noughtwel that point forsake,
 That ofté timés I ne wake
 On nightés whan that other slepe.
 But now, I pray you take kepe,
 Whan I am logged in such wise
 That I by nighté may arise
 At some window and loken out
 And se the housing al about,
 So that I may the chambre knowe
 In which my lady, as I trowe,
 Lith in her bed and slepeth softe,
 Than is min hert a thefe ful ofte,
 For there I stond to behold

¹ Smooth the way.

The longe nightes that ben cold
 And thenke on her that lieth there.
 But atté laste whan I finde
 That I am fall into my minde,
 And se that I have stonde longe
 And have no profit underfonge,
 Than stalke I to my bed withinne.
 And this is all that ever I winne
 Of lové, whan I walke on night.
 My will is good, but of my might
 Me lacketh both and of my grace,
 For what so that my thought embrace

Yet have I nought the better ferde.
 My fader, lo, now have ye herde
 What I by Stelth of Love have do,
 And how my will hath be therto ;
 If I be worthy to penaunce,
 I put it to your ordenaunce."—

"My sone, of stelth ! the behete,
 Though it be for a time swete,
 At ende it doth but litel good,
 As by ensample how that it stood
 Whilom, I may the tellé now."—

"I pray you, fader, say me
 how."—

"My sone, of him, which goth
 by day

By wey of stelthe to assay
 In lovés cause and taketh his pray,
 Ovi'dé said, as I shall say,
 And in his Methamor he tolde
 A tale which is good to holde.

The poet upon this matere
 Of Stelthé wrote in this manere.
 Venus, which hath the lawe inhonde
 Of thing which may nought be with-
 stonde,

As she which the tresor to warde
 Of love hath within her warde,
 Phebus to love hath soconstreigned
 That he withoute rest is peined
 With all his herté to coveite
 A maiden which was warded streite
 Withinne chambre and kept so clos

That selden was whan she desclos
 Goth with her moder for to play.
 Leucothoe, so as men say,
 This maiden hight, and Orchamus
 Her fader was. And befell thus,
 This doughter that was kept so dei e
 And haddé be from yere to yere,
 Upon the whose nativité
 Of comeliheed and of beaute
 Nature hath set all that she may,
 That lich unto the fresshe May,
 Whiche other monthes of the yere
 Sourmounteth, so withouté pete
 Was of this maiden the feture,
 Wherof Phebus out of mesure
 Her loveth and on every side
 Awaiteth what so may betide.
 In his await so longe he lay
 Till it befell upon a day
 That he through out her chambre
 wall

Came in all sodeinlich and stall
 That thing which was to him so
 lefe.

But wo the while, he was a thefe,
 For Venus, which was enemy
 Of thilké lovés michery,
 Discovereth all the pleiné cas
 To Climené, which thannd was
 Toward Phebus his concubine.
 And she, to letté the covine
 Of thilké love, dedely wrothe,
 To pleign upon this maide she goth
 And tolde her fader howe it stood,
 Wherof for sorwe well nigh wode
 Unto her moder thus he saide :
 'Lo, what it is to kepe a maide.
 To Phebus dare I nothing speke
 But upon her it shall be wreke.'
 And bad with that do make a pit,
 Wherin he hath his doughter set,
 As he that woll no pite have,
 So that she was all quike begrave
 And deide anone in his presence.
 But Phebus, for the reverence

Of that she hadde be his love,
Hath wrought through his power
above

That she sprong up out of the molde
Into a flour, was named Golde,
Which stant govdrnéd of the sonne.
And thus whan love is evil wonne,
Full ofte it cometh to repentail."—

"My fader, that is no merveile,
Whan that the counceil is bewreied.
For in your tale as it betid,
Venus discovereth all the cas,
And eke also brode day it was
Whan Phebus such a stelthe
wrought,

Wherof the maide in blame he
brought,

That afterwards he was so lore.
But for ye saiden now to-fore,
How Stelth of lové goth by night
And doth his thingés out of sight,
Therof me lust also to here
A tale lich to the matere,
Wherof I might ensample take."

"My godé soné, for thy sake,
So as it befell by dalés olde
And so as the poét it tolde,
Upon the nightes michery
Now herken a tale of poesy.

The mightiest of

Whan Hercules with Eolen,
Which was the love of his corage,
To-gider upon a pelrinage
Towardé Romé shulden go,
It fell hem by the waid so,
That they upon a day a cave
Within a roché founden have,
Which was real and glorious
And of entaile curiols,
By name and Thophis it was hote.
The sonné shone tho wonder hote,
As it was in the somer tide.

"This Hercules, which by his side
Hath Eolen his lové there,
Whan they at thilké cave were,

He said, he thought it for the best,
That she her for the heté rest
All thilke day. And so befell,
This cave was under the hill
Of Timolus, which was begrowe
With vines, and at thilke throwe
Faunus with Saba the goddesse,
By whom the large wilderness
In thilke time stood governed,
Were in a place, as I am lerned,
Nigh by, which Bachuswod eheight.

"This Faunus toke a great insight
Of Eolen, that was so nigh,
For whan that he her beaute sigh,
Out of his wit he was assoted
And in his herte it hath so noted,
That he forsoke the nimphes alle
And said, he wolde, how so it falle,
Assay an other for to winne,
He set his hertes thought withinne.
And therupon his time awaiteth.
Now take good hede, how love
affaiteth

Him which withal is overcome.
Faire Eolen whan she was come
With Hercules into the cave,
She said him, that she wolde have
His clothes of and hire bothe,
Andecheofhem shulde other clothe.
And all was do right as she bad,
lie hath her in his clothés clad
And cast on her his gulion,
Which of the skin of a leon
Was made, as he upon the wey
It slough, and over this to play
She toke his grete mace also
And knet it at her girdel tho.
So was she lich the man arraied,
And Hercules than hath assaied
To clothen him in her array.
And thus they japé forth the clay,
Till that her souper redy weie.
And whan they hadden soupéd there,
They shopen hem to go to rest,
And as it thought hem for the best,

They bad, as for that ilké night,
Two sondry beddes shuld be dight,
Wherin that they to resté gone
Eche by hem self in sondry place.
Fair Eolen hath set the mace
Besides her beddés heved above,
And with the clothés of her love
She helled¹ all her bed aboute.
And he, which had nothing in
doubte,

Her wimpel wonde about his cheke,
Her kirtel and her mantel eke
Abrode upon his bed he spredde,
And thus they slepen both a bedde.
And what of travail, what of wine
The servaunts like to dronken swine
Beganne for to route² faste.

This Faunus, which his stelthé caste,
Was thanne comen to the cave
And found, they weren alle save;
Withoute noise and in he went,
The derke night his sighte blent,
And yet it hapned him to go
Where Eolen a bedde tho
Was laid alond for to slepe.

But for he wolde take kepe
Whose bed it was, he made assay
And of a leon where it lay
The cote he founde and eke hefeleth
The mace, and than his hertékelcth,
That there durst he nought abide;
But stalketh upon every side
And sought aboute with his honde
That other bed, till that he fonde
Where lay bewimpled a visdge.

Tho was he glad in his corgge,
For he her kirtel founde also
And eke her mantel bothe two
Bespred upon the bedde alofte,
And wende well it weré she.

And thus in stede of Eole
Anone he profreth him to love,
But he, which sigh a man above,
This Hercules him threw to grounde

So sore, that they have him founde
Liggende there upon the morwe,
And tho was nought a litel sonve
That Faunus of him selvé made.
But ellés there they were all glade
And loughen him to scorne aboute,
Saba with nimphes all a route
Came down to loke how that it ferde,
And whan that they the sothe herde
He was bejapéd over all.

"My sone, be thou ware with all
In aunter if the so betide
As Faunus dide thilké tide,
Wherof thou might be shamed so."—

"Min holy fader, certes no.
But if I hadde right good leve,
Such micherie I thenke leve.
My fainte herte woll nought serve,
For malgrd wolde I nought deserve
In thilké placé where I love.
But for ye tolden here above
Of Covetise and his pilage,
If there be more of that lignage,
Which toucheth to my shrifte, I
pray,

That ye therof me wolde sny,
So that I may the Vice escheue."—

"My sone, if I by order sue
The Vices as they stonde a rowe,
Of Covetise thou shalt knowe,
There is yet one, which is the last,
In whom there may no Vertue last,
For he with God him self debateth,
Wherof that all the heven him
hateth.

The highé God, whiche allé good
Purveied hath for mannés food
Of clothés and of mete and drinke,
Bade Adam, that he shulde swinke
To geten him his sustenance,
And eke he set an ordenaunce
Upon the lawe of Moises,
That though a man be haveles,
Yet shall he nought by thefté stele.
But now a daies there ben fele,

1 Helled, covered. 2 Route, snore.

That woll no labour undertake ;
 But what they may by stelthe take
 They holde it sikerliché wonne.
 And thus the lawe is overronne,
 Which God hath set, and namely
 With hem that so untruely
 The goodés robbe of Holy Chirche.
 The thefté, which they thanné
 wirche,

By name is cleped Sacrilege,
 Ayein the whom I thenke allegge.
 Upon three points as we ben taught
 Stont Sacrilege, and diés nought.
 The firsté point is for to say,
 Whan that a thefe shall stele away
 The holy thing from holy place.
 The seconde is, if he purchase
 By way of theft an holy thinge
 The whiche upon his knowlechinge
 Fro holy place away was toke.
 The thirde point, as saith the boke,
 Is suche, as whereas ever it be,
 In wode, in felde, or in cite,
 Shall no man stelé by no wise
 That halowed is to the servise
 Of God whiche alle thingés wote.
 But there is nouthur cold ne hote,
 Whiche he for God or man woll
 spare,

So that the body may wel fare
 And that he may the world escape,
 The hevenhimthinketh is but a jape
 Of his condicion to telle,
 Which rifelethbotheboke and belle,
 So forthwith all the remenaunt
 To Goddés hous appurtenaunt,
 Where that he shulde bid his bede,
 He doth his theft in holy stede,
 Andtaketh what thing hefint therein.
 For whan he seeth that he may win
 He wondeth for no cursednesse
 That he ne breketh the holinesse
 And doth to God no reverence.
 For he hath lost his conscience,
 That though thepresttherforé curse,

He saith, he fareth nought the
 worse.

And for to speke it other wise,
 What man that lasseth the fraun-
 chise

And taketh of Holy Chirch his pray,
 I not what bedés he shall pray
 Whan he fro God which hathyive all
 The purpartie in speciall,
 Which unto Crist him self is due,
 Benimth; he may noughtwel eschue
 The peiné comend afterward,
 For he hath made his foreward
 With sacrileggé for to dwelle,
 Which hath his heritage in helle.

"And if we rede of tholde lawe,
 I findé write in thilké lawe,
 Of princes how there weren thre
 Coupdble sore in this degre.
 That one of hem was clepéd thus
 The proude king Antiochus ;
 That other Nabuzardan hight,
 Which of his cruelté behight
 The temple to destruie and waste,
 And so he did in allé haste;
 The thridde, which was afier
 shamed,

Was NabugodoncSsor named,
 And he Jerusalem put under
 Of sacrilege and many a wonder
 There in the holy temple he wrought,
 Which Baltazar his heire abought,
 Whan Mane Techel Phares write
 Was on the wall, as thou might wite
 So as the bible it hath declared.
 But for al that it is nought spared
 Yet now a day that men ne pille
 And maken argument and skilie
 To sacrilege as it belongeth,
 For what man that there after
 longeth

He taketh none hede what he doth.
 And if a man shall tellé soth,
 Of guile and of subtilite
 Is none so sligh in his degre

To feigne a thing for his beyete
 As is this Vice of whiche I trete.
 He can so priveliché pike,
 He can so well his wordés slike
 To put away suspicion,
 That in his excusation
 There shall no man defalté finde.
 And thus full ofté men be blinde,
 That stonden in his word deceived,
 Er his queintise be perceived.
 But netheles yet other while
 For all his sleight and all his guile
 Of that hevvolde his werke forsake,¹
 He is atteint and overtake.
 Wherof thou shake a tale rede,
 In Rome as it befell in dede.

Er Rome cam to the creauce
 Of Cristés feith, it fell perchaunce,
 Cesdr, which tho was emperour.
 Him listé for to done honour
 Unto the temple Apollinis,
 And made an ymage upon this,
 The which was cleped Apollo,
 Was none so riche in Rome tho²
 Of plate of golde a berde he hadde,
 The which his brest all over spradde
 Of golde also without failc
 His mantell was of large entaile
 Beset with perrie³ all about,
 Forth right he straught his finger
 out

Upon the which he had a ringe,
 To seen it was a riche thing
 A fine carbuncle for the nones
 Most precious of alle stones.

" And fell that time in Rome thus
 There was a clerke one Lucius,
 A courteour, a famous man,
 Of every wit somewhat he can,
 Out také that him lacketh reule
 His owne estat to guide and reule.
 How so it stood of his spekmg,
 He was nought wise in his doing.

1 Forsake, deny. 2 Tho, then.
 3 Perrie, precious stones.

But every riote atté last
 Mot nedés falle, and may nought
 laste.

After the mede of his deserte
 So fell this clerke into pouerte
 And wisté nought how for to rise,
 Wherof in many a sondry wise
 He cast his wittés here and ther,
 He loketh nigh, he loketh fer,
 Till on a timé that he come
 Into the temple, and hede he nome
 Where that the god Apollo stood,
 He sigh the richesse and the good
 And thought he woldé by some way
 The tresor picke and stele away;
 And therupon so sleighly wrought
 That his purpose about he brought,
 And went away undpperceived.
 Thus hath the man his god deceived;
 His ring, his mantel and his berd,
 As he which nothing was aferd,
 All privély with him he bare.
 And whan the wardeins weren ware
 Of that her god despuiléd was,
 Hem thought it was a wonder cas
 How that a man for any wele
 Durst in so holy place stele,
 And namely so great a thing.
 This tate came unto the king,
 And was through spoken over all.
 But for to knowe in special!,
 What maner man hath do the dede,
 They soughten helpe upon the
 nede

And maden calculacion,
 Wherof by demonstration
 The man was founde with the good,
 In jugment and whan he stood,
 The king hath axéd of him thus :
 ' Say thou, unsely Lucius,
 Why hast thou don this sacri-
 legge?—

' My lord, if I the cause allegge,
 Quod he ayein, me thenketh this,
 That I have do nothing amis.

Thre points ther ben, which I have
do:

Wherof the firste point stant so,
That I the ring have take away;
As unto that, this woll I say,
Whan I the god behelde about,
I sigh how he his hond straught out
And profred me the ring to yive.
And I, which woldé gladly live
Out of pouerte, through his largesse
It underfang, so that I gesse
As therof I am nought to wite.¹
And evermore I woll me quite
Of gold that I the mantel toke;
Gold in his kind, as saith the boke,
Is hevy both and colde also.
And for that it was hevy so,
Me thought it was no garnément
Unto the god convenient
To clothen him the somer tide.
I thought, upon that other side,
Howgold is colde, and such a clothe
By reson oughté to be lothe
In winter time for the chele.
And thus thenkendé thougatés fele
As I min eie aboutd cast,
His largd berd than atté last
I sigh, and thought anone therfore,
How that his fader him before
Which stood upon the same place,
Was berdles with a yongly face.
And in such wise, as ye have herde,
I toke away the sonés berde
For that his fader haddé none
To make hem liche, and hereupon
I axe for to ben excused.'

'Lo thus, where sacrilege is used,
A man can feigne his conscience
And right upon such evidence
In Lovés cause if I shall trete,
There ben of suché small and great,
If they no leiser finden elles
They wol nought wonden for the
belles,

1 To wite, to blame.

Ne though they sen the prestat
masse,

That wol they leten overpasse,
If that they finden her love there
They stande and tellen in her ere
And axe of God none other grace
While they ben in that holy place.
But er they gon some avauntdge
There will they have and some
pilage

Of goodly word or of beheste,
Or elles they take atté leste
Out of her honde a ring or glove,
So nigh the weder they will have,
As who saith she shall nought for-
yete

Now I this token of her have gete.
Thus halwe they the highé feste,
Such thefté may no chirch areste,
For all is lefull that hem liketh,
To whom that elles it misliketh.
And eke right in the selve kinde
In greate citees men may finde
This lusty folk that make hem gay
And waite upon the haliday,
In chirches and in minstres eke
They gon the women for to seke,
And where that such one goth about
To-fore the fairest of the route
Where as they sitten all a rewe,
There will he moste his body shewe,
His croket¹ kempt and theron set
An ouché² with a chapdlet
Or ellés one of grene leves
Which laté came oute of the greves,
All for he shulde semé fressh.
And thus he loketh on his flessch
Right as an hawke which hath a sight
Upon the fowl there he shall light,
And as he were a fairie
He sheweth him to-fore her eye
In holy placé where they sitte

¹ Croket, croquet, a large roll of crossed hair
once in the fashion.

² Ouche, jewel, or jewel setting . . . , greves,
groves.

Al for to make her hertés flitte.
His eye no where woll abide
But loke and pry on every side
On her and her, as him best liketh,
And other while among he siketh ;
Thenketh one of hem ' That was
for me !'

And so there thenken two or thre
And yet he loveth none of alle,
But where as ever his chaunce falle;
And netheles to say a soth
The cause why that he so doth,
Is for to stele an herte or two
Out of the chirche er that he go.
And as I said it here above,
All is that sacrilege of love,
For well may be he steleth away
That he never after yelde may.
Tell me forthy, my sone, anone,
Hast thou do sacrilege or none
As I have said in this manere ?"—

" My fader, as of this matere
I woli you tellen redely
What I have do, but truely
I may excusé min entent,
That I never yet to chirche went
In such manér as ye me shrive,
For no women that is on live.
The causé why I have it laft
May be for I unto that craft
Am nothing able for to stele,
Though there be women nought so
fele.

But yet woll I nought sai this
Whan I am there my lady is,
In whom lith holy my quaréle,
And she to chirche or to chapele
Woll go to matins or to messe
That time I waité well and gesse,
To chirche I come, and there I
stonde,

And though I take a boke on honde
My contenance is on the boke
But toward her is all my loke.
And if so falle. that I pray

Unto my God and somewhat say
Of *Pater Noster* or of *Crede*
All is for that I wolde spede,
So that my bede in holy chirche
There mighté some miracle wirche
My ladies herté for to chaunge,
Which ever hath be to me so
straunge ;

So that all my devocion
And all my contemplacion
With all min herte and my corgé
Is only set on her ymage.
And ever I waite upon the tide
If she loke any thing aside,
That I me may of her avise ;
Anone I am with Covetise
So smite that me were lefe
To be in holy chirche a thefe,
But nought to stele a vestément
For that is nothing my talent.
But I wol stele if that I might
A glad word or a goodly sight,
And ever my service I profre,
And namely whan she woll gone
offre,

For than I lede her, if I may.
For somewhat wold I stele away
Whan I beclippe her on the wabte,
Yet att last I stele a taste,¹
And other while 'graunt mercy'
She saith, and so win I therby
A lusty touch, a good worde eke,
But all the remenaunt to seke
Is fro my purpos wonder fer.
So may I say, as I said er,
In holy chirch if that I wowe,
My conscience I wolde allowe
Be so that up amendement
I mighte get assignement
Where for to spede in other place;
Such sacrilege I hold a grace.

"And thus, my fader, soth to say
In chirché right as in the way

¹ *Taste*, touch (*tater*). So a knight might
in llie old romances taste his horse; or a
damsel taste a hero's wound.

If I might ought of lové take
 Such hansom have I nought forsake.
 But finally I me confesse,
 There is in me no halinesse
 While I her se in haly stede.
 And yet for ought that ever I dede
 No sacrilege of her I toke
 But if it were of worde or loke
 Or elles if that I her fredde¹
 Whan I toward offring her ledde,
 Také therof what I take may
 For elles here I nought away,
 For though I wolde ought elles have
 All other thingés ben so save
 And kept with such aprivilege
 That I may do no sacrilege;
 God wot my wille netheles.
 Though I must nedes kepe pees
 And nialgre min so let it passe,
 My will therto is nought the lasse,
 If I might other wise away.
 Forth, my fader, I you pray,
 Tell what you thenketh therupon,
 If I therof have gilt or none."—

"Thy will, my sone, is for to
 blame,

The remenaunt is but a game
 That I have herd the tellé yit.
 But take this lore into thy wit,
 That alle thing hath time and stede,²
 The chirche serveth for the bede,²
 The chambre is of an other speche ;
 But if thou wistest of the wreche
 How sacrilege it hath abought,
 Thou woldest better ben bethought.
 And for thou shalt the more amende,
 A tale I will on the sende.

"Collemen" as who saith knowe
 It is, and in the world through biowe,
 How that of Troié Lamedon
 To Hercules and to Jason,
 Whan toward Colchos out of Grece
 By see sailénd, upon a piece
 Of londe of Troie resté preide.

¹ Fredde, felt.

² Bede, prayer.

But he hem wrothfully congide,¹
 And for they found him so villein,
 Whan they came into Grece ayein
 With power that they gette might
 Towardés Troie they hem dight
 And there they token such ven-
 geaunce,

Wherofstantyettheremembraunce.
 For they destruiéd king and all
 And leften but the brenté wall,
 The Grekes of Troians many slow²
 And prisoners they toke mow,
 Among the whiché theie was one
 The kingés doughter Lamedon
 Esiona the faire thing,
 Which unto Thelamon the king
 By Hercules and by thassent
 Of all the hole parlement
 Was at his wille yove and graunted.
 And thus hath Grece Troié daunted,
 Andhometheytorneinsuchmanure.
 But after this, now shalt thou here
 The cause, why I this talé telle,
 Upon the chaunce that befelle.

"King Lamedon, which deide
 thus,

He had a sone one Priamus,
 Which was nought thilke time at
 home,

But whan he herd of this, he come
 And found how the citee was falle,
 Which he began anon to walle
 And made there a citee newe,
 That they which other londesknewe
 Tho saiden that of lime and stone
 In all the world so faire was none.
 And on that o side of the town
 The king let maken Ylion,
 Thathighé toure, thatstronge place,
 Which was adrad of no mandce
 Of quarele nor of none engfne.
 And though men woldémakeamine,
 No mannés craft it might approche,
 For it was set upon a roche

¹ Congeide, expelled.

² Slow , slew.

The wallés of the towne about,
 Hem stood of all the world no doubt.¹
 And after the proportionn
 Six gates were there of the town
 Of such a forme of such entaile
 That hem to se was great merveile.
 The dichés weren brode and depe,
 A fewé men it mighte kepe
 From all the world, as semeth tho
 But if² the goddés weren fo.
 Great prees unto that citee drough,
 So that there was of people inough
 Of burgeis that therinne dwellen,
 There may no mannés tunge tellen,
 How that citee was riche and good.

"Whan ail was made and all
 well stood,

King Priamus tho him bethought
 What they of Greed whilom wrought,
 And what was of her swerd devoured,
 And how his suster deshonoured
 With Thelamon away was lad.
 And tho thenkend he wex unglad
 And set anone a parlement
 To which the lordes were assent.³
 In many wise there was spoke,
 How that they mighten bene awroke,
 But atté lasté nethéles
 They saiden all accorde and pees;
 To setten every parte in rest
 It thought hem thanne for the best
 With resonoble amendément'
 And thus was Anthenor forth sent
 To axen Esiona ayein
 And witen what they wolden sain.

"So passeth he the see by barge
 To Grece for to say his charge,
 The which he saide redely
 Unto the lordés by and by.⁴
 But where he spake in Grece aboute,

1 *Doubt*, fear.

2 *But if*, unless.

3 *Assent*, sent for, summoned.

4 *By and by*, immediately. "By and by,"
 "presently," "anon," and some other words of
 promptitude have grown into senses that ex-
 press some little delay.

He herde nought but wordés stoute
 And nameliche of Thelamon.
 The maiden wolde he nought forgon,
 He saide, for no maner thing,
 And bad him gone home to his king,
 For theré gat he none amende
 For ought he couthé do or sende.

"This Anthenor ayein gothhome
 Unto his king, and whan he come,
 He tolde in Grece of that he herde,
 And how that Thelamon answdre,
 And how they were at her above,
 That they wol nouthur pees ne love
 But every man shall done his best.
 But for men sain, that night hath
 rest,

The king bethought him all that
 night,

And erly whan the day was light
 He toke counsefl of this matdre,
 And they accorde in this manure,—
 That he withouten any let
 A certain timé shulde set
 A parldment to ben avised,
 And in this wise it was avised.
 Of parldment he set a day,
 And that was in the month of May.
 This Priamus had in his ight¹
 A wife, and Hecuba she hight,
 By whom at that time eke had he
 Senés five and doughters thre
 Besiden hem and thritty mo,²
 And weren knightés alle tho²
 But nought upon his wife begete,
 But ellés where he might hem gete
 Of women which he haddé knowe.
 Such was the world that ilkéthrowe,
 So that he was of children riche
 So therof was no man him liche.

Of parldment the day was come.
 There ben the lordes all and some,
 Tho was pronounced and purposed
 And all the cause hem was des-
 closed,

1 *Ight*, possession.

2 *Tho*, those.

How Anthenor in Grece ferde.
 They sitten alle still and herde,
 Arid tho spake every man aboute;
 There was alleggéd many a doubte,
 And many a proud word spoke also.
 But for the moste parte as tho
 They wisten nought what was the
 beste

Or for to werre or for to reste.
 But he that was withouté fere,¹
 Hector, among the lordes there
 His tale tolde in suche a wise
 And saide : ' Lordés, ye ben wise,
 Ye knowen this als well as I,
 Above all other most worth
 Stant now in Grece the manhod
 Of worthinesse and of knightod.
 For who so woll it wel agrope,
 To hem belongeth all Europe,
 Whiche is the thriddé parte even
 Of all the world under the hevén.
 And we be but of folk a fewe,
 So were it reson for to shewe
 The peril er we fall therinne.
 Bet is to leve than beginne
 Thing whichas may nought ben
 acheved,

He is nought wise, that find him
 greved

And doth so that his greve be more.
 For who that loketh all to-fore
 And woll nought se what is behinde,
 He may full ofte his harmes finde.
 Wickis to strive and have the worse,
 We have enchésou for to curse,
 This wote I well, and for to hate
 The Grekes, but er that we debate
 With hem that ben of such a might
 It is full good that every wight
 Be of him self right well bethought.
 But as for me thus say I nought,
 For whilé that my life woll stonde,
 If that ye take werre on honde,
 Fall it to the best or to the werst,

¹ Fere, companion, equal.

I shall my selven be the ferst
 To greven hem what ever I may.
 I woll nought onés saie nay
 To thing which that your counceil
 demeth,

For unto me well more it quemeth
 The werre certés than the pees.
 But this I saie nethéles,
 As me belongeth for to say.
 Now shapé ye the bests' way.'

"Whan Hector hath said his avis
 Next after him tho spake Paris,
 Which was his brother, and alaide¹
 What him best thought, and thus
 he saide :

' Strong thing it is to suffré wronge,
 And suffreshame is more stronge ;
 But we have suffred bothé two :
 And, for all that, yet have we do
 What so we mighté to reforme
 The pees, whan we in suche a forme
 Sent Anthenor, as ye wel knowe.
 And they her grete wordes blowe
 Upon her wrongfull dedes eke,
 And he that woll him self nought
 meke

To pees and list no reson take,
 Men sain reson him wol forsake.

For in the multitude of men
 Is nought the strength, for with ten
 It hath be sene in true quarele
 Ayein an hunderd false dele
 And had the better, of Goddes grace.
 Thus hath befallé in many place.

And if it like unto you alle,
 I will assay how so it falle
 Our enemies if I may greve,
 For I have caught a gret beleve
 Upon a point I wol declare.

' This ender day as I gan fare
 To hunt unto the grete herte
 Which was to-fore min houndes
 sterte,

And every man went on his side

¹ Alaide, alleged.

Him to pursue, and I to ride
 Began to chase, and soth to say,
 Within a while, out of my way
 I rode, and nisté where I was,
 And slepe caught me and on the
 grnsse

Beside a wellle I laid me down
To slepe, and in a vision
To me the god Mercdrie cam,
Goddesses thre with him he nam
Minerve, Venus and Juno,
And in his honde an appel tho
He helde of gold with letters write.
And this he dide me to wite
How that they put hem upon me,
That to the fairest of hem thre
Of gold that appel shulde I yive.
With ech of hem tho was I shrive
And eche one faire me behight.¹
But Venus said, if that she might
That appel of my yifte gete,
She wolde it nevermore foryete;
And saide, how that in Grece londe
She woldé bring into min honde
Of all this erthe the fairést:
So that me thought it for the best
To her and yaf the appel tho.
Thus hope I well if that I go
That she for me woll so ordeigne
That they matere for to pleigne
Shull have or that I come ayein.
Nowe have ye herd that I woli sain,
Say ye what stant in your avis,'—
And every man tho saide his,
And sondry causes they recorde,
But atté lasté they accorde
That Paris shall to Grece wende.
And thus the parlement toke ende.

" Cassandra whan she herd of this,
The which to Paris suster is,
Anone she gan to wepe and weile
And said : 'Alas, what may us eile,
Fortuné with her blindé whele .

¹ *Faire* behight, promised fairly, made fair promises,

Ne woll nought let us stonde wele,
For this I dare well undertake,
That if Paris his waié take,
As it is said that he shall do,
We ben for ever than undo.'—
The which—Cassandra thannight
In all the world as it bereth sight,—
In bokés as men finde write,
Is that Sibille of whom ye wite,¹
That alle men yet clepen sage.
Whan that she wist of this viage,
How Paris shall to Grece fare,
No woman mighte worse fare
Ne sorwé moré than she did.
And right so in the same stede
Ferd Helenus which was her brother,
Of prophecy and such another,
And all was holdé but a jape,
So that the purpos which was shape,
Orwere hem lefe or were hem lothe,
Was holde, and into Grece tie goth,
This Paris, with his retenaunce.
And as it fell upon his chauce,
Of Grece he londeth in an ile,
And him was told the samé while
Of folk which he began to freine,²
Tho was in thile quene Heleine,
And eke of centres there about
Of ladies many a lusty rout,
With mochel worthy people also.
And why they comen thider tho
The cause stood in such a wise
For worship and for sacrifice
That they to Venus wolden make,
As they to-fore had undertake,
Some of good will, some of behest,
For thanné was her highé fest
Within a temple which was there.
Whan Paris wisté what they were,
Anone he shope his ordenaunce
To gone and done his obeisance
To Venus on her haliday
And did upon³ his best array.

1 *Wite* know. 2 *Freine* make inquiry.

3 *Did upon, put on.*

With great riches he him be-
longeth

As it to such a lord belongeth,
He was nought armed netheles,
But as it were in londe of pees.
And thus he goth forth out of ship
And taketh with him his felaship;
In such manere as I you say
Unto the Temple he helde his way.

" Tidinge, which goth over all
To greate and smalle forth withall,
Come to the quenes ere and tolde
How Paris come, and that hewolde
Do sacrifice to Venus.

And whan she herde telle thus,
She thought, how that it ever be,
That she woll him abide and se.

" Forth cometh Paris with glad
visage

Into the Temple on pelrinage,
Where unto Venus the goddessse
He yiveth and offreth great richesse
And praieth her that he praie wolde.
And than aside he gan beholde,
And sigh where that this lady stood,
And he forth in his fresshé mood
Goth there she was, and made her
chere

As he well couth in his manére,
That of his wordés such plesaunce
She toke, that all her aqueintaunce
Als ferforth as the herte lay
He stale er that he went away.
So goth he forth and toke his leve
And thought anone, as it was eve,
He wolde done his sacrilege,
That many a man shuldeit abegge.¹
Whan he to ship ayein was come
To him he hath his counseil nome²
And all devised the matere
In such a wise as thou shalt here.
Withinné night all prively
His men he warneth by and by
That they be redy armed sone

¹ Abegge, aby, pay for. - Nome, taken.

For certain thing whiche is to done.
And they anone ben redy alle
And echone other gan to calle
And went hem out upon the stronde
And toke a purpos there on londe
Of what thing that they wolden do,
Toward the Temple and forth
they go.

So fell it of devotion
Heleine in contemplation
With many an other worthy wight
Was in the Temple and woke all
night

To bid and pray unto thymáge
Of Venus, as was than usdge,
So that Paris right as him list
Into the Temple er they it wist
Came with his men all sodeinly.
And all at onés set askry¹

In hem which in the Temple were,
For tho was mochel people there,
But of defence was no bote,
So suffren they that suffre mote.
Paris unto the quene wente
And her in both his armes hente
With him and with his felaship
And forth they bere her into ship.
Up goth the saile, and forth they
went,

And suche a wind Fortune hem sent,
Till they the haven of Troie caught,
Where out of ship anone they
straught

And gone hem forth toward the town,
The which came with procession
Ayein Paris to sene his pray.
And every man began to say
To Paris and his felaship
All that they couthen of worship,
Was none so litel man in Troy
That he ne made merthe and joy
Of that Paris had wonne Heleine.
But all that merthe is sorwe and
peine

¹ Askry, screaming.

To Helenus and to Cassandre.
For they it tolden¹ shame and
sclaundre

And loss of all the comun grace,
That Paris out of haly place
By stelth hath take a mannés wife,
Wherof that he shall lese his life,
And many a worthy man therto,
And all the citee be fordo
Which never shall be made ayein.
And so it fell, right as they sain,
The sacrilegge which he wrought
Was cause why the Gregois sought
Unto the town and it belay
And wolden never part away
Till what by sleight and what by
strength
They had it wonne in brede and
length
And brent and slain that was
withinne.

"Now se, my soné, which a sinne
Is sacrilege in haly stede.
Beware therefore, and bid thy bede²
And do nothing in haly chirche
But that thou might by reson wirche.
And eke take hede of Achilles,
Whan he unto his love chees
Polixena" that was also
In haly Temple of Apollo,
Which was the cause why he deide
And all his lust was laid aside.
And Troilus upon Creseide
Also his firsté lové laide
In haly place, and how it ferde
As who saith all the world it herde.
Forsake he was for Diomede,
Such was of love his laste mede.

"Forthy my sone, I wolde rede
By this ensample as thou might rede
Seche diés where thou wilt thy grace
And ware thee well, in haly place,
What without love do or speke

thou.

¹ Tolden, accounted, reckoned.

² Bid thy bede, pray thy prayer.

In aunter if it so be wreke¹
As thou hast herd me tell to-fore,
And take good hede also therfore.

Upon the forme of Avarice
More than of any other Vice
I have devided in parties
The braunches, which of com-
paignies

Through out the world in generall
Be now the leders over all
Of Covetise and Perjurie,
Of Fals Brocage and Usurie,
Of Scarsenness and of Unkinde-
ship,

Which never drough to felaship,
Of Robberie and of Prive Stelth,
Which done is for the worldes welth,
Of Ravine and of Sacrilegge,
Which maketh the conscience
agregge;²

All though it may richesse atteigne,
It floureth but it shall not greine
Unto the fruit of rightwisnesse.
But who that wolde do Largesse
Upon the reule as it is yive,
So might a man in trouthe live
Toward his God and eke also
Toward the World, for bothé two
Largesse awaiteth, as belongeth
To neither part that he ne wrongeth.
He kepeth him self, he kepeth his
frendes,

So stant he sauf to both his endes ;
That he excedeth no mesure,
So well he can him self mesure:
Wherof, my soné, thou shalt wite³
So as the philosophre hath write,
"Betwene the two extremities

Of Vice stont the property's
Of Vertue, and to prove it so
Take Avarice and take also
The Vice of Prodegalite,
Betwene hem Liberalite,

¹ Wreke, avenged.

² Agregge, feel overburdened.

³ Wite, know.

Which is the Vertue of Largesse,
 Stant and governeth his noblesse.
 For tho two Vices in discorde
 Stond ever, as I find of recorde;
 So that betwene her two debate
 Largessé reuleth his estate,
 For in such wise as Avarice,
 As I to-fore have told the Vice,
 Through streit holding and through
 scarsnesse

Stant as contrail to largesse,
 Right so stant Prodegalité
 Revers, but nought in such degre,
 For so as Avaricé spareth
 And for to kepe his tresor careth,
 That other all his own and more
 Ayein the wisé mannes lore
 Yiveth and despendeth here and
 there,

So that him reccheth never where ;
 While he may borwe he woll de-
 spende

Till att'e last he saith : ' I wende.'¹

But that is spoken all to late,
 For than is pouerte at the gate
 And taketh him even by the sieve,
 For erst woll he no wisdom leve.
 And right as Avarice is sinne,
 That wold his tresor kepe and winne,
 Right so is Prodegalité.

But of Largesse in his degre,
 Which even stant betwene the two,
 The highé God and man also
 The vertue eche of hem commen-
 deth.

For he him selven first amendeth,
 That over all his name spredeth,
 And to all other where it nedeth
 He yiveth his good in such a wise
 That he maketh many a man arise
 Which diés shuldé fallé low.
 Largesse may nought be unknowe,
 For what lond that he regneth inne,

¹ I wende I will turn (over a new leaf), will change my way.

It may nought faile for to winne
 Through his deserte love and grace,
 Where it shall faile in other place.
 And thus, betwene to moch and lite,¹
 Largesse, which is nought to wite,
 Holt ever forth the middel way.
 But who that torne wol away
 Fro that to Prodegalité,
 Anone he left the proprete
 Of Vertu and goth to the Vice.
 For in such wise as Avarice
 Leseth for scarsnesse his good
 name,

Right so that other is to blame,
 Which through his wast mesure
 exceedeth.

For no man wot what harm that
 bredeth

But mochel joie ther betideth,
 Where that Largesse an herte
 guideth.

For his mesure is so governed,
 That he in bothe parts is lerned
 To God and to the World also,
 He doth reson to bothe two.
 The pouer folk of his almesse
 Relieved ben in the distresse
 Of thurst of hunger and of colde,
 Ne yift of him was never soldo
 But frely yive, and nethéles
 The mighty God of his ences
 Rewardeth him of double grace,
 The heven he doth him to purchase
 And yiveth him eke the worldés good.
 And thus the cote for the hood
 Largesse taketh, and yet no sinne
 He doth, how so that ever he winne.
 What man hath hors, men given
 him hors,
 And who ne hath, of him no force,²
 For he may thenne on fote go;
 The world hath ever stonde so.
 But for to loken of the tweie,

¹ To wite, to be blamed.

² No force, no matter.

A man to go the siker weie,
 Bet is to yive than to take,
 With yifte a man may frendiés make,
 But who that taketh or great or small,
 He taketh a charge forth with all
 And stant nought fre til it be quit.
 So for to deme in mannes wit,
 It helpeth more a man to have
 His owne good than for to crave
 Of other men and make him bonde
 Wher elles he may stond unbonde.
 Senec counseileth in this wise
 And saith : ' But if the good suffice
 Unto the liking of the will,
 Withérawe thy lust and hold the still
 And be to thy good suffisaúnt,
 For that thing is appurtenaunt
 To trouthe and causeth to be fre
 After the reule of charite,
 Which first beginneth of him selve.
 For if thou richest other twelve,
 Wherof thou shalt thyself bepouer,
 I not what thank thou might recouer.
 While that a man hath good to yive,
 With greate routés he may live
 And hath his frendes over all,
 And everich of him tellé shall,
 The while he hath his fullte packe
 They say, ' A good felaw is Jacke.'
 But whan it faileth atte last,
 Anone his prise they overcast,
 For than is there none other lawe,
 But ' Jacke was a good felawe.'
 Whan they him pouer and nedy se,
 They let him passe and fare well he;
 Al that he wend of compaignie
 Is thanne torned to folie.

" But now to speke in other kinde
 Of Love, a man may suche finde,
 That where they come in every rout,
 They cast and wast her love about
 Till all her time is overgone,
 And thanné have they lové none.
 For he that loveth over all,
 It is no reson that he shall

Of love have any proprete.
 Forthy my sone, avise the,
 If thou of love hast ben to large ;
 For suche a man is nought to charge.
 And if it so be, that thou hast
 Despended al thy time in wast
 And set thy love in sondry place,
 Though thou the substaunce of thy
 grace

Lese at the last, it is no wonder,
 For he that put him selven under
 As who saith comun over all,
 He leseth the lové speciall
 Of any one, if she be wise.
 For lové shall nought bere his prise
 By reson, whan it passeth one.
 So have I sen full many one,
 That were of love wel at ese,
 Which after fell in great disease
 Through wast of lové, that they spent
 In sondry places where they went.
 Right so, my sone, I axe of the,
 If thou with prodegalite
 Hast here and there thy lo\nd
 wasted ?"—

"My fader, nay, but I have tasted
 In many a place as I have go,
 And yet love I never one of tho
 But for to drive forth the day.
 For leveth well, my hert is ay
 Withoute mo for evermore
 All upon one, for I no more
 Desire but her love alone.
 So make I many a prive mone,
 For well I fele I have despended
 My longé love and nought amended
 My spede, for ought I finde yit.
 If this be wast, unto your wit,
 Of love and prodegalite,
 Now, gode fader, demeth ye.
 But of o thing I wolle me shrive,
 That I shall for no love thrive
 But if her self me woll releve."—

" My sone, that I may well leve,¹

¹ Leve, believe.

And netheles me semeth so
 For ought that thou hast yet misdo
 Of timé whiché thou hast spended,
 It may with gracé ben amended.
 For thing which may be worth the
 cost

Perchaunce is nouthur wast ne lost,
 For what thing stant on aventure
 That can no worlde's creature
 Tell in certain how it shall wende
 Till he therof may sene an ende.
 So that I note¹ as yet therefore,
 If thou, my sone, hast wone or lore.
 For ofte time, as it is sene,
 Whan somer hath lost all his grene
 And is with winter wast and bare,
 That him is left nothing to spare,—

¹ Note, know not.

All is recovered in a throwe;
 The colde winde"s overblowe,
 And stilted ben the sharpé shoures,
 And sodeinlich ayein his floures
 The somer happneth, and is riche,
 And so parcas thy grace is liche.
 My soné, though thou be now pouer
 Of lové, yet thou might recouer."—
 " My fader, certe graunt mercy,
 Ye have me taught so redily,
 That ever while I live shall
 The bet I may be ware with all
 Of thing which ye have said er this.
 But evermore how that it is
 Toward my shrifte as it belongeth,
 To wit of other points me longeth,
 Wherof that ye me wolden teche
 With all min herte I you beseche."

Book VII.

OF GLUTTONY.

The grete sinne originall,
Which every man in general
Upon his birth hath envenimed,
In Paradis it was mistimed,
Whan Adam of thilke appel bote,
His swete morcel was to hote,
Which dedly¹ made the mankinde.
And in the bokes as I finde
This Vice, which so out of reule
Hath set us all, is cleped Gule,
Of which the braunches be so great
That of hem all I wol nought treat,
But only as touchend of two
I thenke speke and of no mo.
Wherof the first is Dronkeship
Which bereth the cuppe felaship.
Ful many a wonder doth this Vice,
He can make of a wisman nice,
And of a fool that him shall seme
That he can all the lawe deme
And yiven every jugement
Which longeth to the firmament
Both of the sterre and of the mone.
And thus he maketh a great clerk

sone

Of him that is a lewde man.
There is no thing, whiche he ne can
While he hath dronkeship on honde,
He knoweth the see, he knoweth
the stronde,
He is a noble man of armes,—
And yet no strength is in his armes.

1 *Dedly*, mortal.

There he was stronge inow to-fore
With dronkeship it is forlore,
And all is chaunged his estate
And wext anone so feble and mate,¹
That he may nouthur go ne come,
But all to-gider he is benome²
The power both of honde and fote
So that algate abide he mote,
And all his wittés he foryete.
The which is to him such a lete³
That he wot never what he doth,
Ne which is fals ne which is soth,
Ne which is day ne which is night,
As for the time he knoweth no wight⁴
That he ne wot so moch as this—
What maner thing him selven is
Or he be man or he be beste.
That holde I right a sory feste,
Whan he that reson understode
So sodeinlich is woxe wode
Or elles lich the dedé man
Which nouthur go ne speke can.
Thus ofte rfe is to bedde brought,
But where he lith yet wot he nought,
Till he arise upon the morwe
And than he saith, 'O, which asorwe
It is for to be drinkéles,'
So that half drunke in such a rees
With drie mouth he sterte him up
And saith, 'Now *baillez ca* the cuppe,'

1 *Mate*, dull, flat.

2 *Benome*, deprived of.

3 *Lete*, hindrance.

4 *No wight*, no whit.

That made him lese his wit at eve
Is than a morwe all his beleve,
The cuppe is all that ever him pleseth
And also that him most diseseth,
It is the cuppé whom he serveth,
Which allé carés from him kerveth
And all the bales to him bringeth.
Injoy he wepeth, in sorwe he singeth,
For dronkéship is so divers
It may no while stonde invers,
He drinketh the wine, but atté last
The wine drinketh him and bint
him fast

And laith him drunke by the walle
As him which is his bondé thralle
And all in his subjection.

And lich to such condicion
As for to speke it otherwise
It falleth, that the mosté wise
Ben other while of Love adoted
And so bewhappéd and assoted ¹
Of dronken men that never yit
Was none which half so lost his wit
Of drinke, as they of such thing do
Which cleped is the jolif wo,
And waxen of her owné thought
So drunké that they knowe nought,
What reson is, or more or lesse.
Such is the kinde of that siknesse,
And that is nought for lacke of
braine,

But Love is of so great a maine ²
That where he taketh a herte on
honde,

There may no thing his might with-
sonde.

The wisé Salomon was nome,
And strong Sampson overcome,
The knightly David him ne might
Rescoué that he with the sight
Of Bersabé ne was bestade.
Virgile also was overlade,
And Aristotle was put under.

¹ *Bewhapped and assoted, knocked over and besotted*

² *Maine, strength.*

"Forthy my sone, it is no wonder,
If thou be drunke of Love amonge,
Which is above all other stronge.
And if so is that thou so be,
Tell me thy shrift in priveté,
It is no shame of such a thewe
A yong man to be dronkelewe.
Of such phisfque I can a parte,
And as me seineth by that arte
Thou shuldest by phisonomy
Be shapen to that malady
Oflovéd drunk, and that is routhé."—

"Ha, holy fader, all is trouthe
That ye me telle, I am beknowe,
That I with Love am so bethrowe ¹
And al min herte is so through
sunke

That I am veriliche drunke,
And yet I may both speke and go.
But I am overcome so
And torned from my self so clene
That oft I wot nought what I mene,
So that excusen I ne may
My herté fro the firste day
That I cam to my lady kith. ²

I was yet sobre never sith,
Where ³ I her se or se her nought;
With musing of min owne thought
Of lové which min herte assaileth
So drunke I am that my wit failleth
And all my braine is overtorned,
And my manéré so mistorned,
That I foryete all that I can
And stonde like a maséd man,
That ofté whan I shulde play
It maketh me drawe out of the way
In solein ⁴ place by my selve,
As doth a laborer to delve
Which can no gentilmannés chere, ⁵
Or diés as a lewdé frere,
Whan he is put to his penaunce,

¹ *Bethrowe, cast down.*

² *Cam kith, became known.*

³ *Where, whether.*

⁴ *Solein, single.*

⁵ *Who knows nothing of the good manners of a gentleman.*

Right so lese I my contenance.
 And if it nedes so betide,
 That I in compaigny abide,
 Where as I muste daunce and singe
 The hove-daunce¹ and carolinge,
 Or for to go the newe fote,
 I may nought wel heve up my fote,
 If that she be nought in the way.
 For than is all my merth away,
 And waxe anone of thought so full,
 Wherof my limmes ben so dull,
 I may unethes² gon the pas.
 For thus it is and ever was,
 Whan I on suché thoughtes muse,
 The lust and merthe that men use,
 Whan I se nought my lady by me,
 All is foryete for the time
 So ferforth that my wittes chaungen
 And allé lustes fro me straungen,
 That they sain alle truety
 And swere, that it am nought I.
 For as the man which ofte drinketh
 The wine that in his stomacksinketh
 Wexth drunke and witles for a
 throwe,
 Right so my lust is overthrowe,
 And of min owne thought so mate³
 I waxe, that to min estate
 There is no limme will me serve,
 But as a drunken man I swerve
 And suffre such a passion,
 That men have great compassion
 And everich by him self merveilith
 What thing it is that me so efleth.
 Such is the maner of my wo,
 Which timé that I am her fro,
 Till efte ayein that I her se.
 But than it were a nicété
 To tellé you how that I fare.
 For whan I may upon her stare,
 Her womanheed, her gentillesse,
 Min hert is full of such gladnesse
 That overpasseth so my wit

¹ *Hove-daunce*, court dance.

² *Unethes*, not easily.

³ *Mate*, dull, dead.

That I wot never where it sit,
 But am so drunken of that sight
 Me thenketh for the time I might
 Right sterte through the hole wall.
 And than I may well, if I shall,
 Both singe and daunce and lepe
 about
 And holde forth the lusty rout.
 But nethees it falleth so
 Full ofte that I fro her go
 Ne may, but as it were a stake
 I stonde, avisement to take
 And loke upon her faire face,
 That for the while out of the place
 For all the world ne might I wende.
 Such lust comth than into my
 minde,
 So that withoute mete and dúnke
 Of lusty thoughtés which I thinke,
 Me thenketh I mighté stonden ever.
 And so it were to me lever
 Than such a sighté for to leve,
 If that she wolde yive me leve
 To have so mochel of my will.
 And thus thenkend I stonde still
 Withouté blenching of min eye,
 Right as me thought that I sigh
 Of paradis the mosté joy.
 And so there while I me rejoy;
 Unto min herte a great desire
 The which is hoter than the fire
 All sodeinliche upon me renneth,
 That all my thought withinné bren-
 neth
 And am so ferforth overcome
 That I not where I am become,
 So that among tho hertés stronge
 In stede of drinke I underfonge
 A thought so swete in my cordge,
 That never piment¹ ne vernage³
 Was half so sweté for to drinke.
 For as I wolde, than I thinke,

¹ *Piment* wine with a third part of honey
 spiced with powder of cloves, mace, cinnamon,
 cubebs, and galingale.

² *Veriége*, a white wine.

As though I were at min above,
 For so through drunke I am of love,
 That all that my sotie demeth
 Is soth as than it to me semeth.
 And while I may tho thoughtés kepe
 Me thenketh as though I were aslepe
 And that I were in Goddés barme.¹
 But whan I se min owné harme
 And that I sodeinliche awake
 Out of my thought and hedé take
 How that the sothé stant in dede,
 Than is my sikernesse in drede
 And joié tornéd into wo,
 So that the hete is all ago
 Of such sotie as I was inne.
 And than ayeinward I beginne
 To take of love a newe thorst,
 The which me greveth alltherworst,
 Forthanné cometh the blanche fever
 With chele and maketh me so to
 chever²

And so it coldeth at min herte,
 That wonder is how I asterolte³
 In suche a point that I ne deie.
 For certes there was never keie
 Ne frozen is upon the walle
 More inly cold than I am alle.
 And thus suffré I the hote chele
 Which passeth other peines fele,
 In colde I brenne and frese in hete
 And than I drinke a bitter swete
 With drie lippe and eyen wete.
 Lo, thus I temper my diete
 And take a draught of such reles⁴
 That all my wit is herteles
 And all min herté there it sit
 Is as who saith withouté wit,
 So that to prove it by reson
 In making of comparisdn
 There may no differéncé be
 Betwen a drunken man and me,
 But all the werst of everychone
 Is ever that I thurst in one,

The more that my herte drinketh
 The more I may, so that me
 thinketh,
 My thurst shall never be acquieint.¹
 God shield that I be nought dreint
 Of such a superfluite
 For well I fele in my degre
 That all my wit is overcast,
 Wherof I am the more agast
 That in defaulte of ladyship
 Perchaunce in such a dronkeship
 I may be dead er I beware.
 For certes, fader, this I dare
 Beknowe and in my shrift telle,
 But² I a draught have of that welle
 In which my deth is and my life,
 My joy is tornéd into strife,
 That sobre shall I never worthe,³
 But as a drunken man forworthe,⁴
 So that in londé, where I fare,
 The lust is lore of my welfare,
 As he that may no bote finde.
 But this methenketh a wonder kinde,
 As I am drunke of that I drinke
 Of thesé thoughtés that I thinke
 Of which I finde no reles,
 But if I mighte netheles
 Of suche a drinke as I coveite
 So as me list have o receite,
 I shulde assobre⁵ and fare wele.
 But so Fortune upon her whele
 On high medeigneth nought to sette,
 For evermore I finde a lette.
 The boteler is nought my frend
 Which hath the keie by the bend.⁶
 I may well wissh and that is waste,
 For well I wot so fressh a taste,
 But if my gracie be the more,
 I shall assaie nevermore.
 Thus am I drunke of that I se,
 For tasting is defended me,

1 Acquieint, quenched.

2 But unless.

3 Worthe, become.

4 Forworthe, perish.

5 Assobre, become sober.

6 The key on his girdle, or band.

1 Barme, bosom.

2 Chever, shiver.

3 Asterte, escape.

4 Reles, relish.

And I can nought my selven
staunche,

So that, my fader, of this braunche
I am gyltif, to tellé trouth."—

"My soné, that me thenketh
routh.

For lovedrunke is the mischefe
Above all other the moste chefe,
If he no lusty thought assay
Which may his sory thurst allay,
As for the timé yet it lesseth
To him which other joie misseth.

"Forthy my sone, aboven all
Think well how so it the befall,
And kepe thy wittes that thou hast
And let hem nought be drunke in
wast.

But netheles there is no wight,
That may withstonde Loves might.
But why the cause is, as I finde,
But that there is diverse kinde
Of lovedrunke: why men pleigneth
After the court which all ordeigneth,
1 will the tellen the manere,
Now list, my sone, and thou shalt
here.

For the fortune of every
chaunce

After the goddes purveaunce
To man it groweth from above,
So that the spede of every love
Is shape there, er it befall.
For Jupiter aboven alle,
Which is of goddes soverain,
Hath in his celler, as men sain,
Two tonnés full of love drinke
That maketh many an herté sinke
And many an herte also to flete,¹
Or of the soure or of the swete.
That one is full of such piment
Which passeth all entendment
Of mannes wit if he it taste,
And maketh a jolif herte in haste.

"That other bitter as the galle,

¹ Flete, float, swim.

Which maketh amannés hertpalle,
Whose dronkeship is a siknesse
Through feling of the bitternesse.
Cupide is bottler of bothe,
Which to the leve and to the lothe
Yiveth of the swete and of the soure,
That somé laugh and somé loure.
But for so much as he blinde is
Full ofte time he goth amis
And taketh the badde for the good,
Which hindreth many amannés food
Without cause and furthereth eke.
So be there some of love seke
Which ought of reson to ben hole,
And somé comé to the dole
In happe and as hem selven lest¹
Drinke undeserved of the best.

"And thus this blindé botelere
Yiveth of the trouble in stede of
chere
And eke the chere in stede of trouble.
Lo, how he can the hertes trouble
And maketh men drunke al upon
chaunce

Without lawe of governaunce.
If he drawe of the swete tonne,
Than is the sorwe all overronne
Of lovédrunke, and shall nought
greven

So to be drunken every even,
For all is thanne but a game.
But whan it is nought of the same
And he the better tonne draweth,
Such dronkeship an herte gnaweth
And febleth all a mannes thought,
That better him were have drunk
nought

And all his brede have eten drie,
For than he lest his lusty wey
With dronkeship and wot nought
whider

To go, the waies ben so slider,
In whiche he may par cas so falle
That he shall breke his winés alle.

¹ Lest, please.

And in this wise men be drunke
 And the drinke they have drunke.
 But alle drinken nought alike,
 For some shall singe and some shal
 sike,

So that it me no thing mervefleth,
 My sone, of love that the eyleth.
 For wel I knowé by thy tale,
 That thou hast drunken of the
 dwale¹

Which bitter is, till God the sende
 Such gracé that thou might
 amende.

But sone, thou shalt bid and pray
 In such a wise as I shall say,
 That thou the lusté well atteigne
 Thy wofull thurstes to restreigne
 Of Love and tasté the swetenesse,
 As Bachus did in his distresse,
 Whan bodeliché thurst him hent
 In straungé londés, where he went.

"**This Bachus** sone of Jupiter
 Was hote,² and as he wenté fer
 By his faders assignement
 To make a wer in Orient
 And great power with him he ladde,
 So that the higher hond he hadde
 And victoire of his enemies
 And torneth homward with his
 prise.

In suche a centré which was drie
 A mischefe fell upon the wey,
 As he rode with his compaigny
 Nigh to the strondés of Lubie,
 There mighté they no drinké finde
 Of water ne of other kinde,
 So that him self and all his hoste
 Were for default of drinke almoste
 Distruied, and than Bachus praid
 To Jupiter, and thus he said :
 ' O highe fader, that seest all,
 To whom is reson that I shall
 Beseche and pray in every nede,
 Behold, my fader, and take hede

This wofull thurst that we be inne,
 To staunche and graunt us for to
 winne

And saufe unto the contré fare
 Where that our lusty lovés are
 Waitend upon our home coming.'
 And with the vois of his praying,
 Which herd was to the goddés high,
 He sigh anone to-fore his eye
 A wether which the grounde hath
 sporned,

And where he hath it overtorned,
 There sprang a wellé fressh and
 clere,

Wherof his owne botelere
 After the lustés of his will
 Was every man, to drinke his fill.
 And for this ilke grete grace
 Bachus upon the samé place
 A riche temple let arere,
 Which ever shuldé stondé there
 To thursty men in remembrai'mce.

" Forth, my sone, after this
 chaunce

It sit the well to taken hede
 So for to pray upon thy nede,
 As Bachus praidé for the well.
 And thenke as thou hast herd me tell
 How grace he gradde¹ and grace
 he had,

He was no fool that first so rad.
 For selden get a domb man londe,
 Take that provérbe, and under-
 stonde

That worded ben of vertue gret.
 Forth to speké thou ne let
 And axe and pray erety and late
 Thy thurst to quenche, and thenke
 algate,

The boteler which bereth the key
 Is blinde, as thou hast herd me say.
 And if it mighté so betide,
 That he upon the blindé side
 Par cas the sweté tonne arauight,

¹ Dwale, nightshade, ² Hote, called.

¹ Gradde, cried for,

Than shaltthou have a lusty draught
 And waxe of lovédrunke sobre.
 And thus I rede thou assobre
 Thin herte in hope of suche a grace,
 For dronkéship in every place
 To whether sidé that it torne
 Doth harme and maketh a man to
 sporne¹

And ofte falle in suche a wise,
 Where he par cas may nought arise.

" And for to loke in evidence
 Upon the sothe experience
 So as it hath befall er this,
 In every mannes mouth it is
 How Tristram was of lovédrunke
 With Bele Isoldé, when theydrunke
 The drink which Brangweine hem
 betok

Er that king Mark his eme her toke
 To wife, as it was after knowe.
 Andeke,mysone,ifthouwoltknowe
 As it hath fallen over more
 In loves cause, and what is more
 Of dronkeshippe for to drede
 As it whilom befell in dede,
 Wherof thou might the better
 escheue

Of drunke men that thou ne sue
 The compaigny in no manere,
 A great ensample thou shalt here.

This finde I write in poesy
 Of thilke faire Ypotasy,
 Of whose beaute there as she was
 Spake everyman. And fell par cas,
 That Pirothous so him spedde,
 That he to wife her shulde wedde,
 Wherof that he great joie made.
 And for he wolde his lovéd glade
 Ayein the day of maridge
 By mouthé bothe and by message
 His frendés to the fest he praid,
 With great worship and as men said
 He hath this yongé lady spoused.
 And whan that they were alte housed

And set and served atté mete,
 There was no wine, which may
 begete

That there ne was plenty inough.
 But Bachus thilké tonnédrough,
 Wherof by way of dronkéship
 The greatest of the felaship
 Were out of reson overtake,
 And Venus, which hath also take
 The cause most in speciall,
 Hath yive him drinke forth with all
 Of thilke cuppe whiche excitet
 The lust wherin a man deliteth.
 And thus by double weie drunke
 Of lust that ilké firy funke¹
 Hath made hem as who saith half
 wode,²

That they no reson understode
 Ne to none other thing they seen
 But hiré which to-fore her eyen
 Was wedded thilke samé day ;
 That fresshe wife, that lusty may
 Of her it was all that theythoughten
 And so ferforth her hastés soughten
 That they the whiché named were
 Centauri, at the feste there
 Of one assent, of one accorde,
 This yongé wife malgré her lorde
 In suche a rage away forth ladden,
 As they which none insight ne
 hadden

But only to her drunke fare,
 Which many a man hath made
 misfare
 In love als wel as other wey.
 Wherof, if I shall mor say
 Upon the nature of this Vice,
 Of custume and of exercise
 The mannés grace how it fordooth,
 A talé, which was whilom soth
 Of fooles that so drunken were,
 I shall reherce unto thin ere.

I rede in a cronique thus
 Of Galba and of Vitellius,

¹ Sporne, strike with the foot; stumble.

¹ Funke, touchwood, spark. ² Wode, mad.

The which of Spaine bothé were
 The greatest of all other there,
 And bothe of o condition
 After the disposition
 Of glotony and dronkeship,
 That was a sory felaship.
 For this thou might wel understonde,
 That man may nought well longé
 stonde

Which is wine drunkeof comunuse,
 For he hath loré the vertues
 Wherof that Reson shuld him clothe,
 And that was sen upon hem bothe.
 Men sain there is non evidence
 Wherof to knowe a difference
 Betwene the drunken and thewode,
 For they ben never nouthér gode;
 For where that wine doth wit away
 Wisdome hath lost the righté wey,
 That he no maner Vice dredeth;
 No moré than a blind man thredeth
 His nedel by the sonnes light,
 No more is Reson than of might
 Whan he with dronkeship is blent.
 And in this point they weren shent
 This Galba both and eke Vitelle
 Upon the cause as I shall telle,
 Wherof good is to taken hede.
 For they two through her dronken-
 hede

Of witles excitatidn
 Oppressed all the nacion
 Of Spaine, for all foul usaunce,
 Which done was of continuaunce
 Of hem which all day drunké were.
 There was no wife ne maiden there
 What so they were or faire or foule
 Whom they ne taken to defoule,
 Wherof the lond was often wo.
 And eke in other thingés mo
 They wroughten many a sondry
 wronge.

But how so that the day be longe,
 The derké night cometh atté last.
 God woldé nought they shulden last,

And shope the lawe in suche a wise
 That they through dome to thejuise
 Ben dampnéd for to be forlore.
 But they that hadden be to-foie
 Enclined to allé drunkenesse,
 Her endé thanné bare witnesse;
 For they in hopé to assuage
 The peine of dethe upon the rage
 That they the lassé shulden fele,
 Of wine let fill full a mele
 And drunken till so was befall
 That they her strengthés losten all
 Withouten wit of any braine,
 And thus they ben half dedé slaine,
 That hem ne greveth but a lite.

"My sone, if thou be for to wite
 In any point which I have said,
 Wherof thy wittes bene unteid,
 I rede clepe hem home ayein."—

"I shall do, fader, as ye sain,
 Als ferforth as I may suffice.
 But well I wot that in no wise
 The dronkeship of Love away
 I may remué by no wey,
 It stant nought upon my fortune.
 But if you listé to comune
 Of the seconde glotony,
 Which clepéd is Delfcacy,
 Wherof ye speken here to-rore,
 Beseche I wolde you therfore."—

My sone, as of that ilké Vice
 Which of all other is the norice,
 And stant upon the retenue
 Of Venus, so as it is due,
 The propreté how that it fareth
 The boke hereafter now declareth.

Of this chapitre, in trete,

There is yet one of such diete
 To which no pouer may atteigne,
 For all is past as paindemaine¹
 And sondry wine and sondry drinke
 Wherof that he woll ete and drinke

¹ *Past as paindemaine*, diet unattainable by the poor; all pastry, as fine white bread, éc.

His cokes ben for him affaited,
 So that his body is awaited
 That him shall lacké no delite
 Als ferforth as his appetite
 Suffiseth to the metés hote.
 Wherof the lusty Vice is hote
 Of guld the Delicacy,¹
 Which all the holé progeny
 Of lusty folke hath undertake
 To fede while that he may take
 Richesse, wherof to be founde.
 Of abstinence he wot no bounde,
 To what profit it shuldé serve.
 And yet phisfque of his conserve
 Maketh many a restauracidn
 Unto his recreacion,
 Which wolde be to Venus lefe.
 Thus for the point of his relefe
 The coke which shai his mete array
 But he the bet his mouth assay
 His lordes thank shall ofté lese
 Er he be served to the chese.
 For there may lacke nought so lite²
 That he ne nnt anone a wite,³
 For but his lust be fully served
 There hath no wight his thank de-
 served,
 And yet for mannés sustenance
 To kepe and holde in governaunce
 To him that woll his hele gete
 Is none so good as comun mete.
 For who that loketh on the bokes,
 It saith, confection of cokes
 A man him shuldé well advise
 How he it toke and in what wise.
 For who that useth that he knoweth
 Full seldensiknesseonhim groweth,
 And who that useth metés straunge
 Though his nature empeire and
 chaunge
 It is no wonder, leve sone,
 Whan that he doth ayein his wone⁴
 To take metes and drinks newe,

The which it shulde alwey eschewe
 For in phisfque this I finde,
 That Usance is the seconde Kinde.¹

"And right so chaungeth his
 estate

He that of Love is delicate,
 For though he hadde to his honde
 The besté wife of all the londe
 Or the fairésté love of alle,
 Yet wolde his herte on other falle
 And thinke hem more delicious
 Than he hath in his owné hous.
 Men sain it is now ofte so,
 Advise hem well, that they so do,
 And for to speke in other way
 Full ofte time I have herd say,
 That he which hath no love acheved
 Him thenketh that he is nought
 relieved

Though that his lady make him
 chere,

So as she may in good manere
 Her honour and her namé save,
 But he the surplus mighté have;
 Nothing withstanding her estate,
 Of lové moré delicate,
 He set her chere at no delite
 But he have all his appetite.

"My sone, if it with the be so,
 Tell me?"—"Min holy fader, no.
 For delicate in such a wise
 Of Love, as ye to me devise,
 Ne was I never yet giltife.
 For if I hadde" suche a wife,
 As ye speke of, what shulde I more?
 For than I woldé never more
 For lust of any womanhede
 Min herte upon none other fede.
 And if I did, it were a waste.
 But all withouté such repaste
 Of lust as ye me tolde above,
 Of wife or yet of other love,
 I faste and may no fode gete,
 So that for lack of deintie mete

¹ Delicacy of the gullet. ² Lite, little.
³ Wite, blame. ⁴ Wone, custom.

¹ Use is second Nature.

Of whiche an herte may be fedde,
 I go fastndé to my bedde.
 But might I getten as ye tolde
 So muchel that my lady wolde
 Me fede with her glad semblaunt.
 Though me lacke all theremenaunt,
 Yet shulde I somdele ben abeshed¹
 And for the time wel refreshed.
 But certes, fader, she ne doth;
 For in good feith to tellé soth
 I trowé, though I shuldd sterve,
 She wolde nought her eye swerve
 My herte with one goodly loke
 To fede, and thus for such a coke
 I may go fasting evermo.
 But if so is that any wo
 May fede a mantlés herté wele,
 Therof I have at every mele
 Of plente moré than inough.
 But that is of him self so tough)
 My stomack may it nought detie.²
 Lo, such is the Dellcacie
 Of Love which min herte fedeth,
 Thus have I lacke of that me nedeth.
 But for all this yet nethéles,
 I say, I am nought giltéles,
 That I somdele am delicate.
 For ellés were I fully mate
 But if that I some lusty stounde
 Of comfort and of esé founde
 To take of lové some repast;
 For though I with the fulle taste
 The lust³ of Love may nought fele,
 Min hunger otherwise I kele
 Of smale lustés whiche I pike,
 And for a timé yet they like,
 If that ye wisten, what I mene."—

"Now, gode soné, Shrivetheclene
 Of suché deinties as ben good
 Wherof thou takest thin herté
 food."—

"My fader, I you shall reherce,

¹ *Abeshed*, astonished.

² *Defies* digest.

³ *Lust*., pleasure, in no bad sense; so 'lusty' = the German "lustig."

How that my fodes ben diverse,
 So as they fallen in degre.
 One feding is of that I se,
 An other is of that I here,
 The thridde, as I shall tellen here,
 It groweth of min owne thought.
 And ellés shulde I livé nought,
 For whom that faileth food of herte
 He may nought well the dethe as-
 terte.

"Of sight is all my firsté food,
 Through which min eye of alle good
 Hath that to him is accordaunt
 A lusty fode suffisaunt.

Whan that I go toward the place
 Where I shall se my ladies face,
 Min eye", whiche is loth to faste,
 Beginneth to hunger anone so faste
 That him thenketh of an houré thre,
 Till I there come and he her se.
 And than after his appetite
 He taketh a food of such delite,
 That him none other deintie nedeth,
 Of sondry sightés he him fedeth.
 He seeth her face of such colour
 That fressher is than any flour;
 Heseethher front is largeandpleine
 Withoute frounce of any greine;
 He seeth her eyen liche an heven;
 He seeth her nasé straughte and
 even;

He seeth her rudde upon the cheke;
 He seeth her reddé lippés eke;
 Her chinne accordeth to the face,
 All that he seeth is full of grace;
 Heseethherneckéroundeandclene,
 Thernné may no bonfe be sene;
 He seeth her handés faire and white,
 For all this thingé without wite
 He may se naked atte leste,
 So is it well the moré feste
 And well the more delicacie
 Unto the feding of min eye.
 He seeth her shape forth with all,
 Her body rounde, her middel small,

So well begone with good array,
Which passeth all the lust of May
Whan he is most with softe shoures
Full clothed in his lusty floures.
With suche sightes by and by
Min eye is fed, but finally,
Whan he the port and the manere
Seeth of her womanisshé chere,
Than hath he such delite on honde
Him thenketh he might stille stonde
And that he hath full suffisaunce
Of livelode and of sustenaunce
As to his part for evermo.
And if it thought all other so,
Fro thenne wolde he never wende
But there unto the worldes ende
He wolde abide, if that he might,
And feden him upon the sight.
For though I mighte stonden ay
Into the time of domesday
And loke upon her ever in one,
Yet whan I shulde fro her gone
Min eye wolde, as though he faste,
Ben hunger storven also faste
Till eft ayein that he her see,
Such is the nature of min eye.
There is no lust so deintefull,
Of which a man shall nought be full
Of that the stomack underfongeth,
But ever in one min eye longeth;¹
For loke, how that a goshawk tireth,
Right so doth he, whan that he pireth
And toteth on her womanhede,
For he may never fully fede
His lust, but ever a liche sore
Him hungreth, so that he the more
Desireth to be fed algate.
And thus min eye is made the gate
Through which the deinties of my
thought
Of lust ben to min herte brought.
Right as min eye with his loke
Is to min herte a lusty coke

¹ *Tireth* tears and plucks in feeding, as a bird of prey.

Of Loves fode delicate.

Right so min ere in his estate,
Whereas min eyé may nought
serve,

Can well min hertés thank deserve
And feden him fro day to day
With suché deintés, as he may.

For thus it is, that over all
Where as I come in speciall
I may here of my lady prise :
I here one say, that she is wise ;
An other saith, that she is good;
And some men sain, of worthy blood
That she is come, and is also
So fair, that no where is none so;
And some men preise her goodly
chere :

Thus every thing that I may here
Which souneth to my lady good,
Is to min ere a lusty food.
And eke min ere hath over this
A deinty feste, whan so is
That I may here her selven speke,
For than anone my faste I breke
On suche wordés as she saith,
That full of trouth and full of feith
They ben, and of so good disporte,
That to min eié great comforte
They done as they that ben delices.
For all the metes and the spices
That any Lumbard couthé make
Ne be so lusty for to take
Ne so ferforth restauratife
I say as for min owne life,
As be the wordés of her mouth.
For as the windes of the south
Ben most of allé debonaire,
So whan her list to speké faire
The vertue of her goodly speche
Is verrily min herts leche.
And if it so befall amonge
That she carole upon a songe,
Whan I it here I am so fed
That I am fro my self so led

¹ *Leche*, physician.

As though I were in Paradis,
 For certes as to min avis,
 Whan I here of her vois the Steven¹
 Me thenkth it is a blisse of heven.
 And eke in otherwise also
 Ful ofté time it falleth so
 Min ere with a good pitaunce
 Is fed of reding of romaunce
 Of Ydoine and of Amadas,
 That whilom weren in my cas,
 And eke of other many a score,
 That loveden longe er I was bore;
 For whan I of her loves rede,
 Min ere with the tale I fede
 And with the lust of her histoire.
 Somtime I drawe into memoire
 How sorwe may nought ever last,
 And so cometh hope in atte last,
 Whan I none other *fode* knowe.
 And that endureth but a throwe,
 Right as it were a chery feste.
 But for to compten atte lest,
 As for the while yet it eseth
 And somdele of min hert appeseth.
 For what thing to min ere spredeth,
 Which is plesaunt, somdele it fedeth,
 With wordés such as he may gete,
 My lust in stede of other mete.

"Lo thus, my fader, as I you say
 Of lust the which min eye hath see
 And eke of that min ere hath herde,
 Full ofte I have the better ferde.
 And tho two bringen in the thridde,
 The which hath in min herte amidde
 His place také to array
 The lusty fodé whiche assay
 I mote, and namelich on nightes,
 Whan that me lacketh allé sightes,
 And that min hering is away,
 Than is he redy in the wey
 My *reré souper*² for to make,
 Of which min hertes fode I take.

"This lusty cokes name is hote

¹ Steven, *voice*, sound.

² *Réré souper*, a supper after supper for the luxurious who sat up late.

Thought, which hath ever his
 pottes hote
 Of lové boilend on the fire
 With fantasy and with desire,
 Of which er this full ofte he fed
 Min herte whan I was a bed.
 And than he set upon my borde
 Both every sight and every worde
 Of lust which I have herd or seen.
 But yet is nought my fest all plein,
 But all of woldés and of wissches
 Therof have I my fulle disshes,
 But as of feling and of taste
 Yet might I never have o repaste.
 And thus as I have said a-forn,
 I lické hony on the thorn,
 And as who saith upon the bridel
 I chewe, so that all is idel,
 As in effect the fode I have.
 But as a man that wolde him save
 Whan he is sike by medicine,
 Right so of love the famine
 I fonde in all that ever I may
 To fede, and drive forth the day
 Till I may have the grete fest
 Which all min hunger might arest.

"Lo, suché ben my lustes thre,
 Of that I thenké, here and se,
 I take of lové my feding
 Withoute tasting or felfng,
 And as the plover doth of aire
 I live, and am in good espeire
 That for no such delicacy
 I trowe I do no gloteny.
 And netheles to your avis,
 Min holy fader, that ben wis,
 I recommaunde min estate
 Of that I have ben delicate."—

"My sone, I understonde wele
 That thou hast told here every dele,
 And as me thenketh by thy tale
 It ben delités wonder smale
 Wherof thou takest thy lovés fode.
 But, sone, if that thou understode,
 What is to ben delicious,

Thou woldest nought ben curious
 Upon the lust of thin estate
 To ben to soré delicate
 Wherof that thou reson excede;
 For in the bokes thou might rede,
 If mannes wisdom shall be sued
 It oughte wel to ben escheued
 In Love als well as other way;
 For as these haly bokes say,
 The bodely delices alle
 In every point how so they falle
 Unto the soulé done grevaunce.
 And for to take in remembraunce
 A tale accordaunt unto this,
 Which of great understanding is
 To mannes soule resondble,
 I thenke tell and is no fable.

“**Of Cristes word** who wol it
 rede

How that this Vice is for to drede
 In thevangle it telleth pleine,
 Which mote algate be certeine
 For Crist himself it berethwisse.
 And though the clerke and the
 clergesse

In Latin tunge it rede and singe
 Yet for the moré knouelechinge
 Of trouthe, which is good to wite,
 I shal declare as it is write
 In English, for thus it began.

“**Crist saith:** There was a
 riché man,

A mighty lord of great estate,
 And he was eke so delicate
 Of his clothing that every day
 Of purple and bisse¹ he made
 him gay
 And ete and drank therto his fill
 After the lustes of his will
 As he which all stode in delice
 And toke none hede of thilke Vice.
 And as it shulde so betide,
 A pouer lazer upon a tide
 Came to the gate and axéd mete.

¹ Bisse, finest linen.

But there might he nothing gete
 His dedely hunger for to staunche,
 For he which had his milé paunche
 Of allé lustés atté borde
 Nedeigneth nought tospekeaworde
 Onlich a crumme for to yive
 Wherof the pouer mighte live
 Upon the yift of his almesse.
 Thus lay this pouer in great distresse
 A colde and hungry at the gate,
 Fro which he might go no gate
 So was he wofully besene.
 And as these haly bokes sain,
 The houndes comen fro the halle,
 Where that this sike man was falle,
 And as he lay there for to deie,
 The woundes of his malady
 They licken, for to done him ese.
 But he was full of such disese
 That he may nought thedeth escape.
 But as it was that timé shape
 The soule for the body passeth,
 And he whom nothing overpasseth,
 The highe God up to the heven
 Him toke, where he hath set him
 even

In Abrahames barme¹ on high,
 Where he the hevens joie sigh
 And had all that he have wolde.
 And fell as it befall sholde,
 This riché man the same throwe
 With sodein deth was overthrowe
 And forth withouten any went-
 Unto the helle straught he went,
 The fende into the fire him drotigh
 Where that he haddé peine inough
 Of flamé which that ever brenneth.
 And as his eye abouté renneth,
 Toward the heven he cast his loke,
 Where that he sigh and hede toke
 How Lazar set was in his see
 Als fer as ever he mighte see
 With Abraham, and than he praide
 Unto the patriarch and saide :

¹ Barme, bosom.

² Went, turning.

' Send Lazar down fro thilké sete
And do that he his finger wete
In water, so that he may droppe
Upon my tungé for to stoppe
Thè grete hete in which I brenne.'
But Abrahám answerdé thenne
And saide to him in this wise:

' My sone, thou the might avise
And take into thy remembraunce
How Lazar hadde great penaunce
While he was in that other life.
But thou in all thy lust jolife
The bodely delices soughtest,
Forth so as thou thanné wroughtest,
Now shalt thou také thy rewarde
Of dedely peine here afterwarde
In helle, which shall ever last.
And this Lazar now atte last
This worldes peine is overronne,
In heven and hath his life begonne
Ofjoie which is endeles.

But that thou praïest netheles,
That I shall Lazar to the sende
With water on his finger ende
Thine hoté tunge for to kele,
Thou shalt no suché graces fele,
For to that foule place of sinne
For ever in which thou shalt ben
inne,

Cometh none out of this place thider
Ne none of you may comen hider,
Thus be ye parted now a-two.'
The rich ayeinward cridé tho :
' O Abraham, sithe it so is,
That Lazar may nought do me this
Whiche I have axéd in this place,
I woldd pray an other grace.
For I have yet of bretherne five
That with my fader ben a-live
To-gider dwellend in one hous,
To whom, as thou art gracious,
I praïé, that thou woldest sende
Lazar, so that he mights' wende
To warne hem how the worlde is
went,

That afterward they be nought shent
Of suche peínés as they deie.
Lo, this I praie and this I crie,
How I maynought myself amende.'
The patriarche anone suende
To this praier answerde : ' Nay,'
And saide him, how that every day
His bretheren mighten knowe and
here

Of Moises on erthé here
And of prophetes other mo,
What hem was best. And he
saith : ' No,

But if there might a man arise
From deth to life in suche a wise
To tellen hem how that it were,'
He saide, ' than of pure fere
They shulden well beware therby.'
Quod Abraham : ' Nay sikerly,
For if they now will nought obey
To such as techen hem the wey
And all day preche and all day telle
Howthat it stant of heven and helle,
Theywollnoughtthannetaken hede
Though it befelle so in dede
That any dede man were arered,
To ben of him no better lered
Than of an other man alive,'

" If thou, my sone, canst describe
This tale, as Crist him self it tolde,
Thou shalt have causé to beholde
To se so great an evidence,
Wherof the sothe experience
Hath shewed openlich at eye,
That bodely delfcacy
Of him which yiveth none almesse,
Shall after falle in great distresse.
And that was sene upon the riche,
For he ne wolde unto his liche
A crummé yiven of his brede,
Than afterward whan he was dede
A droppe of water him was werned.¹
Thus may a mannés wit be lerned
Of hem that so delités taken

Whan they with deth ben overtaken,
 That erst was swete is thanne soure.
 But he that is a governour
 Of worldés good, if he be wise,
 Within his herte he set no prise
 Of all the worlde, and yet he useth
 The good that he nothing refuseth,
 As he which lord is of the thinges,
 The ouches and the riché ringes,
 The cloth of gold and the perrie
 He taketh, and yet delicacie
 He levethe though he wear all this.
 The beste mete that there is
 He eteth, and drinketh the beste
 drinke,

But how that ever he ete or drinke
 Delfcacié he put away
 As he which goth the righté wey
 Nought only for to fede and clothe
 His body, but his soule bothe.
 But they that taken other wise
 Her lustes, ben none of the wise,
 And that whilom was shewed eke,
 If thou these olde bokes seke.

" That man that wolde him well
 advise,

Delicacy is to despise
 Whan Kinde accordeth nought
 withall,

Wherof ensample in speciall

Of Nero whilom may be tolde,
 Whiche ayein kindé manifolde
 His lustes toke, till atte last,
 That God him wolde all overcast,
 Of whom the cronique is so plein,
 Me lust no more of him to sain.
 And netheles for glotony

Of bodély delicacy
 To knowe his stomack how it ferde,
 Of that no man to-ford herde
 Which he within him self bethought,
 A wonder subtil thing he wrought.
 Thre men upon election
 Of age and of complexion
 Lich to him self by allé way

He toke towardses him to play,
 And ete and dranke as well as he,
 Therof was no diversite.

For every day whan that they ete
 To-fore his owne bard they sete,
 And of such mete as he was served,
 All though they had it nought de-
 served,

They token service of the same.

But afterward all thilké game
 Was into wofull ernest torned.

For whan they were thus sojorned,
 Within a time at after-mete

Nero, which hadde nought foryete
 The lustes of his frele estate,

As he which all was delicate

To knowe thilke experience,

The men let come in his presence.

And to that one the same tide

A courser that he sholdé ride

Into the felde anone he bad,

Wherof this man was wonder glad

And goth to pricke and prauuco
 about.

That other, while that he was out,
 He laide upon his bed to slepe.

The thridde, which he wolde kepe

Within his chambre faire and softe,

He goth now up now down ful oft,

Walkend apace, that he ne slepte

Till he which on the courser lepte,

Was comen fro the felde ayein.

Nero than, as the bokes sain,

These men did done take alle thre

And slough hem for he woldé se

The whose stomack was best
 defied.¹

And whan he hath the sothe tried,
 He found that he which goth the pas

Defied best of alle was,

Which afterward he used ay.

And thus what thing unto his pay

Was most plesant, he lefte none;

With every lust he was begone

1 Was defied, had digested.

Wherof the body mighté glade,
 For he no abstinencé made ;
 But althermost of erthly thinges
 Of women unto the likfnges
 Nero set all his hole herte,
 For that lust shuld him nought
 asterte.

Whan that the thurst of love him
 caught

Where that him list he toke a
 draught,

He spareth nouthr wife ne maide,
 That such another, as men saide,
 In all this world was never yit.

He was so drunke in all his wit
 Through sondry lustés which he
 toke,

That ever while there is a boke
 Of Nero men shall rede and sing
 Unto the worldes knouleching.

" My gode sone, as thou hast
 herde,

For ever yet it hath so ferde,
 Delicacy in Lovés cas
 Withouté reson is and was.

For where that love his herte set
 Him thenketh it might be no bet,
 All though it be nought fully mete
 The luste of love is ever swete.

Lo, thus to-gider of felaship,
 Delfcacy and dronkship,

Wherof Reson stant out of herre,¹
 Have made full many a wiseman erre
 In Lovés causé most of all.

For than how so that ever it fall
 Wit can no reson understonde,
 But let the governauncé stonde
 To Will, which thanné wexeth so
 wilde

That he can nought him selven shilde
 Fro the perill, but out of fere
 The way he secheth here and there,
 Him reccheth nought upon what
 side,

¹ Out of herre, off its hinges.

For ofté time he goth beside
 And doth such thing without drede,
 Wherof him oughté wel to drede.
 But whan that Love assoteth sore,
 It passeth alle mennés lore,
 What lust it is that he ordeigneth
 There is no mannés might re-
 streigneth,

And of God taketh he none hede,
 But laweles withouté drede,
 His purpos for he wolde acheve,
 Ayein the points of the beleve
 He tempteth heven, erth and helle,
 Here afterward as I shall telle.

" Who dare do thing, which Love
 ne dare ?

To Love is every lawe unware,
 But to the lawes of his hest
 Thefissh, the fowl, the man, the beste
 Of all the worldés kindé louteth.
 For Love is he which nothing
 doubteth,¹

In mannés herté where he sit
 He compteth nought toward his wit
 The wo no moré than the wele,
 No more the hete than the chele,
 No more the weté than the drie,
 No more to livé than to deie,
 So that to-fore ne behinde
 He seeth no thing but as the blinde.
 Withouté insight of his coráge
 He doth mervéilés in his rage
 To what thing that he wol him
 drawe.

There is no God, there is no lawe
 Of whom that he taketh any hede,
 But as Baydrd the blindé stede
 Till he falle in the dicche a midde
 He goth there no man will him bidde,
 He stant so ferforth out of reule,
 There is no wit that may him reule.
 And thus to tell of him in soth,
 Full many a wonder thing he doth,
 That weré better to be laft,

¹ Doubteth, feareth.

Among the whiche is wicché craft,
 That some men clepen sorcery,¹
 Which for to winne his druer¹
 With many a circumstaunce he
 useth,
 There is no point which he refuseth.
 The craft, which that Saturnus fonde,
 To make prickés in the sonde,
 That geomauncé clepéd is,
 Ful oft he useth it amis;
 And of the flood his ydromaunce;
 And of the fire the piromaunce :
 With questions echone of tho
 He tempteth ofte, and eke also
 Aeromaunce in jugément
 To Love he bringeth of his assent.
 For these craftds as I finde
 A man may do by way of kinde
 Be so it be to good entent.
 But he goeth all other went,²
 For rather er he shulde faile
 With nigromaunce he wolde assaile
 To make his incantation
 With hote subfutnigacion,³
 Thilke art which specular³ is hote
 And used is of comun rote
 Among paiens which that craft eke,⁴
 Of whiche is auctor Thoszthe Greke,
 He wercheth one and one by rowe.
 Razel is nought to him unknowe,
 The Salomonés Candary,
 His Ydeác, his Eutony,
 The figure and the boke withall
 Of Balamuz and of Ghenball,
 The seale and therupon thymáge
 Of Thebith for his avauntge
 Hetaketh, and somewhat of Gibere,
 Which helplich is to this matere.
 Babylla to her sonés seven
 Which hath renounced to the heven,

With Cernés bothe square and
 rounde,
 He traceth ofte upon the grounde,
 Makénd his invocation.
 And for full enformation
 The scole, which Honorius
 Wrote, he pursueth. And lo, thus
 Magique he useth for to winne
 His love, and spareth for no sinne.
 And over that of his soty
 Right as he secheth sorcery
 Of hem that ben magicians,
 Right so of the naturiens
 Upon the sterres from above
 His wey he secheth unto love
 Als fer as he hem understandeth.
 In many a sondry wise he fondeth,
 He maketh ymáge, he maketh
 sculpture,
 He maketh writing, he maketh
 figure,
 He maketh his calculations,
 He maketh his demonstrations,
 His hours of astronomy
 He kepeth as for that party
 Which longeth to the inspectidn
 Of love and his affection,
 He wolde into the hellé seche
 The devel him selvé to beseche
 If that he wisté for to spede
 To gete of love his lusty mede.
 Where that he hath his herte set
 He bidde never fare bet,
 Ne wit of other heven more.
 My sone, if thou of such a lore
 Hast ben er this, I rede the leve."—
 "Min holy fader, by your leve
 Of all that ye have spoken here
 Which toucheth unto this matere,
 To tellé soth right as I wene,
 I wot nought o word what ye mene.
 I woll nought say if that I couth
 That I nolde in my lusty youth
 Beneth in helle and eke above
 To winné with my ladies love

¹ *Druery*; love.

² *Went*, turning, cross way.

³ *Specular*, miswritten "spatula" in MS. The chapter "De Speculatoria" follows that on Geomancy in Cornelius Agrippa, "De Vanitate Scientiarum."

⁴ *Eke*, increase, extend.

Done al that ever that I might.
For therof have I none insight
Where afterward that I become
So that I wonne and overcome
Her lové which I most coveite."—

"My sone, that goth wonder
streite.

For this I may well tellé soth,
There is no man the which so doth
For all the craft that he can caste,
That he ne bieth it atte laste.
For often he that will beguile
Is guiled with the same guile,
And thus the guiler is beguiled,
As I finde in a boke compiled
To this mature an olde histoirc,
The which comth now to my
memoire

And is of great ensemplary
Ayein the vice of sorcery,
Wherof none ende may be good.
But how whilom therof it stood,
A tale which is good to knowe
To the, my sone, I shall beknowe.

Among hem, which at Troie
were,

Ulixcs at the siege there
Was one by name in special!
Of whom yet the memorial!
Abit, for while there is a mouthe
For ever his namé shall be couthe.
He was a worthy knight and king
And clerk knowénd of every thing,
He was a great rethorien,
He was a great magicien ;
Of Tullus the rethorique,
Of king Zorastes the magique,
Of Tholomé thastronomy,
Of Plato the philosophy,
Of Daniel the slepy dremes,
Of Neptune eke the water stremes,
Of Salomon and the proverbes,
Of Macer all the strength of herbes,
And the phisique of Ypocras,
And lich unto Pithagoras

Of surgery he knew the cures.
But some what of his aventúres,
Which shall to my matere accorde,
To the, my sone, I will recorde.

"This king, of which thou hast
herd sain,

From Troy as he goth home ayiem
By ship, he found the see diverse
With many a windy storm reverse.
But he through wisdom which he
shapeth

Ful many a great peril escapeth,
Of whiche I thenke tellen one,
How that malgréthenedeland stome
Wind-drive he was all sodeinly
Upon the strondés of Cilly,
Where that he must abide a while.

Twey quens weren in that ile
Calipso named and Circes.

And whan they hercle, how Ulixds
Is londed there upon the rive,

For him they senden also blive.¹
With him such as he wolde he nam

And to the court to hem he cam.
These quenés were as two goddesses

Of art magique sorceresses,
That what lord come to that rivage

They make him love in such a rage
And upon hem assote so,

That they woll have, er that he go,
All that he hath of worldes good,

Ulixes well this understood,
They couthé moch, he couthe more.

They shape and cast ayein him sore
And wrought man a subtil wile

But yet they might him nought
beguile;

But of the men of his navie
They two forshope² a great pajtie,

May none of hem withstonde her
hestes :

Some part they shopen into bestes,
Some part they shopen into foules,

¹ Rive, shore; also blive, very quickly; nam, took.
² Those two (queens) transformed.

To beres, tigres, apés, oules,
 Or elles by some other wey,
 Ther might no thing hem disobey,
 Such craft they had above kinde.
 But that art couthe they nought finde
 Of which Ulixes was deceived,
 That he ne hath hem alle weived
 And brought hem into such a rote¹
 That upon him they bothe assote.
 And through the science of his arte
 He toke of hem so well his parte
 That he begat Circes with childe,
 He kepte him sobre and made hem
 wilde,

He set him selve so above
 That with her good and with her love,
 Who that therof be leve or loth,
 All quite into his ship he goth.

Circes to-swolle bothe sides
 He left, and waiteth on the tides,
 And straught throughout the salté
 fome

He taketh his cours and comth him
 home,

Where as he found Penelopé,
 A better wife there may none be,
 And yet there ben inough of good.
 But who her goodship understood
 Fro first that she wifehodé take,
 How many loves she forsoke
 And how she bare her all about
 Therewhiles that her lord was out,
 He might make a great avaunt,
 Amonges all the remenaunt,
 That she was one of all the best.
 Well might he set his herte in rest,
 This king, whan he her founde in
 hele.

For as he couthe in wisdom dele,
 So couthe she in womanhede.
 And whan she sigh withouten drede
 Her lord upon his owné grounde,
 That he was come sauf and sounde,

¹ *Rote*, practice; routine, as in the phrase
 "repeat by rote."

In all this world ne mighte be
 A gladder woman than was she.

"The fame which may nought
 be hid

Throughout the londe is sone kid,
 Her king is comen home ayein;
 There may no man the fullé sain
 How that they weren alle glad
 So mochel joy of him they made;
 The presents every day be newed,
 He was with yiftes all besnewcd,
 The people was of him so glad
 That though none other man hem
 bad

Taillage upon hem self they sette,
 And as it were of pure dette
 They yive her goodés to the king.
 This was a glad home welcoming.

"Thus hath Ulixes what he wolde,
 His wife was such as she be sholc-e,
 His people was to him subgite,
 Him lacketh nothing of delite.-

"But Fortune is of such a flight
 That whan a man is most on height
 She maketh him rathest for to falle,
 There wot no man what shall befallé.
 The nappés over mannés hede
 Ben hongé with a tender threde;
 That proved was on Ulixes,
 For whan he was most in his pees
 Fortuné gan to make him wcre
 And set his welthe al out of herre.
 Upon a day as he was mery,
 As though there might him no thing
 dery,¹

Whan night was come he goth to
 bedde,

With slepe and both his eyen,
 fedde.

And while he slept he met a sweven,
 Him thought he sigh a statue even
 Which brighter than the sonne
 shone.

A man it semed was it none,

¹ *Dery*, hurt.

But yet it was as in figure
Most lich to mannës creature.
But as of beaute hevenlich
It was most to an aungel lich,
And thus betwene aungel and man
Beholden it this king began,
And suche a lust toke of the sight,
That fain he wolde, if that he might,
The forme of that figure embrace.
And goth him forth toward that
place

Where he sigh that ynidgé tho,
And takth it in his armés two
And it embraceth him ayein
And to the king thus gan it sain :

' Ulixes, understand wel this,
The token of our acqueintaunce is
Here afterward to mochel tene ;
The lové that is us betwene,
Of that we now such joié make,
That one of us the deth shall take,
Whan timé cometh of destine,
It may none otherwis be.'

Ulixes tho began to pray
That this figure wolde him say
What wight he is, that saith him so.
This wight upon a speré tho
A pensel¹ which was well begone
Embrouded, sheweth him anone,
Thre fisshes all of o colour
In maner as it were a toure
Upon the pensel weré wrought.
Ulixes knew this token nought
And praith to wite, in some partie,
What thinge it mightte signifie.

' A signe it is,' the wight answerde,
' Of an empire ;' and forth he ferde
All sodeinly, whan he that said.

" Ulixés out of slepe abraid,
And that was right ayein the day,
That longer slepen he ne may.
Men sain, a man hath knoueleching
Save of him self of allé thing ;

¹ *Pensel*, a small banner hanging from a lance.

His owne chaunce noman knoweth,
But as Fortune it on him throweth.
Was never yet so wise a clerk,
Which might knowe all goddés
werk,

Ne the secret which God hath sette
Ayein a man may nought be lette.
Ulixes though that he be wise,
With all his wit in his avise

The more that he his sweven ac-
compteth

The lasse he wot what it amounteth.
For all his calculation

He seeth no demonstration
As plainly for to knowe an ende.
But netheles, how so it wende,
He drad him of his owné sone;
That maketh him well the more
astone

And shope therfore anone withall
So that withinn castell wall
Thelemachum his sone he shette
And upon him strong warde he sette.
The sothe further he ne knewe,
Till that Fortune him overthrewe.
But netheles for sikernesse,
Where that he mighte wit and gesse
A place strengest in his londe,
There let he make of lime anésonde
A strengthe where he wolde dwelle,
Was never man yet herdé telle
Of suche an other as it was.

And for to strength him in that cas
Of all his lond the sikerest
Of servants and the worthiest
To kepen him withinné warde
He set his body for to warde ;
And made such an ordenaunce
For love, ne for dqueintaunce,
That were it erely were it late
They shulde let in at the gate
No maner man, what so betid,
But if so were him self it bid.

" But all that might him nought
availe,

For whom Fortune wol assaile
 There may be no such résisténce
 Which mighté make a man defence,
 All that shall be, mot fall algate.
 This Circes whiche I spake of late,
 On whom Ulixés hath begete
 A child, though he it have foryete,
 Whan time came, as it was wone,
 She was deliverd of a sone,
 Which cleped is Thelogonus.
 This child whan he was bore thus
 About his moder to full age
 That he can reson and langage
 In good estate was drawé forth.
 And whan he was so mochel worth
 To stonden in a mannés stede,
 Circes his mother hath him bede,
 That he shall to his fader go
 And told him all to-gider tho
 What man he was that him begat.
 And whan Thelogonus of that
 Was ware, and hath full knouelching
 How that his fader was a king,
 He praith his moder faire this
 To go where that his fader is.
 And she him graunteth that he shall,
 And made him redy forth with all.
 " It was that time such usaunce,
 That every man the conoissaunce
 Of his contre bare in his honde,
 Whan he went into straungé londe.
 And thus was every man therfore
 Wei knowe, where that he was bore,
 For espiall and mistrowfnges
 They didé thanné suché thinges
 That every man might other knowe.
 So it befell that ilke throwe
 Thelogonus, as in this cas,
 Of his contré the signe was
 Thre fisshes, which he shuldé bere
 Upon the penon of a spere.
 And whan that he was thus arraied
 And hath his harneis all assaied,
 That he was redy every dele,
 His moder bad him faré wele

And said him, that he shulde
 swithe¹
 His fader grete a thousand sithe.
 Thelogonus his moder kist
 And toke his leve, and where he wist
 His fader was, the waíe name,
 Till he unto Nachaie came,
 Which of that lond the chefe citee
 Was clepéd, and there axeth he
 Where was the kinge and how he
 ferde.
 And whan that he the sothé herde,
 Where that the king Ulixes was,
 Alone upon his hors great pas
 He rode him forth, and in his honde
 He bare the signal of his londe
 With fisshes thre, as I have tolde,
 And thus he went unto that holde
 Where that his owné fader dwelleth.
 The causé why he comth, he telleth
 Unto the keepers of the gate,
 And wolde have comen in there at,
 But shortly they him said nay.
 And he als faire as ever he may
 Besought and tolde hem of this,
 How that the king his fader is.
 But they with proude wordés great
 Began to manace and to threte
 But² he go fro the gate fast
 They wolde him take and sette fast.
 Fro wordés unto strokés thus
 They felle, and so Thelogonus
 Was sore hurte and well nigh dede,
 But with his sharpé sperés hede
 He maketh defence, how so it falle,
 And wan the gate upon hem alle
 And hath slain of the beste five.
 And they ascriden also blive
 Through out the castell all about;
 On every sidé men come out,
 Wherof the kingés herte afflight,
 And he with all the hast he might
 A speré caught and forth he goth
 As he that was nigh wode for wroth.

1 Swithe, strongly. 2 But, unless.

He sigh the gates full of blood,
 Thelogonus and where he stood
 He sigh also, but he ne knewe
 What man it was, but to him threwé
 His spere, and he sterte out a side,
 But destind which shall betide,
 Befell that ilké time so,
 Thelogonus knew nothing tho
 What man it was that to him caste,
 And while his owné speré laste,
 With all the signé therupon,
 He cast unto the kinge anon
 And smot him with a dedly wounde.
 Ulixes fell anone to grounde,
 Tho every man, ' The king ! the
 king !'

Began to cry, and of this thing
 Thelogonus which sigh the cas
 On knes he fell and saide : ' Alas,
 I have min owné fader slain !
 Now wolde I deie wonder fain,
 Now sle me who that ever will,
 For certes it is right good skill.¹
 He crieth, he wepeth, he saith ther-
 fore:

' Alas, that ever was I bore,
 That this unhappy destine
 So wofully comth in by me !'
 Thiking, whichyethathlifeinough,
 His herte ayein to him he drough
 And to that vois an ere he laide
 And understood all that he saide
 And gan to speke and saide on
 high:

' Bring me this man.' And whan
 he sigh

Thelogonus, his though he sette
 Upon the sweven which he mette,²
 And axeth, that he mighte se
 His spere, on which the fisshes thre
 He sigh upon the pensel wrought.
 Tho wist he well, it faileth nought,
 And bad him that he telle sholde

¹ Skill, reason.

² Sweven . . mette, dream . . dreamed.

Fro whenne he came and what he
 wolde.

Thelogonus in sorwe and wo
 So as he mighté tolde tho
 Unto Ulixes ail the cas,
 How that Circes his moder was,
 And so forth said him every dele,
 How that his moder grete him wele,
 And in what wisé she him sent.
 Tho wist Ulixes what it ment,
 And toke him in his armés softe
 And all bledende kist him ofte
 And saide : ' Soné, while I live,
 This infortune I the foryive.'
 After his other sone in hast
 He send, and he began him hast
 And cam unto his fader tite.
 But whan he sigh him in such plite,
 He wold have ronne upon that
 other

Anone and slain his owne brother,
 Ne haddé be that Ulixes
 Betwene hem made accorde and
 pees,

And to his heir Thelemachus
 He bad that he Thelogonus
 With all his power shuldé kepe
 Till he were of his woundes depe
 All hole, and than he shulde him
 yive

Lond where upon he mighte livé
 Thelemachus whan he this herde,
 Unto his fader he answerde
 And saide, he woldé don his wille.
 So dwelle they to-gider stille
 These brethren, and the fader
 sterveth.

" Lo, wherof sorcerie serveth.
 Through sorcery his lust he wan,
 Through sorcer his wo began,
 Through sorcery his love he chese,
 Through sorcerer his life he lese.
 The child was gete in sorcery,
 The which did all his felony,

¹ Tite, quickly.

Thing which was ayeiri kinde
wrought

Unkindeliche it was aboutt:
The child his owne fader slough,
That was unkindeship inough.

"Forthy,'-take hede how that it is,
So for to winné love amis,
Which endeth all his joy in wo.
For of this arte I find also,
That hath be do for Lovés sake,
Wherof thou might ensample take,
A great cronfque emperiall
Which ever into memoriall
Among the men, how so it wende,
Shall dwell to the worldés ende.

The highé creator of thinges,
Which is the king of allé kinges,
Full many wonder worldés chaunce
Let slide under his sufferaunce,
There wot no man. the causé why
But he, the which is Almight.
And that was provéd whilom thus,
Whan that the king Nectdnabús,
Which had Egipté for to lede,
But for he sigh to-fore the dede
Through magique of his sorcerie,
Wherof he couth a great partie,
His enemies to him coménd,
Fro whom he might him nought
defend

Out of his owne lond he fledde
And in the wise as he him dredde
It fell, for all his wicchcraft,
So that Egipte him was beraft.
And he disguised fledde away
By ship and held the righte way
To Macedoine, where that he
Arriveth at the chefe citee.
Thre yomen of his chambre there
All only for to serve him were,
The which he trusteth wonder wele
For they were trewe as any stele.
And hapneth that they with him
ladde

Pane of the besté good he hadde,

They také logginge in the town
After the dispositiouty
Where as him thought best to
dwelle.

He axeth than and herde telle
How that the kingé was out go
Upon a werre he hadde tho.
But in that citee thanné was
The quené which Olimpias
Was hotc and with solempnite
The feste of her nativité,
As it befell' was thanne holde.
And for her lust to be beholde
And preised of the people about
She shope her for to riden out
At after-mete all openly.
Anone were alle men redy,
And that was in the month of May.
This lusty quene in good array
Was set upon a mule white,
To sene it was a great delite
The joie that the citee madé.
With fresshé thingés and with glade
The noble town was all behonged,
And every wight was sore alonged
To se this lusty lady ride.
There was great merth on alle side
Where as she passeth by the strete,
There was ful many a timbre bete
And many a maide carotende.
And thus through out the town
pleiende

This quene unto the pleine rode,
Where that she hoved and abode
To se diverse gamés pley,
The lusty folk joust and tourney.
And so forth every other man
Which pleie couth his pley began
To plesé with this noble quene.

"Nectdnabus came to the grene
Amonges other and drough him
nigh.

But whan that he this lady sigh
And of her beauté hede toke,
He couthe nought witholde his loke

To se nought diés in the felde,
But stood and only her behelde.
Of his clothfng and of his gere
He was unliche all other there,
So that it hapneth atté laste
The quene on him her eye caste
And knew that he was straunge
anone.

But he behelde her ever in one
Without blenching of his chere.
She toke good hede of his manure
And wondreth why he didé so,
And bad men shuldé for him go.
He came and did her reverence.
And she him axeth in silence
From whenne he cam and what he
wolde.

And he with sobre wordés tolde,
He saith: 'Madame, a clerk I am
To you and in message I cam
The whiche I may nought tellen
here,

But if it liketh you to here,
It mot be said so prively
Where none shall be but ye and I.
"Thus for the time he toke his
leve.

The day goth forth till it was eve
That every man mot leve his werk.
And she thought ever upon this clerk,
What thing it is that he wold mene.
And in this wise abode the quene
And passeth over thilké night,
Till it was on the morwé light.
She sende for him, and he came,
With him his astrolabe he name,¹
Which was of find gold precious
With points and cercles merveilous.
And eke the hevenly figures
Wrought in a boke full of peintúres
He toke this lady for to shewe
And tolde of eche of hem by rewe
The cours and the condition.
And she with great affection

¹ Name, took.

Sate still and herde what he wolde.
And thus whan he seeth time he tolde
And feigneth with his wordes wise
A tale and saith in such a wise:
' Madame, but a while ago,
Where I was in Egipte tho
And rad in scole of this science,
It fell into my conscience
That I unto the temple went
And there with all min hole entent
As I my sacrificé dede
One of the goddés hath me bede
That I you warne privety,
So that ye make you red,
And that ye be nothfng agast,
For he such love hath to you cast,
That ye shull bene his owne dere
And he shall be your beddefere
Till ye conceive and be with childe.'
And with that word she wax allmilde
And somdele red became for shame
And axeth him that goddés name,
Which so wold done her compaigny.
And he said: ' Amos of Luby.³
And she saith: ' That may I nought
leve,

But if I se a better preve.'
' Madame,' quod Nectdnabús,
' In token that it shall be thus
This night for enformati6n
Ye shall have an avisi6n,
That Amos shall to you appere
To shewe and teche in what manere
The thing shall afterward befallé.
Ye otighten well aboven alle
To maké joy of such a lorde.
For whan ye ben of one accorde
He shall a sone of you begete
Which with his swerd shall win and
gete

The wide worlde in length and brede,
All erthly kingés shall him drede.
And in such wise I you behote
The god of erthe he shall be hote.'
' If this be soth,' thoquod the quene,

' This night, thou saiest, it shall be
sene.

And if it falle into my grace,
Of god Amos that I purchase
To take of him so great worship,
I wol do the such ladiship,
Wherof thou shalt for evermo
Be riche.' And he her thonketh
tho

And toke his leve and forth he went.
She wisté litel what he ment.
For it was guile and sorcery
AH that she toke for prophecy.

Nectanabús throughout the day
Whan he cam home where as he lay
His chambre by him self betoke
And overtorneth many a boke
And through the craft of artemage¹
Of wexe he forgéd an yimge.
He loketh his equacions
And eke the constellacions,
He loketh the conjunctions,
He loketh the receptiõs,
His signe, his houre, his Ascendent,
And draweth Fortune of his assent.
The name of quene Olimpias
In thilke ymage written was
Amiddés in the front above.
And thus to winne his lust of love
Nectdnabus this werk hath dight.
And whan it cam withinne night,
That every wight is fall aslepe,
He thought he wolde his time kepe
As he, whiche hath his houre
apointed.

And thanné first he hath anointed
With sondry herbés that figure
And therupon he gan conjure,
So that through his enchantément
This lady, which was innocent
And wisté nothing of this guile,
Met² as she slepté thilke while,
How fro the heven came a light,
Whiche all her chambre madé light.

1 *Artemage*, Art Magic. 2 *Met*, dreamed.

And as she loketh to and fro,
She sigh, her thought, a dragon tho,
Whose scherdes¹ shinen as the
sonne,

And hath his softe pas begonne
With all the chere that he may
Toward the bed there as she lay,
Till he came to the beddés side.
And she lay still and nothing cride,
For he did all his thingés faire
And was courtes and debonaire.
And as he stood her faste by,
His forme he chaungeth sodeinly,
And the figure of man he nome
To her and into bed he come,
And she was wonder glad withall.
Nectilnabús, which causeth all
Of this metredé² the substaunce
Whan he sigh time his nigromaúnce
He stint and nothing moid saide
Of his carecte, and she abraide
Out of her slepe and leveth'wele
That it is soth than every dele
Of that this clerke her haddé tolde,
And was the glader many folde
In hope of suche a glad metrede
Which after shall befallé in clede.
She longeth sore after the day,
That she her sweven telle may
To this guilovir in privaté,
Which knewe it al so well as she.
And netheles on morwe sone
She left al other thing to done
And for him send, and all the cas
She tolde him plainly as it was
And saide, how than well she wist
That she his wordes mighte trist,
For she founde her avisitfn
Right after the conditidn
Which he her haddé told to-fore,
And praid him hertely therfore,
That he her holdé covenant
So forth of all the remenant,

¹ *Scherdes*, scales.

² *Metrede*, dream-counsel.

That she may through his orde-
naunce

Towardés god do such plesaunce,
That she wakndé might him kepe
In such wise as she met¹ a slepe.
And he that couth of guile inough,
Whan he this herd, for joy he lough
Anésaith: 'Madame, it shall be do.
But this *I* warne you therto,
This night whan that he comth to
play,

That there be no life² in the way
But *I* that shall at his liking
Ordeine so for his coming
That ye ne shull nought of him faile.
For this, madame, I you counseile,
That ye it kepé so prive,
That no wight ellés but we thre
Have knouleching how that it is ;
For ellés might it fare amis
If ye didought that shulde him greve.'
And thus he makth her to beleve
And feigneth under guile feith.
But netheles all that he saith
She troweth. And ayein the night
She hath within her chambre dight,
Where as this guiler fasté by
Upon this god shall prively
Awaite, as he makth her to wene.
And thus this noble gentil quene,
Whan she most trusted, was de-
ceived.

" The night come, and the cham-
bre is weived,

Nectanabus hath take his place,
And whan he sigh the time and space,
Through the deceit of his magfque
He put him out of mannés like
And of a dragon toke the forme,
As he, which wolde him allconforme
To that she sigh in sweven er this ;
And thus to chambre come he is.
The quené lay a bed and sigh
And hopeth ever as he cam nigh,

¹ Met, dreamed, ² No life, body body,

That he god of Lubie were,
So hath she well the iesse fere.
But for he wold her more assure,
Yet efte he chaungeth his figure
And of a wether the likenesse
He toke in signe of his noblesse,
With largd homés for the nones
Of fine gold and riche stones.
A corone on his heved he bare
And sodeinlich, er she was ware,
As he whiche alle guile can,
His forme he torneth into man.
All though she were in part de-
ceived,

Yet for all that she hath conceived
The worthiest of allé kithe,
Which ever was to-fore or sithe
Of conquest and chivalerie,
So that through guile and sorcerie
There was that noble knight be-
gonne,
Which all the worlde hath after
wonne.

Thus fell the thing which fallé
sholde,

Nectanabús hath that he wolde,
With guile he hath his love sped,
With guile he came into the bed,
With guile he goth him out ayein.
He was a shrewed chamberlein
So to beguile a worthy quene,
And that on him was after sene.
But nethéles the thing is do.
This falsé god was sone go
With his deceit and helde him
close,

Till morwe cam that he arose,
And tho, whan time and leiser was,
The quend tolde him all the cas
As she that guild none supposeth,
And of two points shehimopposeth.
One was, if that this god no more
Woll come ayein, and overmore
How she shall stonden in accorde
With king Philippe hef owné lorde,

When he comth home and seeth
her grone.

Madame,' he saith, ' let me
alone,

As for the god I undertake
That whan it liketh you to take
His compaigny at any throwe,
If I a day to-fore it knowe
He shall be with you on the night,
And he is well of such a might
To kepé you from alle blame.
Forth comforté you, madame,
There shall none other causé be.'
Thus toke he leve and forth gothhe.
And tho began he for to muse
How he the quene might excuse
Toward the king of that is falle,
And found a craft amongés alle,
Through which he hath a see foule
daunted¹

With his magique and so cn-
chaunted,

That he flew forth whan it was night
Unto the kingés tente right,
Where that he lay amidde hishoste.

" And whan he was a-slepe most,
With that the see foule to him
brought,

An other charme which he wrought
At home within his chambre still,
The kinge he torneth at his will,
And maketh him for to dremeanése
The dragon and the private
Which was betwene him and the
queue.

And over that he made him wene
In sweven that the god Amos,
Whan he up fro the quene aros,
Toke forth a ring wherin a stone
Was set and gravd therupon
A sonne, in which, whan he camnigh,
A leon with a swerd he sigh.
And with that prent, as he somette,²
Upon the quenés wombe he sette

1 A sea-fowl tamed. 2 Mette, dreamed.

A seal, and goth him forth his way;
With that the sweven went away.
And tho began the king awake
And sigheth for his wivés sake
Where as he lay within his tent,
And hath great wonder what it ment.
With that he hasted him to rise
Anone and sent after the wise,
Among the whiche there was one,
A clerke, his name is Amphione,
Whan he the lungés sweven herde,
What it betokneth he answrde
And saith : ' As sikerly as the life
A god hath laien by thy wife
And got a sone which shall winne
The world and all that is withinne.
As leon is the king of bestes
So shall the world obey his hestes,
Which with his swerd shal al be
wonne

Als fer as shineth any sonne.'

" The king was doubtif of this
dome,

But nethéles whan that he come
Ayein into his owné lond,
His wife with childe great he fond;
He mighte nought him selven stere
That he ne made her hevy chere.
But he which couthe of allé sonve,
Nectanabús, upon the morwe
Through the deceit of nigromaunce
Toke of a dragon the semblaunce
And where the king sat in his halle,
Cam in rampend among hem alle
With such a noise and such a rore,
That they agast were all so sore
As though they shuldé deie anone.
And nethéles he greveth none,
But goth toward the deis on high.
And whan he cam the quend nigh,
He stint his noise and in his wise
To her he profreth his service
And laith his hede upon her barme,
And she with goodly chere her arme
About his necke ayeinward laide,

And thus the quené with him plaide
In sight of alte men about.
And atte last he gan to lout
And dbeisaunce unto her make,
As he that wolde his leve take.
And sodeinly his lothely forme
Into an egle he gan transforme,
And fligh and set him on a raile,
Wherof theking had greatmerveille.
For there hepruneth him andpiketh,
As doth an hawk whan him wel
liketh,

And after that him self he shoke,
Wherof that all the halle quoque,
As it a terremoté¹ were.
They saiden alle, god was there,
In suche a rees and forth he fligh.

" The king which all this wonder
sigh,

Whan he cam to his chambre aione,
Unto the quené made his mone
And of foryivenesse he her praide.
For than he knew well, as he saide,
She was with childé with a god.

" Thus was the king without rod
Chastised and the quene excused
Of that she haddé ben accused.
And for the greater evidence
Yet after that in the presence
Of king Philip and other mo,
Whan they ride in the feldés tho,
A fesaunt came before her eye
The whiche anone, as they her sigh
Fleéndé, let an ey² down falle,
And it to-brake to-fore hem alle.
And as they token therof kepe,
They sigh out of the shelte crepe
A litel serpent on the grounde,
Which rampeth all aboute rounde,
And in ayein he woll have wonne,
But for the brenning of the sonne
It mighté nought, and so it deide.
And therupon the clerkés saide:

'As the serpént, when it was out,

¹ Terremote, earthquake, 2 Ey, egg.

Went environ the shelle aboute
And mighté nought torne in ayein,
So shall it fallen in certain,—
This child the world shall environ
And above alle the corone
Him shall befall, and in yonge age
He shall desire in his conige,
Whan all the worlde is in his honde
To torne ayein unto the londe
Where he was bore, and in his wey
Howewardheshall with poison dey.'

" The king whiche al this sigh
and herde

Fro that day forth how so it ferde
His jalousie hath all foryete.
But he, whiche hath the child begete,
Nectanabús in privite
The time of his nativite
Upon the constellation
Awaiteth and relation

Maketh to the quene, how she snail
do,

And every houre appointeth so
That no minute therof was lore.
So that in due time is bore
This childe, and forthwith therupon
There fellen wonders many one ;
Of terremote unfversele;

The sonnet toke colour of stele
And lost his light; thewindés blewe
And many strengthés overthrewe ;
The see his propré kindé chaungeth
And all the worlde his forme
straungeth;

The thunder with his firy leven
So cruel was upon the heven,
That every erthely creature
Tho thought his life in aventure.
The tempest atté laste ceseth,
The child is kepte, his age encreseth,
And Alisaundre his name is hote ;
To whom Calistre and Aristote
To techen him philosophy
Entenden, and astronom
With other thingés which he couth,

Also to teche him in his youth
 Nectdnabus toke upon honde.
 But every man may understonde
 Of sorcery, how that it wende,
 It woll him selve prove at ende,
 And namdly for to beguile
 A lady which without guile
 Supposethrouthall that she hereth.
 But often he that evil stereth,
 His ship is dreint therin amide,
 And in this cas right so betidde.
 Nectanabus, upon a night
 Whan it was faire and sterre light,
 This yongé lord lad upon high
 Above a toure, where as he sigh
 The sterres such as he accompteth,
 And saith what eche of hem
 amounteth,
 As though he knewe of allé thing.
 But yet hath he no knoueleching
 What shal unto him self befallé.
 Whan he hath tolde his wordes alle,
 This yonge lord than him opposeth
 And axeth if that he supposeth
 What deth he shul him solvé dey.
 He saith : ' Or fortune is away
 And every sterre hath lost his wone,
 Or diés of min owné sone
 I shall be slain, I may nought fle.'
 Thought Alisaundre in privets' :
 ' Herof this olde dotard lieth.'
 And er that other ought aspieth
 All sodeinlich his oldé bones
 He shof over the wall at ones
 And saith him : ' Lie down there a
 part!
 Wherof now serveth all thin art ?
 Thou knewe all other mennés
 chaunce
 And of thy self hast ignoraunce;
 That thou hast said amonges alle
 Of thy persone is nought befallé.'
 " Nectdnabus, which hath his
 dethe,
 Yet while him lasteth life andbrethe

To Alisaundre he spake and said
 That he with wrong blame on him
 laid.
 Fro point to point and all the cas
 He tolde, how he his soné was.
 Tho he which sory was inough,
 Out of the dich his fader drough
 And tolde his moder how it ferde,
 In counseil and whan she it herde,
 And knew the tokens which he tolde,
 She niste¹ what she saie sholde,
 But stood abashed as for the while
 Of this magfque and all the guile.
 She thought, how that she was
 deceived,
 That she hath of a man conceived
 And wende a god it haddé be.
 But nethéles in such degre
 So as she might her honour save
 She shope the body was begrave.
 And thus Nectanabus abought
 The sorcery, which he wrought,
 Though he upon the creatures
 Through his carectes and figures
 The maistry and the power hadde
 His Creatdr to nought him ladde,
 Ayein whose lawe his craft he useth,
 Whan he for lust his god refuseth
 And toke him for the devels craft.
 Lo, what profit is him belaft:
 That thing, through which he wend
 have stonde,
 First him exited out of londe
 Which was his own, and from a king
 Made him to be an underling,
 And sithen to deceive a quene,
 That torneth him to mochel tene,
 Through lust of love he gat him
 hate,
 That endé couth he nought abate
 His oldé sleightés which he cast,
 Yonge Alisaundre him overcast;
 His fader which him misbegat
 He slough, a great mishap was that.

Nistt, knew not.

But for o mis an other mis
Was yolde, and so full ofte it is.
Nectdnabus his craft miswent,
So it misfell him er he went.¹
I not what helpeth that clerg²
Which maketh a man to do foly,
And namelich of nigromaunce,
Which stont upon the miscreaunce.

"And for to se more evidence

Borastes, which the experience
Of art magique first forth drough,
Anone as he was bore he lough,
Which token was of wo suinge,
For of his owne controvinge
He found magique and taught it
forth,

But all that was him litel worth.
For of Surrie a worthy king
Him slewe and that was his ending.
But yet through him this craft is
used,

And he through all the world ac-
cused,
For it shall never well acheve
That stont nought right with the
beleve.

But lich to wolle is evil sponne,
Who leseth him selfhath litel wonne,
An ende proveth every thing.

"**Saül**, which was of Jewesking,
Up peine of deth forbad this arte,
And yet he toke therof his parte.

The Phitonisse in Samary
Yaf him counseil by sorcery,
Which after fell to mochel sorwe,
For he was slain upon the morwe.
To conne mochel thing it helpeth,
But of to moché no man yelpeth,"
So for to loke on every side,
Magique may nought well betide.

"Forth myson, I woll the rede,
That thou of these ensamples drede,
That for no lust of erthly love

Thou seche so to come above
Wherof as in the worklés wonder
Thoushalt for ever be put under."—

"My gode fader, graunt mercy.
For ever I shall beware therby
Of Love what me so befall
Such sorcery aboven alle.
Fro this day forth I shall escheue,
That so ne woll I nought pursue
My lust of Love for to seche.
But this I wolde you beseche
Beside that me stant of Love,
As I you herde speke above,
How Alisaundre was betaught
Of Aristotle and so well taught
Of all that to a king belongeth,
Wherof my herté sore longeth
To wite what it wolde mene.
For by reson I wolde wene,
But if I herde of thinges straungc,
Yet for a time it shulde chaunge
My peine and lisse me somdele."—
"My gode soné, thou saiest wele.
For wisdom, how that ever it
stonde,

To him that can it understonde
Doth great profit in sondry wise;
But touchend of so high a prise,
Which is nought unto Venus knowe,
I may it nought my selve knowe,
Which of her Court am all forth
drawe

And can no thing but of her lawe.
But netheles to knowe more
As wel as thou me longeth sore.
And for it helpeth to comune
All be they nought to me comune,
The scolds of philosophy
Yet think I for to specify
In boke as it is comprehended,
Wherof thoumigh test ben amended.
For though I be nought all cunning
Upon the forme of this writing,
Some part therof yet I have herde,
In this matere how it hath ferde.

¹ Went, weened. ² Clergy learning.
Yelpeth, boasts.

Book VIII.

HOW A KING WAS TAUGHT.

I Genius the prest of love,
My sone, as thou hast praid
above,

That I the scole shall declare
Of Aristotle and eke the fare
Of Alisaundre, how he was
taught,

I am somdele therof destraught.
For it is nowight the matere
Of love, why we sitten here
To shrivé so as Venus badde,
But nethcles for it is gladde,
So as thou saist, for thin apprise
To here of suche thingés wise,
Wherof thou might thy time lisse,
So as I can, I shall the wisse.
For Wisdom is at every throwc
Above all other thing to knowe
In Loves cause and elles where.
Forthy my sone, unto thin ere,
Though it be nought in the registre
Of Venus, yet of that Calistre
And Aristotle whilom write
To Alisaundre, thou shall wile.
But for the lorés ben diverse
I thenke first to the reherce
The nature of philosophy,
Which Aristotle of his clergy
Wise and experte in the Sciences,
Declared thilke intelligences,
As of the points in principal!
Wherof the first in speciall
Is Theorique, which is giounded

On him which al the worlde hath
founded,

Which comprehended al the lore.
And for to loken overmore
Next of Sciences the secoúnde
Is Rhetoriqué, whose facounde
Above all other is eloquent.

To telle a tale in jugement
So well can no man speke as he.

The lasle Science of the true
It is Practiqu', whose office
The Vertu irieth fro the Vice
And lecheth upon gode thewes¹

To fie the compaigny of shrewes,²
Which stant in diposicion
Of mannes fre election.

Practique enformeth eke the reule,
How that a woithy King shall reule
His realme bōth in werre and pees.

Lo, thus danz³ Aristotelds
These thre Sciénces hath devided
And the nattúe also decided
Wherof thatecheof hem shall serve.

The firste, which is the conserve
And keper of the remenaunt,
As that which is most sufftsaunt
And chefe of the philosophy,
If I therof shall specify,
So as the philosodphre tolde,
Now herke and kepe that thou it
holde.

¹Thewes, manners, morals.

²Shrewes, evil men.

³Danz, Dominus, applied to a Graduate in Arts,

"Of theorique principall

The philosophre in speciall
The propertes hath determined,
As thilke which is enlumfnd
Of wisdom and of high prudence
Above all other in his science,
And stant departed upon thre.
The first of which in his degre
Is cleped in philosophy
The Science of Theology,
That other named is Phisique,
The thridde is said Mathématiquc.
Theology is that science,
Which unto man yiveth evidence
Of thing which is nought bodely,
Wherof men knowe redely
The High Almighty Trinite,
Which is o God in Unite
Withouten ende and beginning
And Creator of alle thing,
Of erthe, of heven and of helle,
Wherof as olde bokés telle
The philosophre in his reson
Wrote upon this conclusion,
And of his writing in a clause
He clepeth God the Firste Cause,
Which of him self is thilké good
Withoute whom nothing is good,
Of which that every creature
Hath his bemg and his nature.
After the being of the thinges
There ben thre formes of beinges.

" Thing, which began and endé
shall,

That thing is clepéd temporal!.
There is also by other way
Thing which began and shall nought
dey

As soules that ben spirituell,
Her being is perpetuall.
But there is one above the sonne
Whose timé never was begonne
And endeles shall ever be,
That is the God, whose mageste
All other thinges shall governe,

And his Being is sempiterné.
The God, to whom that all honour
Belongeth, he is Creatour.
And other ben his creatures,
He commaundeth the natures
That they to him obeidn alle.
Withouten him, what so befallé,
Her might is none and He may¹ all:
The God was ever and ever shall,
And they begonne of his assente.
The times alle be present
To God, and to hem alle unknowe,
Butwhathim liketh that they knowe.
Thus both an aungel and a man,
The which of all that God began
Be chefe, obeidn Goddes might,
And He stont endeles up right.
To this Science ben prive
The Clerkés of Divinite,
The which unto the people prechen
ThefeithofHalyChircheandtechen,
Which in one cas upon beleve
Stant more than they conne preve
By wey of argument sensible.
But netheles it is credible
And doth a man great mede have
To him that thenketh him self to
save.

Theology in such a wise
Of highe Science and apprise
Above all other stant unlike
And is the first of Theorique.

" Phisique is after the seconde,
Through which the philosophre
hath fonde

To techen sondry knoulechinges
Upon the bodeliché thinges
Of man, of beste, of herbe, of stone,
Of fisshe, of foule, of everichone
That ben of bodely substance,
The nature and of the substance.
Through this Science it is full sought,
Which vailéth and which vailéth
nought.

¹ May, has power over.

"Thethridde point of Theorique,
Which cleped is Mathématique,
Devided is in sondry wise
And stand upon divers apprise.
The first of which is Arsmetique,¹
And the second is said Musique,
The thridde is eke Geometrie,
Also the forth Astronomie.

" Of Arsmetique the matere
Is that of which a man may lere,
Whatalgorisme² innombreamount-
eth,

Whan that the wise man accompteth
After the formal propretd
Of alorismes a, be, ce.
By which multiplication
Is made and diminution
Of sommes by Inexperience
Of this art and of this science.

" The seconde of mathématique,
Which is the Science of Musique,
That techeth upon Harmonie
A man to make melodie
By vois and soun of instrument
Through notes of accordement,
The whiche men pronounce alofte,
Now sharpe notes and now softe
Now highe notes and now lowe,
Asbythegamme³ a man may knowe,
Which techeth the prolacion
Of note and the condition.

Mathematique of his Science
Hath yet the thridde intelligence
Full of wisdom and of clergie
And cleped is Geometrie,
Through which that a man hath the
sleight

Of length, of brede, of depth, of height
To knowe the proporcion
By verray calculation
Of this Science. And in this wise
These olde philosdphres wise
Of all this worldés erthé rounde

¹ Arsmetique, Arithmetic.

² Algorisme, Algebra.

³ Gamme, gamut.

How large, how thicke was the
grounde,

Contrived in the experience,
The cerle and the circumference
Of every thing unto the heven
They setten point and mesure even.

" Mathématique above the erth,
Of High Science above, the ferth
Which speketh upon Astronomie
And techeth of the sterres high,
Beginning upward fro the mone.
But first, as it was for to done
This Aristotle in other thing
Unto this worthy yongé king
The kinde of every element,
Which stand under the firmament,
How it is made and in what wise
Fro point to point he gan devise.

" He, which nature the every kinde,
The mighty God, so as I finde,
Of Man, which is his creature,
Hath so devided the nature
That none till other well accordeth.
And by the cause it so discordeth
The life, which feleth the siknesse,
May stond upon no sikernesse.

" Of therthe, which is colde and
dry,

The kinde of man Malencoly
Is cleped, and that is the firste,
The most ungoodlich and the werste.
What man hath that complexion,
Full of ymagination
Of dredés and of wrathfull thought,
He fret him selven all to nought.

" The water, which is moist and
colde, [folde,
Maketh Fleume,¹ which is mani-
foryetel, slow and wery sone
Of every thing whiche is to done.

What man that taketh his kind
of thair,
He shall be light, he shall be fair.

¹ Fleume, phlegm of the phlegmatic temperament.

For his complexion is blood,
Of alle there is none so good,
Where as he hath love undertake,
Wronge is it, if that he forsake.

"The first of his condicion
Appreth the complexion,
Whose propretes ben drie and hote,
Which in a man is coler¹ hote.
It maketh a man ben enginous
And swifte of fote and eke irous.²
Of conteke and fool hastifnesse
He hath a right great besnesse.

After the kinde of thelement
Thus stant a mannes kindé went³
As touchend his complexion
Upon sondry division
Of dry, of moist, of chele, of hete,
And eche of hem his owne sete
Appropred hath within a man.
And first to telle as I began
The Splen is to Malencoly
Assigned for herbergery.⁴

"The moiste Fleume with the
colde

Hath in the Lungés for his holde
Ordeined him a propre stede
To dwellé there as he is bede.

"To the Sanguine Complexion
Nature of his inspection
A propre hous hath in the Liver
For his dwellinge made deliver.⁵

"The drie Coler with his hete
By wey of kinde his propre sete
Hath in the Galle, where he dwel-
leth,

So as the philosophre telleth.

"Now over this is for to wite,
As it is in phisique write
Of Liver, of Lunge, of Galle, of Splen,
They all unto the herté ben
Servaúnts, and eche in his office

¹ Coler, choler, bile.

² Irons, given to anger, choleúic.

³ Kinde went, natural turn or bent.

⁴ The Splen is assigned to Melancholy for
its place of lodging.

⁵ Deliver, free, supple.

Entendeth to don him service,
As he, which is chefe lord above.
The Liver maketh him for to love,
The Lunge yiveth him wey of speche,
The Gallé serveth to do wreche.
The Splen doth him to laugh and play
Whan all unclennesse is away.
Lo, thus hath eche of hem his dede
To susteignen hem and fede.

In time of recreation
Nature hath in creation
The Stomack for a comun coke
Ordeined so, as saith the boke :
The Stomack coke is for the hall
And boileth mete for hem all
To make hem mighty for to serve
The Herte, that he shall nought
sterve.

For as a King in his empire
Above all other is lorde and sire,
So is the Herte principal,
To whom Reson in spECIAL
Is yove as for the governaunce.

"And thus nature his purveaunce
Hath made for man to liven here.
But God which hath the Soule dere
Hath formed it in other wise
That can no man plainly devise.
But as the clerkes us enforme,
That lich to God it hath a forme,
Through which figure and which
likencsse

The Soule hath many an high
noblesse

Appropred to his owne kinde.
But oft her witters ben made blinde
Al onelich of this ilké pointe,
That her abiding is conjointe
Forth with the body for to dwelle.

"That one desireth toward helle,
That other upward to the heven ;
So shall they never stonde in even
But if the Flessh be overcome
And that the Soule have holynome¹

¹ Holy nome, wholly taken.

The governaunce, and that is selde
While that the Flessh him may
bewelde.

All erthely thing which God began,
Was only made to servé man,
But he the Soule all onely made
Him selven for to serve and glade.
All other bestes that men finde
They serve unto her owne kinde,
But to Reson the Soule serveth,
Wherof the man his thank deserveth
And get him with his workés good
The perdurable livés food.

" Of what matere it shall betolde
A tale liketh many folde
The bet if it be spoke pleine,
Thus thenke I for to torne ayeine
And tellen plenerly therfore
Of therthé, wherof now to-fore
I spake, and of the water eke,
So as these olde bokés speke,
And setté proprely the boundc
After the forme of mappemounde,¹
Through which the ground by put-
parties

Departed is in thre parties,
That is Asie, Aufrrque, Europe,
The which under the heaven cope
As fer as streccheth any ground
Begripeth all this erthe round.
But after that the highe wreche²
The water weies let out seche
And overgo the hilles high,
Which every kindé made deie
That upon middel erthé stood
Out take Noe and his blood,
His sonés and his daughters thre
They weren saufand so was he.
Her namés, who that redé right,
Sem, Cham, Japhét the brethern
hight,
And whanné thilke almighty honde

Withérough the water fro the londe
And all the ragé was away
And erthe was the mannes way,
The sonés thre, of which I tolde,
Right after that hem selvé wolde,
This world departe they begonne.¹

" Asia, which lay to the sonne
Upon the marche of orient,
Was graunted by commune assent
To Sem, which was the sone eldest,
For that partie was the best
And double as moch as other
two.

And was that timé bounded so,
Wher as the flood which men Nile
calleth,

Departeth fro his cours andfalleth
Into the see Alexandrine,
There taketh Asie first sesfne²
Toward the west, and over this
Of Canahim, where the flood is
Into the Crete See rendend,
Fro that into the worlde"s end
Estwarde Asie it is algates
Till that men comen to the gates
Of Paradis, and there ho.³
And shortly for to speke it so
Of orient in generall

Within his bounde Asie hath all.

" And than upon that other side
Westwarde, as it fell thilke tide,
The brother, which was hote
Cham,

Unto his parte Aufrique nam.
Japhet Europe tho toke he ;
Thus parten they the worlde on thre.
But yet there ben of londés fele⁴
In Occident as for the chele,
In oriente as for the hete,
Which of the people be forlete
As lond deserte, that is undble,
For it may nought ben habitable.

¹ *Mappemounde*, *Mappa Mundi*, map of the world.

² *The highe wreche*, the vengeance of God.

¹ They began to divide this world

² *Sesine*, seizin, possession.

³ *Ho*, stop,

⁴ *Fele*, many.

"The water eke hath sondry
 bounde,
 After the lond where it is founde,
 And taketh his name of thilke londes
 Where that it renneth on the
 strondes.

But thilké see, which hath no wane,
 Is clepéd the Great Oceane,
 Out of the which arise and come
 The highe flodés all and some.
 Is none so litel welles spring,
 Which therene taketh his beginning,
 And lich a man that lacketh breth
 By wey of kindé so it geth
 Out of the see and in ayein,
 The water, as the bokes sain.

" Of Elements the propretés
 How that they stonden by degres,
 As I have told now might thou here,
 My gode sone, all the matere
 Of erthe, of water, aire and fire.
 And for thou saist, that thy desire
 Is for to witen overmore
 The forme of Aristotles lore,
 He saith in his entendément
 That yet there is an Element
 Above the foure, and is the fifté
 Set of the highe Goddes yifte,
 The which that *orbis* cleped is.
 And therupon he telleth this,
 That as the shellé hole and sounde
 Encloseth all aboute rounde
 What thing within an ey¹ belongeth,
 Right so this *orbis* underfongeth
 These Eleméntés everychone
 Which I have spoke of one and one.

" But over this now take good
 hede,
 My soné, for I wol precede
 To speke upon Mathenatique,
 Which grounded is on Theorique.
 The Science of Astronomy
 I thenke for to specify,
 Withouté which to telte pleine

All other Science is in veine
 Toward the scole of erthly thinges.
 For as an egle with his winges
 Fleeth above allé that men finde,
 So doth this Science in his kinde.

" Benethe upon this erthe here
 Of allé thingés the matere,
 As tellen us they that ben lerned,
 Of thing above it stont governed,
 That is to sain of the planétes
 The chelés bothe and eke the hetes,
 The chaunces of the worlde also,
 That we Fortune clepen so
 Among the mennés nacion,
 All is through constellacion ;
 Wherof that some man hath the
 wele,

And some men have diseses fele
 In love as well as other thinges.
 The state of realmes and of kinges
 In time of pees, in time of werre,
 It is conceived of the sterre.
 And thus saith the Naturien,
 Whiche is an Astronomien.
 But the Divine saith other wise,
 That if men were good and wise
 And plesant unto the Godhede
 They shulclen nought the sterres
 drede.

For o man if him well befalle
 Is mord worth than ben they alle
 Towardés him that weldeth all.
 But yet the lawe original!,
 Which he hath set in the natures,
 Mot worchen in the creatures,
 That therof may be none obstacle
 But if¹ it stonde upon miracle
 Through praier of some haly man.
 And forth so as I began
 To speke upon Astronomy
 As it is write in the clergy,
 To telle how the planétés fare,
 Some parte I thenke to declare,
 My sone, unto thin audience.

"**Astronomy** is the Science
Of wisdom and of high conning
Which maketh a man have know-
leching

Of sterres in the fermament,
Figuré, cercle and movement
Of eche of hem in sondry place,
And what betwene hem is of space,
How so they move or stonde fast,
All this it telleth to the last.

Assembled with Astronomy
Is eke that like Astrology,
The which in jugemeits accompteth
Thefifect what every sterre amount-
eth.

And how they causen many a wonder
To the climdts¹ that stond hem
under.

And for to telle it moré pleine
These old⁶ philosophres saine
That *orbis* which I spake of er
Is that which we fro therthe afer
Beholde, and firmament it calle,
In which the sterres stonden alle,
Among the which in speciall
Planetés seven principal!
There ben, that mannés sighte
demeth

By thORIZONT as to us semeth.
And also there ben Signés twelve,
Which have her cercles by hem selve
Compásséd in the zodiaque
In which they have her places take,
And as they stonden in degre
Her cercles more or lasse be
Made after the proportion
Of therthé, whose condicion
Is set to be the foundamént
To susteine up the firmament.
And by this skill a man may knowe,
The moré that they stonden lowe
The moré ben the cercles lasse,
That causeth why that somé passe
Her dué cours to-fore an other.

¹ *Climats, regions, climes.*

But now, my leve deré brother,
As thou desirest for to wite
What I finde in the bokés write,
To telle of the Planetes Seven
How that they stonde upon the
heven,

And in what point that they ben in,
Take hedé, for I woll begin,
So as the philosophre taught
To Alisaundre and it betaught,
Wherof that he was fully taught
Of wisdom which was him betaught.

" Beneth all other stant the Mone,
The which hath with the See to done
Of nodés high and ebbés lowe
Upon hischaunge it shall be knowe.
And every fissh which hath a shelle
Mote in his governauncé dwelle
To wexe and wane in his degre,
As by the Mone a man may se,
And all that stant upon the grounde
Of his moisture it mot be founde.
All other sterres, as men finde,
Ben shinend of her owne kinde
Out take onty the mone light,
Which is nought of him salvé
bright,

But as he taketh it of the Sonne.
And yet he hath nought all full
wonne
His light that he nis somdele
derke.

But what the let is of that weike
In almagest¹ it telleth this.
The Menés cercle so lowe is,
Wherof the Sonne out of his stage
Ne seth him nought with full visdge
For he is with the ground beshaded,
So that the Mone is somdele faded
And may nought fully shiné clere.
But what man under his powere
Is bore, he shall his placé chaunge
And seché many londés straunge.

¹ *Almagest, Ptolemy's collection of the ob-
servations of the old astronomers.*

And as of this condicion
The Mones disposition
Upon the londe of Alemaigne
Is set, and eke upon Britaigne,
Which is now clepéd Engelonde,
For they travaile in every londe.

" Of the Planetés the seconde
Above the Mone hath take his
bonde

Mercure, and his nature is this,
That under him who that bore is,
In boke he shall be studious
And in writingé curidus
And slowe and lustles to travaile
In thing whiche diés might availe.
He loveth ese, he loveth rest,
So is he nought the worthiest.
But with somdele besinesse
His hert is set upon richesse.
And as in this condicion
Theffect and disposition
Of this Planete and of his chaunce
Is most in Borgone and in Fraunce.

Next to Mercure as woll befallé
Stant that Planete which men calle
Venus, whose constellacion
Governeth all the nacion
Of lovers, where they spede or none,
Of which I trowé thou be one.
But whiderward thin nappés wende,
Shall this Planété shewe at ende,
As it hath do to many mo,
To somé wel, to some wo.
And netheles of this Planété
The most part is softe and swete.

" For who that therof taketh his
berth

He shall desiré joy and merth,
Gentil, curteis and debonaire
To speke his wordés softe and faire,
Such shall he be by wey of kinde.
And over all where he may finde
Plesatince of love, his herte boweth
With all his might and ther he
woweth.

Venus of lové the goddésse
Is clepéd, but of wantonesse
The climate of her lechery
Is most comune in Lumbardy.

" Next unto this Planete of love
The bright Sonne stant above,
Which is the hinderer of the night
And furtherer of the dalés light,
As he which is the worldés eye,
Throughwhomthelustycompaignie
Of foulés by the morwé singe,
The freshe flourés sprede and
springe,

Thehighétre the ground beshadeth,
And every mannés herté gladdeth.
And for it is the Hede Planete,
How that he sitteth in his fete,
Of what richesse, of what nobley
These bokés telle, and thus they
say.

" Of golde glistrend spoke and
wele

The sonne his carte ' hath faire and
wele,

In whiche he sitte, and is coronéd
With bright stones environed,
Of which if that I speké shall
There be to-fore in speciall
Set in the front of his corone
Thre stonés, which that no persone
Hath upon erthe, and the first is
By namé clepéd licuchis.

That other two be clepéd thus
Astrices and ceramius.

In his corone, also behinde,
By olde bokes as I finde,
There ben of worthy stonés thre
Set ech of hem in his degre,
Wherof a cristall is that one,
Which that cordne is set upon.
The seconde is an adamant.
The thridde is noble and avenaunt,
Which clepéd is ydriades.

And over this yet netheles

¹ Carte, chariot.

Upon the sides of the werke,
 After the writing of the clerke,
 There sitten five stons mo,
 The smaragdine is one of tho,
 Jaspis and elitropius
 And vendides and jacinctus.
 Lo, thus the cordne is beset,
 Wherof it shineth well the bet,
 And in such wise his light to sprede
 Sit with his diadème on hede
 The sonne shinend in his carte.
 And for to lede him swithe and
 smarte

After the brighte daies lawe
 There ben ordeindé for to drawe
 Four hors his chare and him withall,
 Wherof the names telle I shall.
 Erftheus the first is hote,
 The which is red and shineth hote,
 The second Acteos the bright,
 Lampés the thridde courser hight,
 And Philogeus is the ferth,
 That bringen light unto this erth
 And gone so swifte upon the
 heven,

In foure and twenty hounés even
 The carte with the brighte sonne
 They drawé, so that over ronne
 They have under the cercles high
 All middel erthe in suche an hie.¹

"And thus the sonne is over all
 The Chefe Planete imperial],
 Above him and beneth him thre
 And thus betwene hem regneth he
 As he that hath the middel place
 Among the Seven, and of his face
 Be glad all erthly creatures
 And taken after the natures
 Her ese and recreation.
 And in his constellacion
 Who that is bore in speciáll,
 Of good will and of liberall
 He shall be founde in alle place
 And also stonde in mochel grace

¹ Hie, haste,

Toward the lordes for to serve
 And great proffte and thank de-
 serve.

And over that it causeth yit
 A man to be subtil of wit,
 To worch in golde, and to be wise
 In every thing which is of prise.
 But for to speken in what coste
 Of all this erth he regneth moste,
 As for wisdom it is in Grece,
 Where is appropred thilké spiece.

" Mars the planet bataillous
 Next to the sonnè glorious
 Abové stant and doth merveiles
 Upon the fortune of batailes.
 The conquerours by dalés olde
 Were unto this planéte holde.
 But who that his nativite
 Hath take upon the propreté
 Of Martes disposicion
 By wey of constellacion,
 He shall be fiers and fool hastife
 And desirous of werre and strife.
 But for to tellen redely
 In what climate most communly
 That this Planete hath his effecte,
 Said is, that he hath his aspecte
 Upon the Haly Londe so cast,
 That there is no pees stedeTast.

" Abové Mars upon the heven
 The Sixte Planete of the Seven
 Stant Jupiter the delicate,
 Which causeth pees and no debate.
 For he is clepéd the Planéte,
 Which of his kindé softe and swete
 Attrempreth all that to him longeth.
 And whom this Planete under-
 fongeth

To stonde upon his regiment,¹
 He shall be meke and pacienc
 And fortunate to marchandy'
 And lusty to delfcacy
 In every thing which he shall do.
 This Jupiter is cause also

¹ Regiment rule.

Of the science of lighte werkes,
 And in this wise tellen clerkes
 He is the planete of delices.
 But in Egipte of his offices
 He regneth most in speciáll,
 For there be tastés over all
 Of all that to this life befalleth.
 For there no stormy weder falleth,
 Which might greve man or beste,
 And eke the londe is so honeste,
 That it is plenteous and pleine,
 There is no idel ground in veine.
 And upon such felicité
 Stant Jupiter in his degre.

" The highest and aboven alle
 Stant that Planété, which men calle
 Saturnus, whose complexión
 Is colde, and his condicion
 Causeth malice and cruelte
 To him the whose nativité
 Is set under his governaunce.
 For all his werkés ben grevaunce
 And enern to mannés hele,
 In what degre that he shall dele.
 His climate is in orient,
 Where that he is most violent.

" Of the Planetes by and by,
 How that they stonde upon the sky,
 Fropointtopoint as thoumighthere
 Was Alisaundre made to lere.
 But over this touchénd his lore
 Of thing that they him taughté more
 Upon the scoles of clergy,
 Now herken the philosophy.

" He whichéparteth day fronight,
 That one derke that other bright,
 Of seven dalés made a weke ;
 A month of fouré wekés eke,
 He hath ordeiné in his lawe;
 Of monthés twelve and eke forth-
 drawe

He hath also the longé yere.
 And as he set of his powere
 Accordaunt to the daiés seven
 Planétés seven upon the heven,

As thou to-fore hast herd devise,
 To speke right in such a wise
 To every monthe by him selve
 Upon the heven, of signes twelve
 He hath after his ordinall
 Assigned one in speciáll,
 Whetof so as I shall rehercen
 The tides of the yere diversen.
 But plainly for to make it knowe
 How that the signés sit a rowe,
 Eche after other by degré
 In substaunce and in proprete
The zodiáque comprehendeth
 Within his cercle and it appendeth.

" The firste of whiché netheles
 By name is clepéd Ariés,
 Which lich a wether of stature
 Resembled is in his figure.
 And as it saith in almageste
 Of sterres twelve upon this beste
 Ben set, wherof in his degre
 The wombe hath two, the heved
 hath thre,

The taile hath seven, and in thiswise,
 As thou might heré me devise,
 Stant Aries, which hote and drie
 Is of him self, and in partie
 He is the receipt and the hous
 Of mighty Mars the batailous.
 And evermore eke as I finde
 The Creator of alle kinde
 Upon this Signé first began
 The world, whan that he madé man,
 And ot this constellacidn
 The verray operacion
 Availeth, if a man therinne
 The purpose of his werk beginne,
 For than he hath of proprete
 Good spede and great felicité.

" The twelve monthés of the yere
 Attitled under the powére
 Of these twelvé signés stonde,
 Wherof that thou shalt understonde
 This Aries out of the twelve
 Hath Marche attitled for him selve,

Whan every brid shall chese his
make,

And every nedder and every snake
And every reptile which may move,
His might assaieth for to prove
To crepen out ayein the sonne,
Whan Ver¹ hisseson hath begonne.

"Taurus the seconde after this
Of Signes which figured is
Unto a bulle, drie and colde,
And as it is in bokes tolde
He is the hous appurtenaunt
To Venus somdele descordaunt.
This bulle is eke with sterres set,
Through which he hath his homes
knet

Unto the taile of Aries,
So is he nought there sterreles.
Upon his brest eke eightetene
He hath, and eke as it is sene
Upon his tail stonde other two.
His month assigned eke also
Is Averil, which of his shoures
Ministreth way unto the floures.

"The thriddé Signe is Gemini,
Which is figured redely
Lich to two twinnés of man kinde,
That naked stonde. And as I
finde,

They ben with sterres wel bego,
The heved hath parte of thilké two,
That shine upon the bulles taile,
So ben they both of o paraile.
But on the wombe of Gemini
Ben five sterrés nought forth.
And eke upon the fete be twey,
So as these olde boks say,
That wis Tholomeus wrote.
His propre monthé wel I wote
Assigned is the lusty May,
Whan every brid upon his lay
Among the grené levés singeth,
And love of his pointuré stingeth
After the lawes of nature

¹ Ver, the Spring.

The youthe of every creature.

"Cancer after thereuleand space
Of Signés halt the forthé place.
Like to the crabbe he hath sem-
blatince

And hath unto his retinaunce
Sixtene sterres, wherof ten,
So as these oldd wisé men
Describe, he bereth on him to-fore
And in the middle two before
And four he hath upon his ende,
Thus goth he sterréd in his kende.
And of him self is moist and colde
And is the propre hous and holde
Which apperteineth to the Mone
And doth what longeth him to done.
The month of Juin unto this Signe
Thou shalte after the reule assigne.

"The fifte Signe is Leo hote,
Whos kinde is shape drie and hote,
In whom the Sonne hath herber-
gage.

And the semblaunce of his ymage
Is a leon, which in baillie
Of sterres hath his purpartie,
The fouré which as Cancer hath
Upon his ende, Leo tath
Upon his heved, and thanné neste
He hath eke foure upon his breste,
And one upon his tail behinde.
In olde boks as we finde.

His propre month is Juil by name,
In which men pleien many a game.

"After Le6 Virgo the nexte
Of Signés clepéd is the sexte,
Wherof the figure is a maide,
And as the philosopfre saide,
She is the welth and the rising,
The lust, the joy and the liking
Unto Mercure. And soth to say
She is with sterres well beseie,
Wherof Leo hath lent her one,
Which sit on high her heved upon.
Her wombe hath five, her fete also
Have other five, and ever mo

Touchend as of complexion
 By kindly disposition
 Of drie and cold this maiden is.
 And for to tellen over this
 Her month as thou shake under-
 stonde,

Whan every felde hath corne in
 honde

And many a man his backe hath
 plied,

Unto this signe is Augst applied.

" After Virgo to reknen even
 Libra sit in the nombre of seven,
 Which hath figure and ressemblaunce
 Unto a man which a balaunce
 Bereth in his honde as for to weie,
 In boke and as it may be seie.
 Diversé sterres to him longeth,
 Wherof on heved he underfongeth
 First thre, and eke his wombe hath
 two,

And down beneth eight other mo.
 This signe is hote and moisté both,
 The whiché thingés be nought loth
 Unto Venus, so that alofte
 She resteth in his hous full ofte,
 And eke Saturnus often hied
 Is in this signe and magnified.
 His propre month is said Septembre,
 Which yiveth men cause to le-
 membre,

If any sore be left behinde
 Of thing which greve may to kinde.

" Among the Signes upon height
 The signé, whiche is nombred eight,
 Is Scorpio, which as felon
 Figured is a Scorpion.

But for all that yet nethelesse
 Is Scorpio nought sterddlesse.
 For Libra graunteth him his ende
 Of eighth sterrés, where he wende,
 The which upon his heved assised
 Hebereth, and eke there ben devised
 Upon his wombe sterrés thre
 And eight upon his taile hath he.

Which of his kinde is moist and colde
 And unbehovely manyfolde.

He harméth Venus and empeireth,
 But Mars unto his hous repeireth,
 But ware whan they to-gider dwellen.
 His propre monthe is, as men tellen,
 Octobre, which bringeth the kalende
 Of Winter, that cometh next suende.

" The ninth signe in Novembre
 also,

Which folweth after Scorpio,
 Is cleped Sagittarius,
 The whos figure is marked thus ;
 A monstre with a bowe on honde,
 On whom that sondry sterrés stonde,
 Thilke eight of whiche I spake to-
 fore,

The which upon the tail ben lore
 Of Scorpio the heved all faire
 Be spreden of the Sagittaire,
 And eight of other stonden even
 Upon his wombe, and other seven
 There stonden on his tail behinde,
 And he is hote and drie of kinde.
 To Jupiter his hous is fre.

But to Mercure in his degre,
 For they be nought of one assent,
 He worcheth great empeirement.
 This signe hath of his proprete
 A month, whiche of duéte
 After the seson that befalleth
 The ploughés oxe in winter stalleth.
 And fire into the halle he bringeth
 And thilké drinke of which men
 singeth,

He torneth must into the winfc,
 Than is the larder of the swine.
 That is Novembre which I mene,
 Whan that the leef hath lost his grene

" The tenthé Signé drie and colde,
 The which is Capricornus tolde,
 Unto a gote hath ressemblaunce.
 Por whosé love and dqueintaunce
 Within his house to sojorne
 It liketh well unto Satorne.

But to the Mone it liketh nought,
 For no prof ft is there wrought.
 This Signe as of his proprete
 Upon his heved hath sterds thre
 And eke upon his wombe two
 And twey upon his taile also.
 Decembre after the yeres forme,
 So as the bokés us enforme,
 Withéaies shorte and nightes longc
 This ilké Signe hath underfonge.

"Of tho that sitte upon theheven
 Of Signés in the nombre elleven
 Aquarius hath take his place
 And stant well in Satornés grace,
 Which dwelleth in his herbergage.
 But to the Sonne he doth outrage.
 This Signe is verrailly resembled
 Lich to a man which halte assembled
 In either honde a water spout,
 Wherof the stremds rennen out.
 He is of kinde moist and hote,
 And he that of the stérres wote
 Saith, that he hath of sterds two
 Upon his heved, and bene of tho
 That Capricorn hath on his ende.
 And as the bokés maken minde
 That Tholomcus made him selve,
 He hath eke on his wombe twelve,
 And twey upon his ende stonde.
 Thou shalte also this understonde,
 The frosty colde Janevere,
 Whan comen is the newd yere,
 That Janus with the double face
 In his chare hath take his place
 And loketh upon bothé sides
 Some dele toward the winter tides,
 Some dele toward the yere suende,
 That is the monthé belongénde
 Unto this Signe, and of his dole
 He yiveth the firste primerole.¹

"The twelfthé, which is last of alle
 Of signés, Piscis men it calle,
 The which, as telleth the scripture,
 Bereth of two fisses the figure.

¹ *Primerole*, primrose.

So is he colde and moist of kinde,
 And eke with sterres as I finde
 Beset in sondry wise, as thus
 Two of his ende Aquarius
 Hath lent unto his heved, and two
 This Signe hath of his owne also
 Upon his wombe, and over this
 Upon his ende also there is
 A nombre of twenty sterres bright,
 Which is to sene a wonder sight.
 Toward this signe into his hous
 Comth Jupiter the glorious,
 And Venus eke with him accordeth
 To dwellen, as the boke recordeth.
 The Month unto this signe ordeined
 Is Februar, which is bereined.
 And with londflodés in his rage
 At fordés letteth¹ the passage.

"Now hastthou herd the proprete
 Of Signes, but in his degre
 Albumazare yet over this
 Saith, so as therthe parted is"
 In foure, right so ben devised
 The signé stwelve, ané stonde assised
 That eche of hem in his partie
 Hath his climate to justifie.
 Wherof the firste regiment
 Toward the parte of orient
 Prom Antioche and that centre
 Govdrndé is of Signés thre,
 That is Cancer, Virgo, Leo.
 And towarde Occident also
 From Armeny, as I am lerned,
 Of Capricorne it stant governed,
 Of Piscis and Aquarius.
 And after hem I finde thus
 Southward fro Alisaundre forth
 Tho Signes, whiché most ben worth
 In gouernaunce of that doaire,²
 Libra they ben and Sagittaire
 With Scorpio, which is conjoint
 With hem to stonde upon that point
 Of Constantnople the cite,
 So as the bdkés tellen me.

¹ *Letteth*, hinders.

² *Doire*, provincé

The last of this division
 Stant untoward Septemtrion,
 Where as by wey of purveiaunce
 Hath Aries the governaunce
 Forth with Taurus and Gemini.
 Thus ben the Signes proprely
 Devided, as it is reherced,
 Wherof the londes ben diversed.

"**So thus, my sone,** as thou
 might here,

Was Alisaundre made to lere
 Of hem that weren for his lore.
 But now to loken overmore
 Of other sterres how they fare
 I thenke hereafter to declare,
 So as king Alisaundre in youth
 Of him that suche signés couth
 Enformed was to-fore his eye
 By night upon the sterres sigh.

" Upon sondry creation
 Stant sondry operation,
 Some worcheth this, some worcheth
 that;

The fire is hote in his estate
 And brenneth whathemayatteigne,
 The water may the fire restreigne,
 The which is colde and moist also.
 Of other thinge it fareth right so
 Upon this erthe among us here.
 And for to speke in this manure
 Upon the heven, as men may finde
 The sterrés ben of sondry kinde
 And worchen many sondry thinges
 To us that bene her underlinges.
 Among the whiché forth withall
 Nectdnabus in speciáll,
 Which was an astronomien
 And eke a great magicien
 And undertake hath thilke emprise,
 To Alisaundre in his apprise
 As of magiqué naturele
 To knowe, enformeth him somdele
 Of certein sterrés what they mene,
 Of which he saith there ben fiftene.
 And sondrily to everichone

A gras belongeth and a stone,
 Wherof men worchen many a
 wonder

To setté thing bothe up and under.

" To telle right as he began
 The first sterre Aldeboran,
 The clerest and the most of alle,
 By righte name men it calle,
 Which liche is of condition
 To Mars and of complexion
 To Venus, and hath therupon
 Carbunculum his propre stone.
 His herbe is Anabulla named,
 Which is of great vertile proclaimed.

" The seconde is nought vertules
 Clota, or elles Pliades
 It hatte and of the Mones kinde
 He is. And also this I finde,
 He taketh of Mars complexidn,
 And lich to such condition
 His stone appropred is Cristall,
 And eke his herbe in speciall
 The vertuous Fenel it is.

" The thridde, which comth after
 this,

Is hote Algol the cleré rede,
 Whiche of Satome as I may rede
 His kindé taketh and eke of Jove
 Complexion to his behove.
 His propre stone is Diamant,
 Which is to him most accordaunt.
 His herbé, which is him betake,
 Is hote Eleborum the blacke.

" So as it falleth upon lot
 The fourth sterre is Alhaiot,
 Which in the wise as I saide er
 Of Satorne and of Jupiter
 Hath take his kinde, and therupon
 The Saphir is his propre stone,
 Marrubium his herbe also,
 The which accorden both two.

" And Canis major in his like
 The fifte sterre is of magique,
 The whosé kinde is Venerien,
 As saith this astronomien.

His propre stone is said Berille,
But for to worche and to fulfille
Thing which to this Science falleth,
There is an herbé, which men
calleth

Saveine, and that behoveth nede
To him that woll his purpos spede.

" The sixte suende after this
By name Canis minor is.
The which sterre is Mercuriall
By wey of kinde, and forth withall
As it is written in the carte
Complexion he taketh of Marte.

His stone and herbe as saith the
scole

Ben Achates and Primerole.

" The seventh sterre in special!
Of this Science is Ariall,
Which sondry nature underfongeth.
The stone which propre unto him
longeth,

Gorgonza proprely it hight.
His herbe also, which he shall right,
Upon the worching as I mene
Is Celidoine fresshe and grene.

" Sterre Ala corvi upon height
Hath take his place in nombre of
eight,

Which of his kindé mot performe
The will of Marte and of Satorne,
To whom Lapacia the gret
Is herbe, but of no beyete.
His stone is Honochinus hote,
Through which men worchen great
riote.

" The ninthé sterrdfaire and wele
By name is hote Alaezele,
Which taketh his propre kinde thus
Bothe of Mercure and of Venus.
His stone is the grene Emeraude
To whom is yoven many a laude.
Saulge is his herbe appurtenaunt
Aboven all the remenaunt.

" The tenthé sterre is Almareth,
Which upon life and upon deth

Through kinde of Jupiter and Marte
He doth what longeth to his parte.
His stone is Jaspe and of Plantaine
He hath his herbé souveraine.

" The sterre eleventh is Venenas,
The whose nature is, as it was,
Take of Venus and of the Mone
In thing which he hath for to done.
Of Adamaunt is that perrie,
In whiche he worcheth his maistrie.
Thilke herbe also, which him be-
falleth,

Cicorea the boke him calleth.

" Alpheta in the nombre sit
And is the twelfte sterre yit,
Of Scorpio which is governed,
And taketh his kinde as I am lerned
And hath his vertue in the stone
Which cleped is Topazion.
His herbe propre is Rosmarine,
Which shapen is for his covine.

" Of these sterres which I mene,
Cor Scorpionis is thrittene,
The whos nature Mart and Jove
Have yoven unto his behove.
His herbe is aristolochy,¹
Which folweth his astronomy.
The stoné which this sterre alloweth,
Is Sardis which unto him boweth.

" The sterre which stant next the
last,

Nature of him this name cast
And clepen him Botercadent,
Which of his kind obedient
Is to Mercure and to Venus.
His stone is said Crisolitus.
His herbe is cleped Satureie,
So as these olde bokes saie.

" But now the lasté sterre of alle
The Taile of Scorpio men calle,
Which to Mercure and to Satorne
By wey of kinde mot retorne

¹Aristolochy, miswritten "astrology." Cornelius Agrippa, *De Occult. Phil.* Lib. I., cap. 32, gives the plants under *Cor Scorpionis* as Aristolochia and Crocus.

After the preparation
Of due constellation.
The Calcidoine unto him longeth
Which for his stone heunderfongeth.
Of Majoran his herbe is grounded.
Thus have I said how they ben
founded

Of every sterre in speciall,
Which hath his herbe and stone
withall,

As Hermes in his bokes olde
Wissene bereth, of that I tolde.

" Now hast thou herd, in suche
a wise

These noble philosophres wise
Enformeden this yongé king
And made him have a knoueleching
Of thing which first to the partie
Belongeth of philosophie,
Which Theorique cleped is,
As thou to-fore hast herde er this.
But now to speke of the seconde,
Whiche Aristotle hath also founde
And techeth how to spekd faire,
Whiche is a thing full necessaire
To counterpeise the balaunce,
Where lacketh other suffisaunce.

" Above all erthly creatures
The Highe Maker of natures
The Word to man hath yove alone,
So that the speche of his persone
Or for to lese, or for to winne
The hertés thought which is
withinne,

May shewe what it wolde mene.
And that is no where elles sene
Of kinde with none other beste.
So shulde he be the more honést,
To whom God yaf so worthy a yifte,
And loke well that he ne shifte
His Wordes to none wicked use,
For Word the techen of vertuse
Is clepéd in philosophy.
Wherof touchendé this party
Is rhetorique the science

Appropred to the reverence
Of Wordes that ben resonable.
And for this art shall be vailible
With goodly wordes for to like
It hath Gramaire, it hath Logiqué,
That serven both unto the speche.
Gramaire first hath for to teche
To speke upon congruite.
Logiqne hath eke in his degre
Betwene the trouthe and the fals-
hode

The pleine wordes for to shode,¹
So that nothing shall go beside
That he the right ne shall decide,
Wherof full many a great debate
Reformed is to good estate
And pees susteigné up alofte
With esy worclés and with softe,
Where strengthe shulde let it falle.
The philosophre amonges alle
Forthy commendeth this science,
Which hath the reule of eloquence.
In stone and gras vertue there is,
But yet the bokés tellen this,
That Worde above all erthly thinges
Is vertuous in his dofnges,
Where so it be to evil or good.
For if the Wordes semen good
And be well spoke at mannes ere
Whan that there is no trouthe there,
They done full oft full great deceipt.
For whan the Word to the conceipt
Descordeth in so double a wise,
Such Rhetorique is to despise
In every place and for to drede.

" For of Ulixes thus I rede,
As in the boke of Troy is founde,
His eloquence and his facounde
Of goodly wordes which he tolde
Hath made that Anthenor him
solde

The town whichehe with treson wan.
Worde hath beguiled many a man,
With word the wilde beste is daunted,

¹ Shode, divide, discriminate.

With word the serpent is en-
chaunted,

Of wordes mong the men of armes
Ben woundes heled with the
charmes,

Where lacketh other medicine
Worde hath under his discipline
Of sorceri the carectes.

The woides ben of sondry sectes,
Of evil and eke of good also.

The wordés maken frende of fo,
And fo of frende, and pees of werre,
And werre of pees, and out of herre
The word the worldes cause en-
túket

And reconcileth who on him liketh.
The worde under the cope of heven
Set every thing or odde or even.

With word the Highe God is plesed,
With word the wordes ben appesed.
The softe word the loude stilleth,
Where lacketh good the word ful-
filleth

To make amendes for the wronge.
Whan wordes medlen with the songe,
It doth plesaunce well the more.

But for to loke upon the lore,
How Tullius his rhetorique
Componeth, there a man may pike
How that he shall his wordes set.
How he shall lose, how he shall knet,
And in what wise he shall pro-
nounce

His tale pleiné without frounce.
Wherof ensample if thou wilt seche,
Take hede and rede whilom the
speche

" Of Julius and Cicero,
Which consul was of Romé tho,
Of Caton eke, and of Silene
Behold the wordes hem betwene,
Whan the treson of Cateline
Discovered was, and the covine
Of hem that were of his assent
Was knowe and spoke inparlement,

And axed howe and in what wise
Men sholden done him to juise.
Silanus first his talé tolde
To trowth and as he was beholde
The comun profit for to save,
He saide how treson shuldé have
A cruel dethe. And thus they
speke,

The consul both and Caton eke,
And saiden that for suche a wronge
There may no peiné be to stronge.

But Julius with wordés wise
His tale tolde all other wise,
As he which wolde her dether respite,
And foundeth howe he might excite
The juges through his eloquence
Fro deth to torne the sentence
And set her hertés to pité.

Now tolden they, now tolde he:
They speken pleine after the lawe ;
But he the wordes of his sawe
Coloureth in an other way
Spekend. And thus betwene the
twey

To trete upon this jugement
Made eche of hem his argument.
Wherof the talés for to here
There may a man the scole lere
Of Rhetorique the eloquence,
Whiche is the seconde of Science
Touchende to Philosophic,
Wherof a man shall justifie
His wordes in dispúteson
And knette upon conclusion
His argument in suche a forme,
Which may the pleiné trouthe en-
forme

And the subtil cautele abate,
Whiche every true man shall debate.

"The firsté, whiche is Theorique,
And the seconde Rhetorique
Sciences of Philosophy,
I have hem tolde as in party,
So as the philosophe it tolde
To Alisaundre, And now I wolde

Tell of the thridde, what it is,
The which Practique cleped is.

"**Practique** slant upon thre
thinges

Toward the governaunce of kinges.
Wherof the firste Ethique is named,
The whose Science stant proclamed
To teche of vertue thilke reule,
How that a King him self shall reule
Of his moral condition

With worthy disposition,
Of good living in his persone,
Which is the chefe of his corone.
It maketh a kinge also to lerne
Howe he his body shall governe,
Howe he shall wake, how he shall
slepe,

How that he shall his hele kepe
In mete, in drinke, in clothing eke.
There is no wisdom for to seke
As for the reule of his persone,
The which that this science alone
Ne techeth as by wey of kinde
That there is nothing left behinde.

"That other point, which to
practique

Belongeth, is Economique,
Which techeth thilké honeste,
Through which a King in his degre
His wife and child shal reule and
guie

So forth with all the compaignie
Which in his houshold shall abide,
And his estate on every side
In such manere for to lede
That he his houshold ne mislede.

" Practique hath yet the thridde
apprise,

Which techeth how and in what wise
Through his purveied ordenaunce
A King shall set in governaunce
His realme, and that is Policie
Which longeth unto Regalie
In time of werre, in time of pees,
To worship and to good encrees

Of clerke, of knight, and of mar-
chaunt,

And so forth all the remenaunt
Of all the comun people about
Withinne burgh and eke without
Of hem that ben artificers,
Whiche usen craftes and mestiers,
Whose art is cleped mechanique;
And though they ben nought alle
like,

Yet netheles how so it falle,
O¹ lawe mot governe hem alle,
Or that they lese, or that they winne,
After the state that they ben inne.

"Lo, thus this worthy yong king
Was fully taught of every thing
Which might yive entendement
Of good reule and good regiment
To suche a worthy prince as he.
But of verráy necessite
The philosophre him hath betake
Five points, which he hath under-
take

To kepe and holde in observaunce
As for the worthy governaunce
Which longeth to his Regalie
After the reule of Policie.

"**To every man** belongeth lore.
But to no man belongeth more
Than to a King which hath to lede
The people als for his kinghede.
He may hem bothe save and spille,
And for it stant upon his wille
It sit him well to ben avised
And the vertues which are assised
Unto a Kingés regiment²
To take in his entendement,
Wherof to tellen as they stonde
Hereafterward now woll I fonde.
Among the Vertues one is chefe
And that is Trouthé, which is lefe
To God and eke to man also.
And for it hath ben ever so,
Taught Aristotle as he well couth

1 O, one. 2 Regiment, rule.

To Alisaundre, how in his youth
 He shulde of Trouthe thilké grace
 With all his hole herte embrace,
 So that his word be trewe and pleine
 Toward the world, and so certeine
 That in him be no double speche.
 For if men shulde Trouthe seche
 And found it nought within a King,
 It were an unsitténde¹ thing.

The worde is token of that within,
 There shall a worthy king begin
 To kepe his tunge and to be trewe,
 So shall his price ben ever newe.
 Advise him every man to-fore
 And be well ware, er he be swore,
 For afterwarde it is to late
 If that he wolde his word debate.
 For as a King in speciall
 Above all other is principall
 Of his power, so shulde he be
 Most vertuous in his degre.
 And that may well be signified
 By his corone and specified.

" The gold betokeneth excellence,
 That men shuld done him reverence
 As to her lege souveraine.
 The stones, as the bokes saine,
 Commended ben in treble wise.
 First they ben hard and thilke
 assise

Betokeneth in a King constauce,
 So that there shall no variaunce
 Be found in his condition.
 And also by description
 The vertue whiche is in the stones,
 A verray signe is for the nones
 Of that a king shall ben honest
 And holde trewely his behest
 Of thing which longeth to kinghede.
 The brighté colour, as I rede,
 Which is in the stonés shinend,
 Is in figure betokenend
 The cronique of this worldés fame
 Which stant upon his gode name,

1 *Unsittende*, unbecoming.

The cercle, which is rounde aboute
 Is token of all the londe aboute,
 Which stant under his gerarchie,
 That he it shall well kepe and guie.
 And for that Trouthe how so it falle
 Is the Vertue Soverraine of alle
 That longeth unto regiment,
 A tald which is evident
 Of Trouthe in commendation,
 Toward thin enformacion,
 My sone, hereafter thou shalt here
 Of a cronique in this matere.

As the cronique it dothe herce,
 A soldan whilom was of Perse,
 Which Daires hight, and Ytaspis
 His fader was. And sothe it is,
 That through wisdom and high
 prudence

More than for any reverence
 Of his ligndge as by descent
 The regne of thilke empire he hent.
 And as he was him selfe wise
 The wise men he held in prise,
 And sought hem out on every side
 That toward him they shulde abide.
 Among the whiche thre there were,
 That most service unto him bere
 As they which in his chambre
 lighen

And all his counceil herd and sighen.
 Her names ben of straunge note,
 Harpaghes was the firsté hote,
 And Manachaz was the secounde,
 Zorobabel, as it is founde
 In the cronique, was the thridde.

This soldan what so him betidde
 To hem he triste most of alle,
 Wherof the case is so befallé :
 This lord, which hath conceiptds
 depe,

Upon a night whan he hath slepe,
 As he which hath his wit disposed,
 Touchend a point hem hath opposed.
 The kingés question was this,
 Of thinges thre which strongest is,

The Wine, the Woman or the King?
And that they shulde upon this
thing

Of her answer avised be,
He yaf hem fully daiés thre
And hath behote hem by his feith
That who the beste reson saith
He shall receive a worthy mede.

"Upon this thing they token hede
And stoden in disputesdn,
That by divers opinion
Of arguments that they have holde
Harpaghes first his tale tolcle
And said, how that the strength of
kinges

Is mightiest of alle thinges.
For King hath power over man,
And man is he which reson can,
As he which is of his nature
The moste noble creature
Of alle tho that God hath wrought
And by that skill it semeth nought,
He saith, that any erthly thing
May be so mighty as a King.
A King may spille, a King may
save,

A King may make of lorde a knave
And of a knave a lord also,
The power of a King stant so,
That he the lawes overpasseth.
What he woll make lasse he lasseth,
What he woll makd more he moreth.
And as a gentil faucon soreth,
He fleeth that no man him reclameth,
But he alone all other tameth
And stant him self of lawe fre.
Lo, thus a Kinges might, saith he,
So as his reson can argue,
Is strengest and of most value.

"But Manachaz saith other wise,
That Wine is of the more emprise,
And that he sheweth by this way.
The Wine full ofte taketh away
The reson fro the manned herte,
The Wine can make a creple sterte

And a deliver¹ man unwelde,
It maketh a blind man to behelde
And a bright eyed seme derke,
It maketh a lewde man a clerke,
And fro the clerkes the clergy
It taketh away, and cowardy
It torneth into hardiesse,
Of avarice it maketh largesse.
The Wind maketh eke the good
blood,

In which the soule, which is good,
Hath chosen her a resting place
While that the life her woll embrace.
And by this skillé Manachaz,
Answered hath upon this cas
And saith, that Wine by wey of
kind

Is thing which may the hertes bind
Well more than the Regalie.

"Zorobabel for his partie
Said as him thoughte for the best,
That Women ben the mightiest.
The Kinge and the Vinour also
Of Women comen bothé two.
And eke he said, how that manhede
Through strengthe unto the woman-
hede

Of lové, where he woll or none,
Obeie shall, and therupon
To shewe of Women the maistrie
A tale whiche he sigh with eye
As for ensample he tolde this.

"How Apemen, of Besazis
Which doughter was, in the paleis
Sittend upon his highe deis,
Whan he was hottest in his ire
Toward the great of his empire,
Cyrus the King tiraunt she toke.
And only with her goodly loke
She made him debonaire and meke,
And by the chin and by the cheke
She luggeth him right as her list,
That now she japeth and now she
kist

¹ Deliver, free of movement, lithe.

And doth with him what ever her liketh.

Whan that she loureth than he siketh,

And whan she gladeth he is glad.

And thus this King was overlad
With hire which his lemman was.

"Among the men is no solas
If that there be no Woman there,
For but if that the Woman were
This worldes joie were away.
Through hem men finden out the
wey

To knighthode and to worldés fame,
They make a man to dredé shame
And honour for to be desired.

Through the beaute of hem is fired
The dart of which Cupide throweth,
Wherof the jolif peiné groweth
Which al the worlde hath under fote.
A Woman is the mannés bote,
His life, his deth, his wo, his wele.
And this thing may be shewed wele,
How that Women ben good and
kinde,

For in ensample thus I finde.

"Whan that the duke Admetus lay
Sike in his bed, that every day
Men waiten whan he shulde dey,
Alcest his wife goth for to prey
With sacrifice unto Minerve,
As she which wolde thank deserve,
To wite answdre of the goddesse,
How that her lorde of his sikennesse,
Wherof he was so wo beseine,
Recover might his hele ayeine.
Lo, thus she cride and thus she
praide,

Till atté last a vois her saide,
That if she wolde for his sake
The maladie suffre and take
And deie her self, he shuldé live.
Of this answer Alcest hath yive
Unto Minerve great thonking,
So that her dethe and his living

She chese with all her hole entent,
And thus accorded home she went.
Into the chambre whan she came,
Her housébonde anone she name
In bothe her armes and him kist,
And spake unto him what her list.
And therupon within a throwe
The goodé wife was overthrowe
And deied, and he was hole in
haste.

So may a man by reson taste,
How next after the God above
The trouth of Women and the love,
In whom that allé grace is founde,
Is mightiest upon this grounde
And most behovely manyfolde.

"Lo, thus Zorobabel hath tolcle
The tale of his opinion.

But for finall conclusion,
What strengest is of erthly thinges
The Wine, the Women or the
Kinges, [alle

He saith, that Trouthe above hem
Is mightiest, how ever it falle.

The Trouthe how so it ever come
May for no thing ben overcome.

It may well suffre for a throwe,
But atte last it shall be knowe.

The proverbe is, who that is trewe,
Him shall his while¹ never rewe.

For how so that the cause wende
The trouthe is shameles atté ende.

But what thing that is troutheles
It may nought well be shameles,

And shamé hindereth every wight.
So proveth it, there is no might

Without Trouthe in no degre.

And thus for trouthe of his decre
Zorobabel was most commended,
Wherof the question was ended
And he received hath his mede
For Trotithé, which to mannés nede
Is most behovelich over all.

Forthy was Trouthe in speciall

¹ While, time.

The firste point in observaunce
 Betake unto the governaunce
 Of Alisaundre, as it is saide ;
 For therupon the ground is laide
 Of every Ringed regiment,
 As thing which most convenient
 Is for to set a king in even
 Bothe in this worlde and eke in
 heven.

"**Next after Trouthe** the se-
 counde

In Policie as it is founde,
 Which serveth to the worldes fame
 In worship of a Kinges name,
 Largesse it is, whose privilege
 There may non avarice abrege.
 The worldés good was first comúne,
 But afterward upon Fortune
 Was thilké comun profit cessed.
 For whan the people stood en-
 crossed

And the ligndges woxen great,
 Anone for singular beyete
 Drough every man to his partie,
 Wherof come in the first envie
 With great debate and werres
 stronge,

And last among the men so longe
 Till no man wiste who was who
 Ne which was frende ne which
 was fo.

Till atte laste in every londe
 Within hem self the people fonde,
 That it was good to make a King
 Which might appesen all this thing
 And yive right to the lignages
 In parting of her heritages
 And eke of all her other good.
 And thus above hem allé stood
 The King upon his regaly,
 As he which hath to justify
 The worldés good fro covetise.
 So sit it well in allé wise
 A King betwene the more and lesse
 To sette his herte upon Largesse

Toward him self and eke also
 Towarde his people. And ifnought
 so,

That is to sain, if that he be
 Toward him selfe large and fre
 And of his people take and pille,
 Largesse by no wey of skille
 It may be said, but Avarice,
 Which in a Kinge is a great Vice.

"A King behoveth eke to fle
 The Vice of Prodegalite,
 That he mesure in his expence
 So kepe that of indigence
 He may be sauf. For who that
 nedeth,

In all his werk the wors he spedeth.
 As Aristotle upon Chaldee
 Ensamplé of great auctorite
 Unto king Alisaundre taught
 Of thilké folk that were unsaught¹
 Toward her King for his pillage.
 Wherof he bad in his corgie
 That he unto thre points entende
 Where that he wolde his good de-
 spende.

" First shulde he loke how that
 it stood

That all were of his owne good
 The yiftes which he wolde yive,
 So might he wel the better live.

" And eké he must taken hede
 If there be cause of any nede
 Which oughte for to be defended,
 Er that his goodes ben despended.

" He mote eke as it is befallé
 Amongés other things alle
 Se the desértés of his men,
 And after that they ben of ken
 And of estate and of merite
 He shall hem largelich aquite,
 Or for the werre, or for the pees,
 That none honour fall in decrees
 Which mighte torne into diffame,

¹ *Unsaught*, out of accord (First English, saht, peace, reconciliation).

But that he kepe his godé name,
So that he be nought holde unkinde.
For in cronique a tale I finde,
Which speketh somdele of this
matere,

Herafterward as thou shalte here.

"In Rome" to pursue his right
There was a worthy pouer knight
Which came alone for to saine
His causé, when the court was plein
Where Julius was in presence.
And for him lacketh of despense
There was with him none advocate
To maké plee for his estate.
But though him lacke for to plede
Him lacketh nothing of manhede.
He wiste well his purse was pouer,
But yet he thought his right recouer,
And openly pouerte aleide
To themperour, and thus he saide:

' O Julius, lord of the lawe,
Behold, my counseil is withérawe
For lacke of gold to thine office
After the lawes of justice.
Help, that I hadde counseil here
Upon the trouthe of my matere.'

And Julius with that anone
Assigned him a worthy one.
But he him self no word ne spake.
This knight was wroth and found a
lake¹

In themperour, and saide thus :

' O thou unkinde Julius,
Whan thou in thy bataile were
Up in Aufrique, and I was there,
My might for thy -rescousse I did
And putté no man in my stede.
Thou wost what woundés there I had,
But here I finde the so bad,
That the ne list to speke o worde
Thine owne mouth, norof thinhorde
To yive a florein me to helpe.
How shulde I thanne me beyelpe²
Fro this day forth of thy largesse,

1 Lake, lack. 2 Beyelpe, boast.

Whan such a great unkindenesse
Is found in suche a lorde as thou ?'
This Julius knew well inough
That all was soth which hehimtolde.
And for he woldé nought ben holde
Unkind, he toke his cause on honde,
And as it were of Goddés sonde,
He yaf him good inough to spende
For ever unto his livés ende.

" And thus shuld every worthy
king

Take of his knightes knoueleching
Whan that he sigh they haddennede,
For every service axeth mede.
But other, which have nought de-
served

Through vertue but of japés served,
A King shall nought deserve grace,
Though he be large in suche a place.

" It sit well every king to have
Discretion whan men him crave,
So that he may his yifted wite;
Wherof I finde a tale write,
How Cinichus a pouveré knight
A sommé which was over might,
Praied of his king Antigonus.

The kinge answerde to him thus
And said, how such a yifte passeth
His pouer estate. And than he
lasseth

And axeth but a litel peny,
If that the king wold yive him any.

" The king answerd, it was to
small

For him which was a lord reall,
To yive a man so litel thinge,
It were unworship in a kinge.

" By this ensample a King may
lere,

That for to yive is in manere,
For if a King his tresor lasseth
Without honour and thankeles
passeth,

Whan he him self woll so beguile
I not who shall compleigne his while

Ne who by right him shall releve.
But netheles this I beleve
To helpe with his owné londe
Belongeth every man his honde
To set upon necessity.

"And eke his Kingés realte
Mote every legé man comforte
With good and body to supporte,
Whan they se cause resonnable.
For who that is nought entendéble
To holde upright his Kinges name,
Him oughte for to be to blame.

"Of Policie and over more
To speke in this matere more
So as the philosophe tolde,
A King after the reule is holde
To modifie and to adresse
His yiftés upon such largesse
That he mesuré nought excede.

"For if a King fall into nede,
It causeth ofte sondry thinges,
Whiche are ungoodly to the kinges.
What man will nought him self
mesúre,

Men seen ful ofte that mesure
Him hath forsake. And so doth he
That useth prodegalite,
Which is the moder of pouerte,
Wherof the londés ben deserte.
And namely whan thilke vice
About a King stant in office
And hath witholde of his party
The covetous flater
Which many a worthy King de-
ceiveth,

Er he the fallace apperceiveth
Of hem that serven to the glose.
For they that connen plesé and
glose

Ben, as men tellen, the norices
Unto the fostring of the Vices,
Wherof full ofte netheles
A King is blamed gilteles.

Aphilosophe,as thou shalt here,
Spake to a King of this mature

And said him well how that flatrours
Coupdble were of thre errours.

One was toward the goddes high,
That weren wroth of that they sigh,
The mischeffe which befallé sholde
Of that the false flatroure tolde
Toward the King. Another was,
Whan they by sleight and by fallas
Of feigned wordes make him wene
That black iswhiteandblewis grene
Touchend of his condicion.

For whan he doth extorcion
With many an other Vied mo,
Men shall nought fin den one of tho
To grucche or speke there ayein,
But holden up his oile¹ and sain,
That all is well what ever he doth.
And thus of fals they maken soth,
So that her Kinges eye is blent
And wot nought how the worldé is
went.

The thridde error is harm com-
mune,

With which the people mot com-
mune

Of wrongés that they bringen inne.
And thus they werehen treble sinne
That ben flatrours about a king.
There mighté be no worse thing
About a kinges regaly,
Than is the Vice of Flatery.

And netheles it hath ben used
That it was never yet refused,
As for to speke, in Court Reall.
For there it is most special
And may nought longé be forbore.
But whan this Vice of hem is bore
That sholden the Vertues forth
bringe,

And Trouthe is torned to Lesinge,
It is, as who saith, ayein kinde,
Wherof an old ensample I finde.

"Among these other tales wise
Of philosophres in this wise

¹ *His oile*, his affirmation.

I rede, how whilom two there were
And to the scolw for to lere
Unto Athenés fro Cartdge
Her frendés when they were of age,
Hem sende. And there they
stoden longe

Till they such lore have underfonge
That in her time they surmoimte
All other men, that to accompte
Of hem was tho the grete fame.
The first of hem his righté name
Was Diogenes thanne hote,
In whom was foundé no riote.
His felaw Aristippus hight,
Which mochel couthe and mochel
might.

But atté lasté soth to sain
They bothe tornen home ayein
Unto Cartage and scold lete.
This Diogenes no beyete
Of worldés good or lasse or more
Ne soughte for his longe lore,
But toke him only for to dwelle
At home. And as the bokes telle,
His house was nigh to a rivere
Beside a brigge, as thou shalt here.
There dwelleth he and taketh his
rest,

So as it thought him for the best,
To studie in his philosophie,
As he which wolde so defie
The worldés pompe on every side.
" But Aristippe his boke aside
Hath laid, and to the court he wente,
Where many a wile and many a
wente¹

With flattery and wordés softe
He caste and hath compassed ofte
How he his prince mighte plesé.
And in this wise he gate him ese
Of veine honour and worldés good,
The londes reule upon him stood.
The king of him was wonder glad,
And all was do what thinge he bad,

¹ *Wente*, turn.

Bothe in the courte and eke without
With flattery he brought about
His purpos of the worldés werke,
Which was ayein the state of clerke,
So that philosophy he lefté
And to richesse him self upleftce
Lo, thus had Aristippe his will.
But Diogenes dwelte still
At home and loked on his boke.
Hesoughtd nought the worldés croke
For veine honour ne for richesse,
But all his hertes besincsse
He sette² to be vertuoiis.
And thus within his owne hous
He liveth to the suffisaunce
Of his having. And fell perchaunce,
This Diogene upon a day,
And that was in the month of May,
Whan that these herbes ben hol-
sôme,

He walketh for to gader some
In his gardin, of which his joutes¹
He thoughte have, and thus aboutes
Whan he hath gadred what him
liketh,

Hesethimthannedowneandpiketh
And wisse his herbes in the flood
Upon the which his gardin stood
Nigh to the brigge, as I tolde ere.
And hapneth while he sitteth there,
Cam Aristippus by the strete
With many hors and routes grete
And straught unto the brigge he
rode

Where that he hoved and abode,
For as he cast his eye nigh
His felaw Diogdne he sigh,
And what he dede he sigh also,
Wherof he saide to him so :

' O Diogdne, God the spede.
It were certes litel nede
To sitten here and wortes pike
If thou thy prince couthest like²

¹ *Joutes* or *jotes*, beets; also legumes used in old cookery.

² *Like*, please.

So as I can in my degre.'
 'O Aristippe,' ayein quod he,
 'If that thou couthest so as I
 Thy worlds pike trudy',
 It were als litel nede or lasse
 That thou so worldly wol compasse
 With flaterie for to serve,
 Wherof thou thenkest to deserve
 Thy princés thank and to purchase
 How thou might stonden in his grace
 For getting of a litel good.
 If thou wolt take into thy mood
 Resdn, thou might by reson deme,
 That so thy prince for to queme¹
 Is nought to reson accordaúnt,
 But it is greatly descordaunt
 Unto the scoles of Athene.'

"Lo, thus answerdd Diogene
 Ayein the clerkes flaterie.
 But yet men sene thessamplerie
 Of Aristippe is well received
 And thilke of Diogene is weived.
 Office in court and gold in cofTre
 Is now, men sain, the philosdphre
 Which hath the worship inthehalle.
 But flaterie passeth alle
 In chambre whom the court avaun-
 ceth.

For upon thilke lot it chaunceth
 To be belovéd now a day.

"I not if it be ye or nay,
 How Danté the poéte answerde
 To a flatrou, the tale I herde.
 Upon a strife betwene hem two
 He said him, there ben many mo
 Of thy servauntés than of min.
 For the poéte of his covine
 Hath none that woll him cloth and
 fede,

But a flatróur may reule and lede
 A king with all his londe about.
 So stant the wisé man in doubt
 Of hem that to folfe drawe,
 For such is now the comun lawe.

¹ *Queme*, please.

But as the comune vois it telleth,
 Where now that flaterie dwelleth
 In every londe under the sonne,
 There is full many a thing begonne
 Which weré better to be lefte;

That hath be shewed now and ete
 "~~But~~ **if a prince** him woldé
 reule

Of the Remains after the reule
 In thilke time as it was used,
 This Vice shulde be refused
 Wherof the princes ben assoted.
 But where the pleine trouth is noted,
 There may a prince wel conceive
 That he shall nought him self de-
 ceive

Of that he hereth wordés pleine,
 For him ther nought¹ by reson
 pleigne

That warnéd is er him be wo.
 And that was fully proved tho,
 Whan Rome was the wordes chefe,
 The sothésaier tho was lefe,
 Which wolde nought the trouthc
 spare

But with his wordes plaine and bare
 To themperour his sortiés tolde,
 As in cronique it is witholde,
 Here afterwarde as thou shalt here
 Accordend unto this matere.

"To se this olde ensemplarie,
 That whilom was no flaterie
 Toward the princes, wel I finde,
 Wherof so as it comth to minde,
 My sone, a tale unto thin ere,
 While that the worthy princes were
 At Rome, I thenke for to telle.
 For whan the chaunces so befelle,
 That any emperour as tho
 Victorie had upon his fo
 And so forth came to Rome ayein,
 Of treble honour he was certain,
 Wherof that he was magnified.

"The first, as it is specified,

¹ *Nought*, ought not.

Was, whan he cam at thilké tide,
 The chare, in which he shuldé ride
 Four white stedés sholde drawe;
 Of Jupiter by thilké lawe
 The cote he shulde were also.
 His prisoners eke sholden go
 Endlong the chare on either honde,
 And all the noble of the londe
 To-fore and after with him come
 Ridend and broughten him to Rome
 In token of his chivalrie,
 And for none other flaterie.
 And that was shewed forth withall
 Where he sat in his chare leall
 Beside him was a ribald set
 Which had his wordes so beset
 To themperour in all his glorie
 He saide : ' Take into memorie,
 P'or all this pompe and all this pride
 Let no justice gon aside,
 But know thy self, what so befallé.
 For men seen .ofte time fallé
 Thing which men wendé siker
 stonde.

Though thou victorie have on honde,
 Fortune may nought stonde alwey ;
 The whele perchaunce another day
 May torne and thou might over-
 throwe,

There lasteth nothing but a throwe.'

" With these wordés and with mo
 This ribald, which sat with him tho,
 To themperour his talé tolde.

And overmore what ever he wolde
 Or were it evil or were it good
 So plainly as the trouthe stood,
 He spareth nought but speketh it out.
 And so might every man about,
 The day of that solempnite,
 His tale tellen as wele as he
 To themperour all openly.

And all was this the causé why,
 That while he stood in his noblesse
 He shulde his vanité repressé
 With suché wordes as he herde.

" Lo now, how thilke time it ferde
 Toward so high a worthy lorde.
 For this I finde eke of recorde,
 Which the cronfque hath auctorized.
 What emperour was cntronized
 The firste day of his corone,
 Where he was in his real throne
 And helde his fest in the paleis
 Sittend upon his highe deis,
 With all the lust that may be gete
 Whan he was gladest at his mete,
 And every minstrell haddé pleide
 And every disour haddé saide
 What most was pleasant to his ere,
 Than atté laste comen there
 His masons for they sholden crave
 Where that he wolde be begrave,
 And of what stone his sepulture
 They sholden make, and what
 sculpture

He wolde ordeigne therupon.
 Tho was there flaterie none '
 The worthy princes to bejape,
 The thing was otherwise shape
 With good counseile; and otherwise
 They were hem selven thanne wise
 And understoden well and knewen;
 Whan suché softé windés blewéu
 Of flatory into her ere
 They setten nought her hertés there.
 But whan they herdé wordés feigned
 The pleind trouth it hath des-
 deigned¹

Of hem that weren so discrete.
 So toke the flaterer no beyete
 Of him that was his prince tho.
 And for to proven it is so,
 A talé, which befell in dede,
 In a cronique of Rome I rede.
Cesar upon his reall throne
 Where that he sat in his persone
 And was highest in all his pris,
 A man which wolde make him wise

¹ Feigned words undervalued the plain truth
 in men of such discernment.

Fell down knelend in his presence
 And did him such a reverence
 As though the highe God it were.
 Men hadden great merveile there
 Of the worshiþe which he dede.
 This man aros fro thilké stede
 And forth withall the same tide
 He goth him up and by his side
 He set him down as pere and pere
 And saide, 'If thou that sittest here
 Art God which allé thingés might,
 Than have I do worship aright
 As to the God; and other wise,
 If thou be nought of thilke assise,
 But art a man suche as am I,
 Than may I sit the faste by,
 For we be bothe of one kinde,'

" Cesar answérde and saide: 'O
 blinde,
 Thou art a fol, it is well sene
 Upon thy self. For if thou wene
 I be a God, thou dost amis
 To sit where thou seest God is.
 And if I be a man also,
 Thou hast a gieat folie do,
 Whan thou to such one as shall deie
 The worship of thy God away
 Hast yiven so unworthily.
 Thus may I prové redely,
 Thou art nought wise,' And they
 that herde,

How wisely that the king answérde,
 It was to hem a newe lore,
 Wherof they dradden him the more,
 And brougthen nothing to his eie
 But if it trouthe and reson were.
 So ben there many in such a wise,
 That feignen wordes to be wise
 And all is verray flaterý
 To him which can it well aspy.

" The kindé flatroun can nought
 love
 But for to bring him self above,
 For how that ever his maister fare,
 So that him self stonde out of care

Him reccheth nought. And thus
 ful ofte

Deceived ben with wordes softe
 The lungés that ben innocent.
 Wherof as for chastfement
 The wisd philosdphre saide :
 'What king that so his tresure laide
 Upon such folke, he hath the lesse
 And yet ne doth he no largesse
 But haimeth with his owné honde
 Him self and eke his owné londe.
 And that by many a sondry wey,
 Wherof if that a man shall sey
 As for to speke in generall
 Where such thing falleth over all
 That any king him self misreule.—
 The philosophre upon his reule
 In speciall a causé set

Whiche is and ever hath be the let
 In governaunce about a king
 Upon the mischeffe of the thing,
 And that, he saith, is Flaterý,
 Wherof to-fore as in party,
 What Vice it is, I have declared.
 For who that hath his wit bewared¹
 Upon a flatroun to beleve,
 Whan that he weneth best acheve
 His gode world, it is most fro.

And for to proven it is so
 Ensamples there ben many one,
 Of whiche if thou wolt knownen one,
 It is behovely for to here
 What whilom fell in this matere,

Among the kingés in the bible
 I finde a tale and is credible
 Of him, that whilom Achab hight,
 Which had all Israel to right.
 But who that couthe glosé softe
 And flater, such he set alofte
 In great estate and made hem riche.
 But they that spoken wordes liche
 To trouthe and wolde it nought for-
 bere

For hem was none estate to bere,

¹ Bewared, spent.

The courte of suché toke none hede.
 Till atte last upon a nede,
 That Benedab kinge of Surfe,
 Of Israel a great partfe,
 Which Ramoth Galaad was hote,
 Hath sesed. And of that riote
 He toke counsefle in sondry wise,
 But nought of hem that weren wise.
 And netheles upon this cas
 To strengthen him, for Josephas
 Which thanné was kinge of Judee
 He sendé for to come, as he
 Which through freneship and alli-
 aúnce

Was next to him of rtqueintaúnce.
 For Joram sone of Josaphath
 Achabbes doughter wedded hath,
 Which lighte fairé Godelie.
 And thus cam into Samar
 King Josaphat, and he found there
 The king Achéb. And when they
 were

To-gider spekend of this thing,
 This Josaphat saith to the king,
 How that he woldé gladly here
 Some true prophet in this matere,
 That he his counseil mighte yive
 To what point it shall be adrive.
 And in that time so befell
 There was such one in Israel,
 Which set him all to flattery,
 And he was cleped Sedechy,
 And after him Achéb hath sent.
 And he at his commaundement
 To-fore him cam, and by a sleight
 He hath upon his heved on height
 Two large homes set of bras,
 As he whiche all a flatroure was,
 And goth rampénd as a leon
 And cast his homés up and down
 And bad men ben of good espeire,
 For as the homés percen thaire
 He saith, withouten resistance,
 So wist he well of his science
 That Benedab is discomfite.

Whan Sedechy upon this plite
 Hath told this tale unto his lorde,
 Anone they were of his accorde
 Prophetés falsé many mo
 To bere up oile¹ and alte tho
 Affermen that which he hath tolde,
 Wherof the king Achéb was bolde
 And yaf hem yiftés all aboute.
 But Josaphat was in great doubte
 And held fantosme all that he herde,
 Praiend Achéb how so it ferde,
 If there were any other man,
 The which of prophecie can,
 To here him speke er that they gone.
 Quod Achab thanne: 'There is one,
 A brothel, which Micheas hight.
 But he ne comth nought in my sight
 For he hath long in prison laien,
 Him likéd never yet to saien
 A goodly word to my plesaunce.
 And netheles at thine instance
 He shall come out, and than he may
 Say as he saide many a day;
 For yet he saide never wele.'
 Tho Josaphat began some dele
 To gladen him in hope of trouthe,
 And bad withouten any slouthe
 That men him shuldé fette² anone.
 And they that weren for him gone
 Whan that they comen where he was
 They tolden unto Micheas
 The manere how that Sedechy
 Declared hath his prophecy.
 And therupon they pray him faire
 That he woll saie no contraile
 Wherof the king may be desplesed,
 For so shall every man be esed,
 And he may helpe him self also.
 Micheas upon trouthe tho
 His herté set and to hem saith—
 All that belonge to his feith

¹ To bere up oile, to sustain the affirmation (of Zedekiah). Oil or oile is an old form of out, yes. "OH, par ma foi, sire, oil mult volontiers" says each of the false prophets to Ahab. See note. p. 366.

² Fette, fetch.

And of none other feigned thing
That woll he tell unto the king,
Als fer as God hath yive him grace.
Thus came this prophete into place,
Where he the kingés *wille* herde.
And he therto anone answerde
And saide unto him in this wise :

' My lege lord, for my service,
Which trewe hath stonden ever yit,
Thou hast me with prison aquite.
But for all that I shall nought glose
Of trouthe als far as I suppose ;
And as touchend of thy bataile
Thou shalt nought of the sothé faile.
For if it liké the to here,
As I am taught in that matere,
Thou might it understand sone.
But what is afterward to done
Avisd the, for this I sigh,
I was to-fore the throne on high,
Where all the world me thought
stode,

And there I herde and understode
The vois of God with wordes clere
Axénd and saide in this manere:
' In what thing may I best beguile
The king Achab ? ' And for a while
Upon this point they speken fast.
Tho said a spirit atte last:
' I undertaké this enprise.'
And God him axeth in what wise.
' I shall,' quod he, ' deceive and lie
With flaterndé prophecie
In suché mouthés as he leveth,'
And he which alle thing acheveth,
Bad him go forth and do right so.
And over this I sigh also
The noble people of Israel
Dispers as shepe upon an hill
Without a keper unarraied.
And as they wente about astraiend,
I herde a vois unto hem sain:
' Goth home into your hous ayein,
Till I for you have better ordeigned.'
Quod Sedechie: 'Thou hastfeigned

This tale in angring of the king.'
And in a wrathe upon this thing
He smote Micheen upon the cheke;
The king him hath rebuked eke;
And every man upon him cride.
Thus was he shent on every side
Ayein and into prison ladde,
For so the kinge him selvé badde.
The trouthe mighte nought ben
herde;

But afterward as it hath ferde,
The dede proveth his entent.
Achab to the bataile went,
Where Benedab for all his shelde
Him slough, so that upon the felcle
His people goth about astray.
But God, which allé thingés may,
So doth that they no mischefe have.
Her king was dede and they ben
save,

And home ayein in Goddes pees
They wente, and all was founde les¹
That Sedechy hath said to-fore.
So sit it wel a king therfore
To loven hem that trouthe mene.
For atté last it will be sene,
That flattery is nothing worth.

" But now to my matere forth
As for to speken overmore
After the philosdphres lore,
The thridde point of policy
I tenke for to specify.

"What is a lond, where
be none ?

What ben the men which are allone
Without a kingés governaunce?
What is a king in his legeaunce
Where that thereisnolaweinlonde?
What is to také lawe on honde,
But if the jugés weren trewe?
These oldé worldés with the newe
Who that woll take in evidence
There may he se thexperience
What thing it is to kepe lawe

¹ Les, leasings, untruth.

Through which the wronges be
withérawe

And rightwisnesse stant com-
mended,

Wherof the regnés ben amended.

For where the lawe may comúne,

The lordés forth with the comune

Eche hath his propre duete.

And eke the kinges realte

Ofbothe his worship underfongeth,

To his estate as it belongeth,

Whiche of his highe worthinesse

Hath to governe rightwisnesse,

As he which shall the lawe guide.

And netheles upon some side

His power stant above the lawe

To yive both and to withérawe

The forfet of a mannes life.

But thinges which are excessife

Ayein the lawe he shal nought do

For love ne for hate also.

" The mights of a king be gret.

But yet a worthy king shall let

Of wrong to done all that he might,

For he which shall the people right,

It sit wel to his regaly

That he him self first justify

Towards God in his degra.

For his estate is elles fre

Toward all other in his persdne,

Sauf only to the God alone

Which woli him self a king chastise

Where that none other may suffice.

" So were it good to taken hede

That first a king his owne dede

Betweene the Vertue and the Vice

Redresse, and than of his justfice

So set in even the balaúnce

Towardés other in governaunce,

That to the pouer and to the riche

His lawés mighten stonden liche,

He shall excepte no persone.

But for he may nought all him one

In sondry places do justice,

He shall of his real office

With wise consideration

Ordeigne his deputation

Of suche juges as ben lerned,

So that his people be governed

By hem that triue ben and wise.

For if the lawe of covetise

Be set upon a juges honde,

Wo is the people of thilke londe.

For wrong may nought him selven
hide.

But elles, on that other side,

If lawe stonde with the right

The people is glad and stant upright,

Where as the lawe is resonible.

The comun people stant mevdble,

And if the lawe torne amis,

The people also mistorned is.

" And in ensample of this matere

Of Maximin a man may here,

Of Rome which was emperour,

That whan he made a gouvernour

By wey of substitution

Of province or of region,

He wolde first enquire his name

And lete it openly proclame

What man he were, or evil or good.

And upon that his name stood

Knclined to vertue or to vice,

So wolde he set him in office,

Or elles put him all away.

Thus held the lawe his righte wey,

Which found no let of covetise.

The world stood than upon the wise,

As by ensample thou might rede

And holde it in thy minde I rede.

In a cronique I findethus,

How that Gaius Fabriciús,

Which whilom was consul of Rome

By whom the lawes yede and come,

Whan the Sampnités to him brought

A somme of gold and him besought

To don hem favour in the lawe,

Toward the gold he gan him drawe

Wherof in alle mennes loke

A part up in his honde he toke,

Which to his mouth in alle haste
 He put it for to smelle and taste
 And to his eye and to his ere,
 But he ne found no comfort there.
 And than he gan it to despise
 And tolde unto hem in this wise:

'I not what is with gold to
 thrive,

Whan none of all my wittes five
 Find favour ne delite therinne.
 So is it but a nicé sinne
 Of gold to ben to covetous.
 But he is riche and glorious
 Which hath in his subjection
 Tho men which in possession
 Ben riche of gold, and by this skill,
 For he may all day whan he will
 Or be hem lefe or be hem lothe
 Justice done upon hem bothe.'

"Lo, thus he said. And with
 that worde

He threw to-fore hem on the borcle
 The gold out of his honde anone,
 And said hem, that he wolde none.
 So that he kept his liberte
 To do justice and equite,
 Withoute lucre of such richesse.
 Thereben nowfeweofsucheI gesse.
 For it was thilke times used,
 That every jüge was refused
 Which was nought frend to comun
 right,

But they that wolden stonde upright
 For trouthe only to do justice
 Preferred were in thilke office
 To deme and jugé comun lawe,
 Which now men sain is all with-
 drawe.

"To sette a lawe and kepe it
 nought

There is no comune profit sought.
 But above alle netheles
 The lawe which is made for pees
 Is good to kepe for the best,
 For that set alle men in rest.

The rightful emperour Conrlde
 To kepe pees such lawé made
 That none withinnd the cité
 In destorbaunce of unité
 Durst onés meven a matere.
 For in his time as thou might here,
 What point that was for lawe set
 It shulde for no good be let¹
 To what person that it were.
 And this brought in the comun fere
 Why every man the lawé dradde,
 For there was none which favour
 hadde.

So as these olde bokes sain,
 I findé write, how a Romain,
 Which consul was of the pretoire,
 Whose name was Carmidotoire,
 He set a lawe for the pees
 That none, but he be wepenles,
 Shall come into the counseil hous,
 And elles as malicious
 He shal ben of the lawe dede.
 To that statute, and to that rede
 Accorden alle, it shall be so,
 For certain cause? which was tho.
 Now list, what fell therafter sone.
 This consul hadde for to done
 And was into the feldes ride.
 And they him haddé longe abide,
 That lordes of the counseil were,
 And for him sende, and he cam there
 With swerd begert, and hath foryete
 Till he was in the counseil sete.
 Was none of hem that made speche
 Till he him self it wolde seche,
 Andfoundeouthedefaulthim selve.
 And than he saide unto the twelve
 Which of the Senate weren wise :

'I have deserved the juisse
 In hasté that it were do.'
 And they him saiden alle no,
 For well they wist it was no vice,
 Whan he ne thoughte no malice

¹ For no good be let, be stayed for no money
 I consideration.

But onlich of a litel slouth.
 And thus they leften as for routh
 To do justice upon his gilte,
 For that he shulde nought be spike.
 And whan he sigh the maner how
 They wolde him save, he made avow
 With manful herte, and thus he
 saide,

That Rome shulde never abraide
 His heires whan he were of daw¹
 That her auncestre brake the laue.
 Forthy er that they weren ware,
 Forthwith the same swerde he bare
 The statute of his lawe kepte,
 So that all Rome his dethebewepte.

"**In other place** also rede,
 Where that a jüge his owne dede
 He wol nought venge of lawe broke,
 The king it hath him selven wroke.
 The grete king, which Cambises
 Was note, a jüge laweles
 He found, and into remembraunce
 He did upon him such vengeaunce:
 Out of his skin he was beflain
 All quick, and in that wise slain,
 So that his skin was shape all mete
 And nailed on the same sete,
 Where that his sone shulde sitte :
 Avise him if he wolde flitte
 The lawe for the covetise,
 There sigh he ledy his juise.

" Thus in defalte of other jüge
 The king mote othenwhile jüge
 To holden up the righte lawe.
 And for to speke of tholde daw
 To take ensample of that was tho,
 I finde a tale write also,
 How that a worthy prince is holde
 The lawes of his londe to holde,
 First for the highe Goddes sake
 And eke for that him is betake
 The people for to guide and lede,
 Which is the charge of hiskinghede.

¹ *Whan he were of daw, when his days were ended.*

"**In a cronique** I rede thus
 Of the rightfull Ligurgius,
 Which of Athenés prince was,
 How he the lawe in every cas
 Wherof he shulde his people reule,
 Hath set upon so good a reule
 In all this world that cite none
 Of lawe was so well begone;
 Forth with the trouthe of gover-
 naunce

There was among hem nodistaunce,
 But every man hath his encrees ;
 There was withoute werre pees,
 Without envie lové stood;
 Richesse upon the comune good
 And nought upon the singuler
 Ordeiné was ; and the power
 Of hem that weren in estate,
 Was sauf; wherof upon debate
 There stood no thing, so that in
 reste

Might every man his hert reste.

"And whan this noble rightfull
 king,

Sigh how it ferde of all this thing
 Wherof the people stood in ese,
 He which for ever woldé plese
 The highe God whose thank he
 sought,

A wonder thing than he bethought
 And shope, if that it mighte be,
 How that his lawe in the cite
 Might afterward for ever laste.
 And therupon his wit he caste,
 What thing him were best to feigne,
 That he his purpose might atteigne.
 A payment and thus he set
 His wisdom where that he beset
 In audience of great and smale,
 And in this wise he tolde his tale :

' God wote, and so ye woten alle,
 Here afterward how so it falle,
 Yet into now my will hath be
 To do justice and equite
 In forthring of común profite,

Such hath ben ever my delite.
 But of o thing I am beknowe,
 The which my will is that ye knowe.
 The lawe which I toke on honde,
 Was all to-gider of Goddés sonde
 And no thinge of min owne wit,
 So mote it nede enduré yit
 And shall do lenger, if ye will,
 For I wol tellé you the skill.
 The god Mercurius and no man
 He hath me taught all that I can
 Of suché lawes as I made,
 Wherof that ye ben allé glad.
 It was the god and no thfng I,
 Which did all this, and now forthy
 He hath commaunded of bis grace,
 That I shall come into a place
 Which is forefn, out in an ile,
 Where I mot tarie for a while
 With him to spekeand he hath bede.
 For as he saith, in thilke stede
 He shall me suché thinges telle
 That ever while the world shal dwelle
 Athenés shall the better fare.
 But first er that I thider fare,
 For that I wolde that my lawe
 Amongés you ne be withérawe
 There whiles that I shall be oute,
 Forthy to setten out of doubte
 Both you and me, thus wol I pray,
 That ye me wolde assure and say
 With such an othe as ye woll take,
 That eche of you shall undertake
 My lawes for to kepe and holde.'

"They saiden allé, that they wolde.
 And thereupon they swore here othe,
 That fro that time that he goth
 Till he to hem be come ayeine
 They shuld his lawes well and pleine
 In every point kepe and fulfill.
 Thus hath Ligurgius his will,
 And toke his leve and forth he went.
 But list now well to what entent
 Of rightwisesse he did so.
 For after that he was ago,

He shope him never to be founde:
 So that Athenés, which was bounde,
 Never after shulde be releed,
 Ne thilke godé lawé cesed,
 Which was for comun profit set.
 And in this wise he hath it knet,
 He which the comun profite
 sought,
 The king his owne estate ne rought.¹
 To do profite to the comune
 He toke of exile the fortune
 And lefte of princé thilke office
 Only for love and for justice,
 Through which he thought, if that
 he might,
 For ever after his deth to right
 The cite which was him betake.
 Wherof men ought ensample take
 The gode lawes to avaunce
 With hem which undergernaunce
 The lawes havé for to kepe.
 For who that wolde take kepe
 Of hem that firste lawes founde,
 Als fer as lasteth any bounde
 Of londe her names yet ben knowe,
 And if it liké the to knowe
 Some of her namés, how they stonde,
 Now herke and thou shalt under-
 stonde.

Of every bienfait the merite
 The God him self it woll aquite.
 And eke full ofte it falleth so,
 The worlde it woll aquite also,
 But that may nought ben even liche.
 The God he yiveth the heven riche,
 The world yifft only but a name
 Which stant upon the godé fame
 Of hem that done the gode dede.
 And in this wise double mede
 Receiven they that done well here,
 Wherof if that the list to here
 After the fame as it is blowe,
 There might thou well the sothe
 knowe,

¹ Rought, cared for.

How thilke honeste businesse
Of hem that first for rightwisnesse
 Among the men the lawés made,
 May never upon this erthé fade.
 For ever while there is a tunge,
 Her names shall be rede and sunge
 And holde in the croniqué write,
 So that the men it sholden wite
 To speke good, as they welloughten,
 Of hem that first the lawes soughten
 In forthring of the worldes pees.
 Unto the Hebrews was Moises
 The first, and to thegipcians
 Mercurius, and to Trojens
 First was Numa Pompilius,
 To Athenés Ligurgius
 Yave first the lawe, and to Gregois,
 Foroneus hath thilke vois,
 And Romulus to the Romains ;
 For suche men that ben vilains,
 The lawe in such awise ordeigneth,
 That what man to the lawe pleigneth,
 Be so the juge stond upright,
 He shall be served of his right.
 And so ferforth it is befallé
 That lawe is come among us alle,
 God leve it moté well bene holde,
 As every king therto is holde.
 For thing whiche is of kinges set,
 With kinges ought it nought be let.
 What king of lawe taketh no kepe
 By lawe he may no regne kepe.
 Do lawe away, what is a king ?
 Where is the right of any thing,
 If that there be no lawe in londe ?
 This ought a king well understonde,
 As he which is to lawe swore,
 That if the lawe be forbore
 Withouten execucion,
 It maketh a lond torne up so down,
 Which is unto the king a sclaundre.
 Forthy unto king Alisaundre
 The wise philosophre bad
 That he him selve first be lad
 Of lawe, and forth than over all

To do justice in generell,
 That all the wide lond aboute
 The justice of his lawe doubte,¹
 And thanné shall he stonde in rest.
 For therto lawe is one the best
 Above all other erthly thing
 To make a lege drede his king.

" But how a king shall gete him
 love

Toward the highe God above
 And eke among the men in erthe
 This nexte point, which is the ferthe
 Of Aristotles lore, it techeth,
 Wherof who that the scolé secheth
 What policfe that it is
 The boke reherceth after this.

It nedeth nought that I delate
 The pris which preiséd is algate
 And hath bene ever and ever shall,
 Wherof to speke in speciáll
 It is the vertue of Pite,
 Through which the highé mageste
 Was stered, whan his sone alight
 And in Pite the world to right
 Toke of the maide flessch and blood.
 Pite was cause of thilke good,
 Wherof that we ben allé save.
 Well ought a man Pite to have
 And the vertue to set in prise,
 Whan he him self whiche is All Wise
 Hath shewed why itshallbepreised.
 Pite may nought be counterpeised
 Of tirannie with no peise.
 For Pite maketh a king curteise
 Both in his worde and in his dede.
 It sit well every lege drede
 His king, and to his hest obey.
 And right so by the samé wey
 It sit a king to be pitdus
 Toward his people and gracios
 Upon the reule of governaunce,
 So that he worché no vengeaunce
 Which may be clepéd cruelte.
 Justfce which doth equite

1 Doubte, fear, reverence.

Is dredful, for he no man spareth
 But in the lond, where Pité fareth
 The king may never faile of love,
 For Pité through the grace above
 So as the philosophre affermeth,
 His regne in goodestate confermeth.
 Thapostel Jamés in this wise
 Saith, what man shulde do jufse
 And hath not Pité forth with all,
 The dome of him which clemeth all
 He may him self ful sore drede,
 That him shall lacke upon the necle
 To finde Pite whan he wolde.
 For who that Pite woli beholde,
 It is a point of Cristés lore;
 And for to loken evermore
 It is behovely, as we finde,
 To reson and to lawe of kinde.
 Cassiddore in his aprise telleth :
 ' The Regne is sauf, where Pite
 clwelleth.'

And Tullius his tale avoweth
 Anésaith: What king to Piteboweth
 And with Pite stont overcome,
 He hath that shilde of grace nome
 Which to the kingés yiveth victoire.

" Of Alisaundre in his histoire
 I rede, how he a worthy knight
 Of sodein wrath and not of right
 Forjued hath, and he appelleth.
 And with that word the king qua-
 releth

And saith : ' None is above me.'
 ' That wote I wel my lorde,' quod he,
 Fro thy lordship appele I nought,
 But fro thy Wrath in all my thought
 To thy Pité stant min appele,'
 The king, which undcrstode him
 wele,

Of pure Pite yave him grace.
 And eke I rede in other place
 Thus saidé whilom Constantine :
 ' What emperour that is encline
 To Pite for to be servaunt,
 Of all the worldés remenaunt

He is worthy to ben a lord.'

" **In olde bokés** OF recorde
 Thus finde I write of ensamplaire :
 Trajan the worthy debonaire,
 By whom that Romé stood governed,
 Upon a time, as he was lerned
 Of that he was to familiér,
 He saide unto that counseller
 That for to ben an emperour
 His wil was nought for vein honour
 Ne yet for reddour¹ of justice,
 But if he might in his office
 His lorclés and his people plese.
 Him thought it were a greater ese
 With love her hertés to him drawe,
 Than with the drede of any lawe.
 For whan a thing is do for double.
 Ful ofte it cometh the wors aboute ;
 But where a kinge is pietouús
 He is the more gracious,
 That mochel thrift him shall betide
 Which elles shulde torne aside.

" **Go do pité**, support, and grace
 The philosophre upon a place
 In his writing of dalés olde
 A tale of great cnsample tolde
 Unto the king of Macedoine,
 How betwene Kaire and Babeloinc,
 Whan comen is the somer hete,
 It hapneth two men for to mete
 As they shulde entren in a pas
 Where that the wilderness was.
 And as they wenten forth spekende
 Under the largé wadés ende,
 That o man axeth of that other :
 ' What man art thou, my leve
 brother ?
 Which is thy creauce and thy
 feith?'

' I am paien,' that other saith,
 ' And by the lawé which I use,
 I shall nought in my feith refuse
 To loven alle men aliche,
 The pouer both and eke the riche ;

¹ *Reddour(roideur)*, ligour.

Whan they ben glad I shall be glad,
 And sory whan they ben bestad;
 So shall I live in unité
 With every man in his degre:
 For right as to my self I wolde,
 Right so toward al other I sholde
 Be gracious and debonaire.
 Thus have I told the soft and faire
 My feith, mylawe, and my creaunce.
 And if the list for aqueintaunce,
 Now tell, what maner man thou art?
 And he answerde upon his part:
 ' I am a Jewe, and by my lawe
 I shall to no man be felawe
 To kepe him trouth in word ne dede
 But if he be withouté drede
 A verray Jew right as am I.
 For elles I may trewely
 Bcreve him bothe life and good.'

" The paien herde and understood
 And thought it was a wonder lawe;
 And thus upon her sondry sawe
 Talkende bothe forth they went.
 The day was hote, the sonne brent,
 The paien rode upon an asse,
 And of his catell more and lasse
 With him a riché trusse he ladde.

" The Jew, which all untrouthe
 hadde
 And went upon his feet beside,
 Bethought him how he mighte ride,
 And with his wordes sligh and wise
 Unto the paien in this wise
 He said: ' O, now it shall be sene
 What thing it is thou woldest mene.
 For if thy lawe be certain,
 As thou hast tolde, I dare well sain
 Thou wolt beholde my destresse,
 Which am so full of werinesse
 That I ne may unethe go,
 And let me ride a mile or two
 So that I may my body ese.'

The paien wold him nought displese

Of that he spake, but in pite
 It list him for to knowe and se
 The pleinté which that other made.
 And for he wolde his herté glade,
 He light and made him nothing
 straunge,

Thus was there made a newe
 chaunge.

The paien goth, the Jewe alofte
 Was set upon his asse softe.
 So gone they forth carpende faste
 On this and that, till atte laste
 The paien mighte go no more
 And praide unto the Jew therfore
 To suffre him ride a litel while.
 The Jew, which thought him to
 beguile,

Anone rode forth the grete pas
 And to the paien in this cas
 He saide: ' Thou hast do thy right
 Of that thou haddest me benight
 To do succour upon my nede,
 And that accordeth to the dede,
 As thou art to the lawe holde.
 And in such wise, as I the tolde,
 I thinke also for my partie
 Upon the lawe of Jewerie
 To worche and do my duété.
 Thin assé shall go forth with me
 With all thy good, which I have
 sesed,

And that I wot thou art disesed
 I am right glad and nought mispaid.'
 And whan he hath these wordes
 said,

In allé haste he rode away.

" This paien wot none other way,
 But on the grounde he kneleth even,
 His handés up unto the heven,
 And said: ' O highe sothfastnesse,
 That lovest alle rightwisnesse,
 Unto thy dome, lorde, I appele,
 Beholde and deme my querdle
 With humble herte I the beseche,
 The mercy bothe and eke the wreche

I set all in thy judgement.'
 And thus upon his marrement
 This paien hath made his preiere.
 And than he rose with drery chere
 And goth him forth, and in his gate
 He cast his eye about algate
 The Jewe if that he mighté se.
 But for a time it may nought be,
 Till atté last ayein the night,
 So as God wolde he went aright
 As he which held the highe wey,
 And than he sigh in a valley,
 Where that the Jewe liggend was,
 All bloody, dede upon the gras,
 Which straungled was of a leon.
 And as he lokéd up and down,
 He found his assé fasté by
 Forth with his harneis redely
 All hole and sound as he it lefte
 Whan that the Jewe it him berefte :
 Wherof he thonked God knelende.

" Lo, thus a man may knowe at
 ende,

How the pitous pite deserveth.
 For what man that to Pite serveth.
 As Aristotle it bereth witnesse,
 God shall his fomen so repressc,
 That they shall ay stond under fote.
 Pité men sain is thilke rote
 Wherof the vertues springen alle.
 What infortune that befallé
 In any lond, lack of Pité
 Is cause of thilke adversite;
 And that alday may shewe at eye,
 Who that the world discretely sigh.
 Good is that every man therfore
 Take hede of that is said to-fore.
 For of this tale and other inowe
 These noble princes whilom drowe
 Her evidence and her apprise,
 As men may finde in many a wise,
 Who that these oldé bokes rede.
 And though they ben in erthe dede,
 Her godé namé may nought deie
 For Pité which they wold obey

To do the dedés of merey.
 And who this tale redely
 Remembre, as Aristotle it tolde,
 He may the will of God beholde
 Upon the point as it was ended,
 Wherof that Pite stood commended,
 Whiche is to Charite felawe,
 As they that kepen both o lawe.

" Of Pite for to speké pleine,
 Which is with mercy well beseine,
 Full ofte he woll him selve peine
 To kepe an other fro the peine.
 For Charite the moder is
 Of Pite, which nothing amis
 Can suffre if he it may amende.
 It sit to every man livende
 To be pitoús, but none so wele
 As to a king, which on the whele
 Fortune hath set aboven all.

For in a king, if so befallé
 That his pité be ferine and stable,
 To all the londe it is vailable
 Only through grace of his persone.
 For the pite of him alone
 May all the large roialme save.
 So sit it wel a king to have
 Pite. For this Valeiré tolde
 And said, how that by dales olde
Cobrus, which was in his degiee
 King of Athenés the citee,
 A werre he had ayein Dorence.
 And for to take his evidence,
 What shall befallé of the bataile,
 He thought he wolde him first
 counseile

With Ápollo, in whom he triste,
 Through whose answere thus he
 wiste
 Of two points that he mighte
 chese,—

Or that he wolde his body lese
 And in bataile him selve deie,
 Or elles the sec6nde wey
 To seen his people discomfite.
 But he, which Pite hath parfite

Upon the point of his beleve,
 The people thought to releve
 And chese him selve to be dede.
 Where is now such another hede
 Which wolde for the limmes die ?
 And netheles in some partie
 It ought a kinges herte sterve
 That he his lege men forbere.
 And eke toward his enemfes
 Full ofte he may deservé prise
 To take of Pite remembraunce
 Where that he mighte do ven-
 geaunce.

For whan a king hath the victoire
 And than he drawe into memoire
 To do pite in stede of wreche
 He may nought fail of thilke speche
 Wherof arist the worldes fame,
 To give a prince a worthy name.

"I rede, how whilom that
 Pompey,

To whom that Romé must obey,
 A werré had in jeopartie
 Ayein the king of Armenie,
 Which of long time him hadde
 greved.

But atte last it was acheved,
 That he this king discomfit hadde
 And forth with him to Rome ladde
 As prisoner, where many a day
 In sory plite and pouver he lay,
 The cordne on his hede deposed,
 Withinne wallas fast enclosed.
 And with full great humilit
 He suffreth his adversité.
 Pompeú sigh his paciéce
 And toke pite with conscience,
 So that upon his highé deis
 To-fore all Rome in his paleis,
 As he that wolde upon him rewe,
 Let yive him his coroné newe
 And his estate all full and pleine
 Restoreth of his regne ayein
 And said,' it was more goodly thing
 To make than undone a king,

To him which power had of bothe.'
 Thus they, that weren bothé wrothe,
 Accorden hem to finall pees.
 And yet justice nethélees
 Was kept and in nothing offended,
 Wherof Pompey is yet commended.
 There may no king him self excuse
 But if justice he kepe and use,
 Which, for to escheud cruelté,
 He mote attempre with Pité.
 Of cruelte the felony
 Engendred is of tirann',
 Ayein the whose condition
 God is him self the champion
 Whose strength may no man with-
 stonde.

For ever yet it hath so stonde
 That God a tiraunt over ladde.
 But where Pité the reine ladde
 There mighte no fortune last,
 Which was grevous. But atté last
 The God him self it hath redressed.
 Pite is thilke vertue blessed,
 Which never let his maister falle.
 But Crueltd though it so falle
 That it may regné for a throwe,
 God woll it shall ben over throwe,
 Wherof ensamples ben inough
 Of hem that thilké merel drowe.¹

Of cruelte I rede thus,
 Whan the tirant Leoncius
 Was to thempfre of Rome arrived,
 Fro which he hath with strengthe
 prived

The pious Justinian,
 As he which was a cruel man,
 His nase of and his lippes both
 He kutté, for he wolde him loth
 Unto the people and make unable.
 But he which all is mercidble,
 The highe God ordeineth so,
 That he within a time also,

¹ *Thilke merel drowe*, suffered that pain. *Traire la merele*, in old French, meant to expose oneself to danger, endure pain or fatigue (Godefroy).

Whan he was strongest in his ire,
 Was shoven out of his empire.
 Tiberius the power hadde
 And Rome after his will he ladde,
 And for Leonce in suche a wise
 Ordeineth that he toke juisse
 Of nase and lippés bothé two,
 For that he did another so
 Which more worthy was than he.
 Lo, which a fall hath Cruelte,
 And Pite was set up ayein.
 For after that the bokés sain,
 Terbellis king of Bulgarie
 With helpe of his chivalerie
 Justinian hath unpris6ned
 And to thempire ayein corrined.

"**In a cronique** I finde also
 Of Siculus, which was eke so
 A cruel king like the tempest,
 The whom no pite might arest.
 He was the first, as bokés say,
 Upon the see which found galey
 And let hem maké for the werre,
 As he which all was out of herre¹
 Fro pite and misericorde,
 For therto couthe he nought ac-
 corde ;

But whom he mightéslain heslough,
 And therof was he glad inough.
 He had of counseil many one,
 Among the whiché there was one,
 By namé which Perillus hight.
 And hebethought him, how he might
 Unto the tirant do liking.
 And of his own ymaging
 Let forge and make a bulle of bras,
 And on the side cast there was
 A dore, where a man may inne
 Whan he his peine shall beginne
 Through fire which that men put
 under.

And all this did he for a wonder,
 That whan a man for peiné cride,
 The bull of bras, which gapeth wide,

¹ Out of herre, unhinged, broken away.

It shulde seme as though it were
 A bellewng in a mannes ere
 And nought the crieng of a man.
 But he which alle sleightés can,
 The Devil that lith in hellé fast,
 Him that it cast hath overcast,
 That for a trespas which he dede
 He was put in the same stede,
 And was him self the first of alle
 Which was into that peine falle
 That he for other men ordeigneth.
 There was no man that him com-
 pleigneth.

Of tyranny and crueltd
 By this ensample a king may se
 Himselfeandekehiscounseilbothe,
 How they ben to mankind lothe
 And to the God abhomináble.
 Ensamples that ben concorddble
 I finde of other princes mo,
 As thou shalt here of time ago.

"**The grete tirant** Dionise,
 Which mannes life set of no prise,
 Unto his hors full ofte he yafe
 The men in stede of corne and
 chafe.

So that the hors of thilke stood¹
 Devoureden the mannés blood,
 Till fortune atte laste came
 That Hercules him overcame,
 And he right in the same wise
 Of this tirant toke the juisse.
 As he till other men hath do
 The same deth he deied also,
 That no pite him hath socoured
 Till he was of his hors devoured.

" Of Lichaon also I finde,
 How he ayein the lawe of kinde
 His hostés slough and into mete
 He made her bodies to ben ete
 With other men within his hous.
 But Jupiter the glorious,
 Which was commed of this thing,
 Vengeaunce upon this cruel king

¹ Stood, stud.

So toke that he fro mannes forme
 Into a wolfe him let transforme.
 And thus the cruelte was kid
 Which of long time he hath hid.
 A wolfe he was than openly,
 The whose nature prively
 He had in his condicion.
 And unto this conclusion
 That tyranny is to despise,
 I finde ensample in sondry wise
 And namelich of hem full ofte,
 The whom Fortune hath set alofte
 Upon the werres for to winne.
 But how so that the wrong beginne
 Of tyranny, it may nought laste,
 But suche as they done atte laste
 To other men suche on hem falleth.
 For ayein suche pité calleth
 Vengeaúncé to the God above.
 For who that hath no tendre love
 In saving of a mannés life,
 He shall be founde so giltife
 That whan he woldé mercy crave,
 In time of nede he shall none have.

" Of the nature this I finde,
 The fierce Icon in his kinde,
 Which goth rampend atér his pray,
 If he a man finde in his way
 He woll him slain if he withstonde.
 But if the man couth understonde
 To fall anone to-fore his face
 In signe of mercy and of grace,
 The leon shall of his nature
 Restreigne his ire in such mesure
 As though it were a besté tamed,
 And torne away halving ashamed,
 That he the man shall nothing greve.
 How shulde than a prince acheve
 The worldes grace, if that he wolde
 Destruie a man whan he is yolde
 And stant upon his mercy all?

" But for to speke in speciall
 There have be such and yet there be,
 Tiraunts, whose hertés no pite
 May to no point of mercy ply,

That they upon her tyranny
 Ne gladen hem the men to slee.
 And as the rages of the see
 Ben unpitous in the tempest,
 Right so may no pite arest
 Of cruelte the great outnige,
 Which the tiraunt in his corrtge
 Engendred hath, wherof I finde
 A tale, which cometh now to minde.

I rede in olde bohes thus,
 There was a duke, which Spertachus
 Men clepe, and was a werriour,
 A cruel man, a conquerour
 With strong power which he lad.
 For this condition he had,
 That where him hapneth the victoire,
 His lust and all his mosté gloire
 Was for to slee and nought to save.
 Of ransom wolde he no good have
 For saving of a mannés life,
 But all goth to the swerde and knife
 So lefe him was the mannés blood.
 And netheles yet thus it stood,
 So as Fortune abouté went,
 He fell right heire as by descent
 To Pers and was coronéd king.
 And whan the worship of this thing
 Was falle, and he was kinge of
 Perse,

If that they weren first diverse,
 The tirannies which he wrought,
 A thousand fold wel more he sought
 Than afterward to do malice,
 Till God vengeaunce ayein the vice
 Hath shape. For upon a tide,
 Whan he was highest in his pride,
 In his rancoúr and in his hete,
 Ayein the quene of Massegete,
 Which Thamaris that time hight,
 He made werre all that Le might.
 And she which wolde her lond
 defende

Her owne sone ayein him sende
 Which the defence hath undertake,
 But he discomfit was and take.

And whan this king him had in
 honde,
 He wol no mercy understonde,
 But did him sleen in his presence.
 The tiding of this violence
 Whan it cam to the moders ere,
 She sende anone ay wide where
 To suché frendés as she had,
 A great powér till that she lad
 In sondry wise, and tho she cast
 How she this king may overcast.
 And atte last accorded was,
 That in the daunger of a pas,
 Through which this tiraunt shulclé
 pas,

She shope his power to compas
 With strength of men by such a wey
 That he shall nought escape away.
 And whan she haddé thus ordeigned,
 She hath her owné body feigned
 For fere as though she woldé flee
 Out of her londe. And whan thathe
 Hath herde how that this lady fledde,
 So fast after the chace he spedde,
 That lie was founde out of array.
 For it betid upon a day
 Into the pas whan he was falle,
 Thembusshéments to-breken alle
 And him beclipt on every side,
 That flee ne might he nought aside.
 So that there weren dede and take
 Two hundred thousand for his sake
 That weren with him of his hoste.
 And thus was laid the grete boste
 Of him and of his tyranny.
 It halp no mercy for to cry
 To him which whilom dide none.
 For he unto the quene anone
 Was brought, and whan that she
 him sigh,
 This word she spake and said on
 high:

'O man, which out of mannes
 kinde
 Reson of man hast left behinde

And livéd worsé than a beste
 Whom pité mighte nought areste;
 The mannés blood to shede and
 spille,

Thou haddest never yet thy fille,
 But now the lasté time is come,
 That thy malice is overcome;
 As thou till other men hast do,
 Now shall be do to the right so,'

Tho bad this lady that men sholde
 A vessel bringe, in which she wolde
 Se the vengeance of his jufse
 Which she began anone devise,
 And toke the princes which he ladde,
 By whom his chefe counsél he
 hadde.

And while hem lasteth any breth,
 She made hem bledé to the deth
 Into the vessel where it stood,
 And whan it was fulfilled of blood,
 She casté this tiraunt therinne
 And said him : ' Lo, thus might
 thouwinne

The lusters of thine appetite.
 In blood was whilom thy delite,
 Now shalt thou drinke all thy fille,'
 And thus onlich of Goddes wille
 He which that wolde him selven
 straunge

To pité, found mere so straunge
 That he withouté grace is lore.

"So may it shewé well therefore,
 That cruelté hath no good ende.
 But pité how so that it wende
 Maketh that God is mercidble,
 If there be causé resondble,
 Why that a King shall be pitous.
 But elles if he be doubtous
 To sleen in cause of rightwisnesse,
 It may be said no pitousnesse
 But it is pusillamité,
 Whiche every princé shuldé flee.
 For 4f pité mesure excede,
 Knighthodé may nought wel pro-
 cede

To do justfse upon the right.
 For it belongeth to a knight
 As gladly for to fight as reste
 To set his lege people in reste
 Whan that the werre upon hem
 falleth.

For than he mote as it befalleth
 Of his knighthode as a leon
 Be to the people a champion
 Withouten any pite feigned.
 For if manhode be restreigned,
 Or be it pees or be it werre,
 Justice goth all out of herre,
 So that knighthode is set behinde.

"**Of Aristotles lore** I finde,
 A King shall make good visdge
 That no man knowe of his cordge
 But all honour and worthinesse.
 For if a King shall upon gesse
 Withoute verray causé drede,
 He may be liche to that I rede,—
 And though that be liche to a fable,
 Then sample is good and resona"ble.

"As it by olde dalés fell,
 I rede whilom that an hill
 Up in the londes of Archade
 A wonder dredfull noise it made.
 For so it fell that ilké day,
 This hill on his childinge lay.
 And whan thethrowes on him come,
 His noisé lich the day of dome
 Was ferefull in a mannes thought
 Of thing which that they sighe
 nought.

But well they herden all aboute
 The noise of which they were in
 doubte,

As they that wenden to be lore
 Of thing which thanne was unbore.
 The nere this hill was upon chaunce
 To taken his deliveraunce,
 The more unbuxomlich he cride;
 And every man was fled aside
 For drede and left his owné hous.
 And atté last it was a mous

The which was bore and to norice
 Betake. And tho they helde hem
 nice,

For they withoute causé dradde.
 Thus if a King his herté ladde
 With every thing that he shall here,
 Ful ofte he shulddchaungehis chere
 And upon fantasie drede
 Whan that there is no cause of
 drede.

Grace to prince tolde,
 That him were lever that he wolde
 Upon knighthode Achillem sue
 In time of werre than escheue
 So as Thersites did at Troy.
 Achilles al his hole joy
 Set upon armes for to fight;
 Thersites sought all that he might
 Unarmed for to stonde in reste.
 But of the two it was the beste,
 That Achilles upon the nede
 Hath do, wherof his knightlihéde
 Is yet commended overall.

King Salomon in speciall
 Saith: 'As there is a time of pees,
 So is a time nethéles
 Of werre, in whiche a prince algate
 Shall for the comun right debate
 And for his owne worship eke.
 But it behoveth nought to seke
 Only the werré for worship,
 But to the right of his lordship
 Which he is holde to defende
 Mote every worthy prince entende
 Btwene the simplesse of pite
 And the foolhaste of cruelte.
 Where stant the verray hardiesse,
 There mote a king his herte adresse,
 Whan it is time to forsake
 And whan time is also to take
 The dedly werres upon honde,
 That he shall for no dredd wonde¹
 If rightwisnessd be withall.
 For God is mighty over all

¹ Wonde, turn aide.

To furtheren every mannes trouthe;
 But it be through his owné slouth,
 And namely the kinges nede
 It may nought failé for to spede.
 For he stant oné for hem alle,
 So mote it well the better falle.
 And wel the moré God favoureth,
 Whan hethecomun right socoureth.
 And for to se the soth in dede,
 Behold the bible and thou might rede
 Of great ensamples many one,
 Wherof that I wil tellen one.

"Upon a time as it befell

Ayein Jude and Israel,
 Whan sondry kinges comé were
 In purpos to destruie there
 The people which God kepte tho,
 It stood in thilke daies so,
 That Gedeon, which shuldd lede
 The Goddés folk, toke him to rede
 And sende in all the lond aboute,
 Till he assembled hath a route
 With thritty thousand of defence
 To fight and maké insistence
 Ayein the which hem wolde assaile,
 And nethéles that o bataile¹
 Of thre that weren enemies,
 Was double more than was all his,
 Wherof that Gedeon him drad,
 That he so litel people had.
 But he which alte thing may helpe,
 Where that there lacketh mannés
 helpe,

To Gedeon his aungel sent
 And bad, er that he further went,
 All openly that he do cry
 That every man in his party
 Which wolde after his owné will
 In his delite abidé still
 At home in any maner wise
 For purchase or for covetise,
 For lust of love or lacke of herte,
 He shulde nought aboute sterte
 But holde him still at home in pees,

¹ Bataile, army.

Wherof upon the morwe he lees
 Wel twenty thousand men and mo
 The which after the cry ben go.
 Thus was with him but only left
 The thriddé parte, and yet God eft
 His aungel send and saidé this
 To Gedeon : ' If it so is
 That I thin help shall undertake,
 Thou shalt yet lassé people take
 By whom my will is that thou spede.
 Forthy to morwe take good hede
 Unto the flood whan ye be come,
 What man that hath the water nome
 Up in his hande and lappeth so,
 To thy part chese out allé tho,
 And him which wery is to swinke
 Upon his wombe and lith to drinke
 Forsake, and put hem al away.
 For I am mighty alle wey
 Where as me list min help to shewc
 In godé men though they be feue.

" This Gedeon awaiteth wele
 Upon the morwe and every dele,
 As God him bad, right so he dede.
 And thus ther leften in that stede
 With him thre hundred and no mo,
 The remenaunt was all ago.
 Wherof that Gedeon mervdileth
 And therupon with God counseileth
 Pleining as ferforth as he dare.
 And God, which wolde he were ware
 That he shall spede upon his right,
 Hath bede him go the samé night
 And take a man with him to here
 What shall be spoke in this matere
 Among the hethen enemies,
 So may he be the more wise,
 What afterwarde him shall befallé,
 This Gedeon amongés alle
 Phara, to whom he triste most,
 By night toke toward thilké host,
 Which logged was in a valey,
 To heré what they wolden say.
 Upon his fote and as he ferde
 Two Sarazins spekénd he herde,

Quod one : 'Arede my sweven¹
aright,

Whiche I met² in my slepe to-night
Me thought I sigh a barly cake,
Which fro the hille his wey hath take
And comé rollend down at ones,
And as it weré for the nones
Forth in his cours so as it ran
The kingés tent of Madian,
Of Amalech, of Amoríe,
Of Amon and of Jebuseie
And many another tentti mo
With gret noise as me thought tho
It threw to grounde and over cast
And all his host so sore agast,
That I awoke for pure drede.'

'This sweven can I well arede,'
Quod thother Sarazin anone,
'The barly cake is Gedeon,
Which fro the hill down sodeinly
Shall come and sette such askry
Upon the kinges and us both,
That it shall to us alle lothe.
For in such drede he shall us bringe,
That if we haddé flight of winge,
The wey one fote in our despeire.³
We sholden leve and flee in thaire.³
For there shal nothing him with-
stonde.'

Whan Gedeon hath understonde
This tale, he thonketh God of alle,
And privelich ayein he stalle,
So that no life⁴ him hath perceived.
And than he hath fulty conceived,
That he shall spede. And therupon
The night suend he shope to gone
This multitudé to assaile.

Now shalt thou here a great
merveile,
With what wisdomé that he wrought.
The litel people which he brought
Was none of hem that he ne hath

¹ Sweven, dream.

² Met, dreamt.

³ In our despair we should leave the way of
going on foot, and fly in the air.
No life nobody.

A pot of erthe, in whiche he tath
A light brenning in a cresset,
And eche of hem eke a trompét
Bare in his other hond beside.
And thus upon the nightés tide
Duke Gedeon whan it was derke
Ordeineth him unto his werke,
And parteth than his folke In thre
And chargeth hem that they ne flee,
And taught hem how they shuld
askry

All in o vois par compaign.
And what worde eke they shuldd
speke,
And how they shulde her pottes
breke

Echone with other, whan theyherde
That he him selve first so ferde.
For whan they come into the stede,
He bad hem do right as he dede.
And thus stalkende forth a pas'
This noble duke whan time was
His pot to-brake and loudeaskride,
And tho they breke on every side.
The trompe was nought for to seke,
He blewe and so they blewen eke
With such a. noise amonge hem
alie,

As though the heven shulde falle.
The hill unto hef vois answerde.
This hoste in the valéy it herde
And sigh how that hill was alight,
So what of hering and of sight
They caughten such a sodein fere,
That none of hem be lefte there.
The tented holy they forsoke
That they none other good ne toke,
But only with her body bare
They fledde, as doth the wilde hare.
And ever upon the hill they blewe
Till that they sighen time and knewe
That they be fled upon the rage.
And whan they wiste their avaun-
tage,

They fell anone unto the chace.

" Thus might thouse, how Goddes
 grace
 Unto the godé men availeth.
 But elles ofté time it faileth
 To such as be nought well disposed.
 This talé nedeth nought be glosed,
 For it is openliché shewed,
 That God to hem that ben well
 thewed

Hath yoveand graunted the victoire,
 So that thensample of this histoire
 Is good for every King to holde.
 First in himself that he beholde
 If he be good of his livfng,
 And that the folk which he shal bring
 Be good also, for than he may
 Be glad of many a mery day
 In what that ever he hath to done.
 For he which sit above the mone
 And allé thing may spill and spede
 In every cause and every nede,
 His godé King so well adresseth,
 That all his fomen he represseth,
 So that there may no man him dere.
 And also well he can forbere
 And suffre a wicked king to falle
 In hondes of his fomen alle.

" **Now furthermore** if I shall
 sain

Of my matere and torne ayein
 To speke of Justice and Pité
 After the reule of Realte,
 This may a King well understonde,
 Knighthodé mot be take on honde
 Whan that it stant upon the nede,
 He shall no rightfull causé drede,
 No more of werré than of pees,
 If he woll stondé blamles.
 For suche a cause a king may have,
 That better him is to slee than save;
 Wherof thou might ensample finde.
 The highé maker of mankinde
 By Samuel to Saul bad,
 That he shall nothing ben adrad
 Ayein king Agag for to fight.

For this the Godhede him benight,
 That Agag shall be overcome.
 And whan it is so ferforth come,
 That Saul hath him descomfite,
 The God bad maké no respite,
 That he ne shulde him sleen anone.
 But Saúl let it overgone
 And dide nought the Goddés heste.
 For Agag made a great behest¹
 Of raunsom which he wolde yive.
 King Saúl suffreth him to live
 And feigneth pité forth withall.
 But he which seeth and knoweth all,
 The highe God, of that he feigneth
 To Samuel upon him pleigneth,
 And send him word for that he lefté
 Of Agag that he ne berefte
 The life, he shall nought only deie
 Him self, but fro his Regalie
 He shall be put for evermo,
 Nought he but eke his heire also,
 That it shall never come ayein.

" Thus might thou se the sothé
 plein,
 That of to moch and of to lite
 Upon the princes stant the wite.²
 But ever it was a Kinges right
 To do the deds of a knight.
 For in the hondes of a King
 The dethe and life is all o thing
 After the lawés of justice;
 To sleen, it is a dedly vice
 But if a man the deth deserve.
 And if a king the life preserve
 Of him which oughté for to deie,
 He sueth nought thensamplarie,
 Which in the bible is evident,
 How David in his testament,
 Whan he no lenger mighté live,
 Unto his sone in charge hath yive,
 That he Joab shall sleen algate.
 And whan David was gone his gate,
 The yonge wisé Salomone

¹ Behest, promise.

² Wite, blame.

His faders heste did anone
 And slew Joéb in such a wise,
 That they that herden the juise
 Ever after dradden him the more.
 And God was eke well paid therfore
 That he so wolde his herté ply
 The lawes for to justify.
 And yet he kepte forth withall
 Pité, so as a prince shall,
 That he no tirannie wrought.
 He found the wisdom which he
 sought,

And was so rightfull netheles
 That all his life he stood in pees,
 That he no dedly werres had,
 For every man his wisdom drad.
 And as he was him serve wise,
 Right so the worthy men of prise
 He hath of his counseil witholde,
 For that is every prince holde
 To make of such his retenue
 Which wise ben, and to remue
 The fooles. For there is no thing,
 Which may be better about a king
 Than counseil, which is the sub-
 staunce

Of all a kingés governaunce.

"In Salomon a man may se,
 What thing of most necessite
 Unto a worthy King belongeth,
 Whan he his kingéom under-
 fongeth.

God bad him chese what he wolde
 And saide him that he have sholde
 What he wold axe, as of o thing.
 And he, which was a newe king,
 Forth therupon his bone¹ praide
 To God, and in this wise saide :

'O king, by whom that I shall
 regne,

Yive me Wisdome that I my regne
 Forth with the people which I have
 To thin hon6ur may kepe and save.'
 Whan Salomon his bone hath taxed,

The God of that which he hath
 axed

Was right well paid and graunteth
 sone

Nought all only that he his bone
 Shall have of that, but of richesse,
 Ofhele, of pees, of high noblesse,
 Forth with Wisdom at his axinges,
 Which stant above all other thinges.

" But what king woll his regne
 save,

First him behoveth for to have
 After the God and his beleve
 Such counseil which is to beleve¹
 Fullfild of trouth and rightwisnesse.
 But above all in his noblesse
 Betwene the reddour and pite
 A king shall do suche equite
 And setté the balaunce in even,
 So that the highe God in heven
 And all the people of his nobley
 Locnge² unto his name say.
 For most above all erthly good,
 Where that a king him self is good,
 It helpeth ; for in other wey³
 If so be that a king forsway,³
 Full oft er this it hath be sain,
 The comun people is overlain
 And hath the Kinges sin abought⁴
 All though the people agultenought.
 Of that the King his God misserveth,
 The people taketh that he de-
 serveth;

Here in this world, but diés where
 I not how it shall stonde there.
 Forth good is a king to triste
 First to him self, as he ne wiste
 None other help but God allone,
 So shall the reule of his persone
 Within him self through providence
 Ben of the better conscience.
 And for to finde ensample of this

¹ Beleve, remain.

² Loenge praise.

³ Forswey, become remiss, not awake to his
 duty.

⁴ Abought, paid for, suffered for.

A tale I rede, and soth it is.

"**In a cronique** it telleth thus,
The King of Rome Lucius
Within his chambre upon a night
The steward of his hous a knight
Forth with his chamberlein also
To counseil hadde bothe two,
And stoden by the chimende
To-gider spekend allé thre.
And hapneth that the Kingés fole
Sat by the fire upon a stole,
As he that with his babel¹ plaide,
And yet he herde all that theysaide,
And therof toke they non hede.
The King hem axeth what to rede
Of such rnateres as cam to mouth.
And they him tolden as they couth.
Whan all was spoke of that they
ment,

The King with all his hole entent
That atte last hem axeth this,
What King men tellen that he is
Among the folk touchend his name,
Or it be pris, or it be blame,
Right after that they herden sain
He bad hem for to telle it plein,
That they no point of soth forbere
By thilké feith that they him bere.

The steward first upon this thing
Yaf his ansldre unto the King
And thoughté glose in this matere
And said, als fer as he can here,
His name is good and honourable.
Thus was the steward favourable,
That he the trouthé plein ne tolde.

The King than axeth, as he sholde,
The chamberlein of his avise,
And he, that was subtil and wise
And somdele thought upon his feith,
Him tolde, how all the people saith,
That if his counseil weré trewe,
They wisté thannd well and knewe,
That of him self he shulde be
A worthy King in his degre.

1 Babel, bauble,

And thus the counseil he accuseth
In party, and the king excuseth.

"The fool, which herde of all
the cas,

What time as goddés wille was,
Sigh, that they saiden nought
inough,

And hem to scorne bothé lough,
And to the king he saide tho :

' Sir king, if that it were so
Of wisdom in thin owne mode,
That thou thy selven were good,
Thy counseil shulde nought be bad.'
The king therof merveile had,
Whan that a fool so wisely spake,
And of him self found out the lacke
Within his owné conscience.

And thus the foulds evidence,
•Which was of goddes grace en-
spired,

Maketh, that good counseil was
desired.

He put away the vicious
And toke to him the vertuous.
The wrongfull lawes ben amended,
The londés good is well despended,
The people was no more oppressed
And thus stood every thing re-
dressed,

For where a king is propre wise
And hath such as him selven is
Of his counseil, it may nought faile,
That every thing ne shal availe.
The Vices thanne gone away,
And every Vertu holt his wey,
Wherof the highe God is plesed
And all the londés folke is esed.
For if the comun people cry
And than a king list nought to ply
To here what the clamour wolde,
And other wise than he sholde
Desdaineth for to done hem grace,
It hath be seen in many place,
There hath befallé great contraire,
And that I finde of ensamplaire.

" After the deth of Salomone,
Whan thilke wise king was gone
And Roboas in his pers6ne
Receive shulde the corone,
The people upon a parlemēt
Avised were of one assent
And all unto the king they preiden
With comun vois and thus they
saiden:

' Our lege lord, we the beseche,
Thatthou receiveour humble speche
And graunt us that which reson will
Or of thy grace or of thy skill.
Thy fader, while he was alive
And mighte bothe graunt and prive,
Upon the werkes which he had
The comun people streite lad,
Whan he the temple made newe.
Thing which men never afore
knewe

He brought up than of his tallge,
And all was under the visage
Of werkes which he made tho.
But now it is befallē so,
That all is made right, as he saide,
And he was richē whan he deide.
So that it is no maner nede,
If thou therof wolt taken hede,
To pilen of the people more,
Which long time hath be greved
sore.

And in this wise as we the say,
With tender herte we the prey,
That thou relesse thilke clette,
Which upon us thy fader sette.
And if the like to done so,
We ben thy men for evermo
To gone and comen at thin heste.'

"The King, which herde this
requeste,
Saith, that he wolde ben avised,
And hath therof a time assised,
And in the while as he him thought
Upon this thing counsel! he sought.
And first the wise knightés olde,

To whom that he his tale tolde,
Counseillen him in this manure,
That he with love and with glad
chere
Foryive and graunt all that is axed
Of that his fader haddē taxed.
For so he may his regne acheve
With thing which shall hem litel
greve.

" The King hem herd and over
passeth
And with these other his wit com-
pdsseth

That yongē were and nothing wise.
And they these olde men despise
And saiden: ' Sir, it shall be shame
For ever unto thy worthy name,
If thou ne kepē nought thy right,
While thou art in thy yongē might,
Which that thin oldē fader gat.
But say unto the people plat,
That while thou livest in thy lon.de,
The lestē finger of thin honde
It shall be stronger over all,
Than was thy faders body all.
And thus also shall be thy tale,—
If he hem smote with roddes smale,
With scorpions thou shalt hem
smite.

And where thy fader toke a lite,
Thou thenkest take mochel more,
Thus shalt thou make hem drede sore
The grete hert of thy coralge,
So for to holde hem in servdge.'

" This yongē king him hath con-
formed

To done as he was last enformed,
Which was to him his undoing.
For whan it came to the speking,
He hath the yongē counseil holde,
That he the same wordes tolde
Of all the people in audience.
And whan they herden the sentence
Of his malice and the mandce,
Anone to-fore his ownē face

They have him outtrelly refused
 And with full great reprove accused.
 So they beginnd for to rave,
 That he was faine him self to save.
 For as the wildd wode rage
 Of windés maketh the see salvage
 And that was calm bringth into

wawe,

So for defalt and grace of lawe,
 The people is stered all at ones
 And forth they gone out of his wones,
 So that of the ligndges twelve,
 Two tribus onely by hem selve
 With him abiden and no mo.
 So weré they for evermo
 Of no retorne without espeire
 Departed fro the rightfull heire
 Of Israel with comun vois.

A king upon her owne chois
 Among hem self anone they make
 And have her yongé lord forsake.
 A pouer knight Jeroboas
 They toke and lefte Roboas,
 Which rightfull heire was by de-
 scent.

Lo, thus the yongé cause went,
 For that the counseil was nought
 good

The regne fro the rightfull blood
 Ever afterward devided was.
 So may it proven by this cas,
 That yong counseil, which is to
 warme,

Or men beware, doth ofte harme.
 Old age for the counseil serveth,
 And lusty youth his thank deserveth
 Upon the travail which he doth.
 And bothé for to say a soth
 By sondry causé for to have,
 If that he will his regne save,
 A king behoveth every day,
 That one can and that other may
 Be so the kinge hem bothé reule,
 Or ellés all goth out of reule.

" And upon this matere also

A question betwene the two
 Thus writen in a boke I fonde,
 Where¹ it be better for the londe
 A King him selvé to be wise
 And so to bere his owne prise,
 And that his counseil be nought
 good;

Or otherwise if it so stood,
 A King if he be vicidus
 And his counseil be vertuous :
 It is answerde in suche a wise,
 That better it is that they be wise,
 By whom that the counsel shall
 gone.

For they be many, and he is one,
 And rather shall an oné man
 With fals counsel, for ought he can,
 From his wisdom be made to fall,
 Than he aloné shuld hem all
 Fro vices into vertue chaunge,
 For that is well the more straunge.
 Forthy the lond may well be glad,
 Whose king with good counseil is
 lad,

Which set him unto rightwisnesse,
 So that his highte worthinesse
 Betwene the reddour and pite
 Doth mercy forth with equite.
 A king is holden over all
 To pite, but in speciall
 To hem, where he is most beholde,
 They shulde his pite most beholde
 That ben the leges of the londe,
 For they ben ever under his honde
 After the goddés ordenaunce
 To stonde upon his governaunce.

Of thempour Anthonius

I find, how that he saide thus :

' Lever him were for to save
 One of his legds than to have
 Of enemies a thousand dede.'
 And thus he lernéd as I rede
 Of Cipio, which haddé be
 Consul of Rome. And thus to se

1 Where, whether.

Divers ensamples how they stonde,
A King, which hath the charge on
honde

The comun people to governe,
If that he woll, he may well lerne
Is none so good to the plesaunce
Of God, as is good governaunce.
And every governaunce is due
To pité; thus I may argue
That pitd is the foundement
Of every Kinges regiment.
If it be medled with justice,
They two remeven alle Vice
And ben of Vertue most vailable
To make a Kinges regne stable.

"Lo, thus the foure points to-fore
In Governauce as they ben bore
Of Trouthé first and of Largesse,
Of Pité forth with Rightwisnesse,
I have hem tolde. And over this
The fifte point, so as it is
Set of the reule of Policy,
Wherof a king shall modify
The fleshly lustcs of nature,
Now thenke I telle of such mesure,
That bothe kinde shall be served
And eke the lawe of God observed.

"It sit a man by wey of kinde
To lové, but it is nought kinde
A man for love his wit to lese.
For if the month of Juú shall frese
And that December shall be hote,
The yere mistorneth wel I wote.
To seen a man from his estate
Through his sot effeminate
And leve that a man shall do,
It is as hose above the sho
To man, which ought nought to be
used.

But yet the world hath oft accused
Full grete princes of this dede,
How they for love hem self mislede,
Wherof manhode stood behinde
Of olde ensamples as men finde.

These olde gestes tellen thus,

That whilom Sardanapallus,
Which held all hole in his empire
The grete kingéom of Assfre,
Was through the slouth of his
cordge

Fall into thilke firy rage
Of lové which the men assoteth,
Wherof him self he so rioteth,
And wax so ferforth womanissh,
That ayein kinde, as if a fissh
Abide wold upon the londe,
In women suche a luste he fonde,
That he dwelt ever in chambre still
And only wrought after the will
Of women, so as he was bede,
They taughten him a lace to braide
And weve a purs and to en file
A perle. And fell that ilke while,
One Arbactus the prince of Mede
Sigh how this king in womanhede
Was falle fro chivdlerie,
And gate himhelpe and compaignie
And wroughte so that atte last
This king out of his regne he cast,
Which was undone for ever mo.
And yet men speken of him so,
That it is shame for to here;
Forth to love is in manere.

For where a prince his lustes sueth,
That he the werre nought pursueth,
Whan it is time to bene armed,
His centré stant full ofte harmed,
Whan thenemies ben woxe bolde,
That they defence none beholde.
Full many a londe hath so be lore,
As men may rede oft time afore
Of hem that so her eses soughten,
Which after they full dere aboughten.

To mochel ese is othing worth,
For that set every vice forth
And every vertue put a backe,
Wherof pris torneth into lacke,
As in cronique I may reherse,
Which telleth, how the king of Perse
That Cyrus night, a werré hadde

Ayein the people which he dradde
 Of a contré which Lidos hight.
 But yet for ought that he do might
 As in bataile upon the werre,
 He had of hem ahvay the werre.¹
 And whan he sigh and wist it wele,
 That he by strength wan no dele,
 Than atté last he cast a wile
 This worthy people to beguile
 And toke with hem a feigned pees,
 Which shulde lasten endeles,
 So as he saide in wordes wise,
 But he thought all in other wise.
 For it betid upon the cas
 Whan that this people in resté was
 They token eses many folde,
 And worldés ese as it is tolde
 By way of kinde is the nonce
 Of every lust which toucheth vice.
 Thus whan they were in lustes falle,
 The werres ben forgotten alle.
 Was none which woldé the worship
 Of armes, but in idelship
 They putten besinesse away
 And token hem to daunce and play,
 And every man doth what him liste.
 But whan the king of Perse it wiste,
 That they unto folie entenden,
 With his power, whan they lest
 wenden,

More sodeinly than doth the thunder
 He came for ever and put hem under.
 And thus hath lecheric lore
 The londe which had be to-fore
 The best of hem that weré tho.

"And in the bible I finde also
 A tale lich unto this thing,
 How Amalech the paien king,
 Whan that he mighté by no wey
 Defend his londe and put away
 The worthy people of Israel,
 This Sarazin, as it befell,
 Through the counsefl of Balaam
 A rout of fairé women nam,

1 The werre, the worse.

That lusty were and yonge of age,
 And bad hem gon to the lignage
 Of these Hebrews. And forth they
 went

With eyen grey and browés bent
 And well arraied everychone.
 And whan they comé were anone
 Among thebrews, was none in sight
 But cacch who that cacche might,
 And grace anone began to faile,
 That whan they comen to bataile,
 Than afterward in sory plite
 They were take and discomfite,
 So that within a litel throwe,
 The might of hem was overthrowe,
 That whilom were wont to stonde,
 Till Phinees the cause on honde
 Hath také this vengeaunce last.
 But than it ceséd atte last.
 For God was paid of that he dede,
 For where he found upon a stede
 A couple which misferde so
 Throughout he smote hem bothetwo
 And let hem Hgge in menrieb eye,
 Wherof all other which hem sigh
 Ensampled hem upon the dede
 And praiden unto the godhede
 Her oldd sinnes to amende.
 And he which wold his mercy sende
 Restored hem to newe grace.
 Thus may it shewe in sondry place
 Of chastetd how the clennesse
 Accordeth to the worthinesse
 Of men of armes over all.
 But most of all in speciáll
 This vertue to a King belongeth,
 For upon his fortune it hongeth
 Of that his lond shall spede or spill.
 Forthy but if a King his will
 Fro lustés of his flesh restreigne,
 Ayein him self he maketh a treigne,
 Into the whiche if that he slide,
 Him weré better go beside.
 For every man may understonde
 How for a timé that it stonde,

It is a sory lust to like,
Whose ende maketh a man to sike¹
And torneth joies into sorwe.
The brighte sonne by the morwe²
Beshineth nought the derke night;
The lusty youth of mannes might,
In agé but it stondé wele,
Mistorneth all the lasté whele.

"That every worthy prince is
holde

Within him self him self beholde
To se the state of his persone
And thenke, how there be joies none
Upon this erthé made to last,
And how the flesshe shall at last
The lustes of his life forsake,
Him ought a great ensample take
Of Salomon, Ecclesiaste,
The fame of whom shall ever laste,
That he the mighty God forsoke,
Ayein the lawe whan he toke
His wives and his concubines,
Of hem that were Sarazines,
For which he did ydolatrie.
For this I rede of his soty,
She of Sidoiné so him ladde,
That he knelend his annás spradde
To Astrathen with great humblésse,
Which of her lond was the goddessse.
And she that was of Moabite
So ferforth made him to delite
Through lust, which al his wit
devoureth,
That he Chamos her god honoureth.
An other Amonite also
With love him hath assoted so,
Her god Moloch that with encense
He sacreth and doth reverence
In such a wise as she him bad.
Thus was the wisest overlad
With blinde lustés which he sought.
But he it afterward abought.

" For Achids Selonités,

Which was prophet, er his deces,
While he was in his lustés alle,
Betokeneth what shall after falle.
For on a day, whan that he mette
Jerdboam, the knight he grette¹
And bad him that he shulde abide
To heré what him shall betide.
And forth withall Achias cast
His mantel of, and al so fast
He kut it into pieces twelve,
Wherof two parts toward him selve
He kept, and all the remenaunt,
As God hath set his coveaunt,
He toke unto Jerdboas
Of Nabal which the soné was
And of the kingés court a knight.
And said him, 'Such is Goddés
might,

As thou hast sene departed² here
My mantel, right in such manere
After the deth of Salomon
God hath ordeiné therupon,
This regne than he shall devide,
Which *time* thou shalt eke abide,
And upon that division
The regne, as in proporcion
As thou hast of my mantel take,
Thou shalt receive I undertake.'
O, which a sinne violent,
Wherof so wise a king was shent,
That he vengeaúnce of his persone
Was nought inough to take alone,
But afterward, whan he was passed,
It hath his heritagé lassed,
As I more operily to-fore
The talé tolde ; and thus therfore
The philosopre upon this thing
Writ and counseiled to a king,
That he the forfeite of luxure
Shall tempre and reule of such
mesure

Which be to kindé suffisaunt
And eke to reson accordaunt,
So that the lustés ignoraunce

¹ Sike, sigh.

² The bright morning sun.

¹ Grette, greeted.

² Departed, divided.

Be cause of no misgovernauce,
Through which that he be over-
throwe

As he that woll no reson knowe.

" For of Ant6nie thus I rede,
Which of Severus was the sone,
That he his life of comun wone
Yaf holy unto thilké vice,
And ofté time he was so nice,
Wherof nature her hath compleigned
Unto the God, which hath des-
deigned

The werkés which Antonie wrought
Of lust which he full sore abought;
For God his forfeite hath so wroke,
That in cronfque it is yet spoke.
But for to take remembrance
Of speciall misgovernauce
Through covetise and injustice
Forth with the remenaunt of vice,
I finde a tale, as thou shalt here,
Which is thensample of this matere.

So as these olbe gestés sain,
The proude tirannish Remain
Tarquinius, which was than king
And wrought many a wrongful
thing,

Of senés he had many one,
Among the which Arrons was one
Lich to his fader in maneres,
So that within a fewe yeres
With treson and with tiramiy
They wonne of londe a great party
And token hede of no justice,
Which due was to her office
Upon the reule of governauce.
But al that ever was plesaunce
Unto the fleshhés lust they toke.
And fell so, that they undertoke
A weird, which was nought acheved,
But often time it had hem greved,
Ayein a folk which thanné hight
The Gabiens, and all by night
Thus Arrons whan he was at home
In Rome a prive place he nome

Within a chambre and bete him
selve

And made him woundes ten or
twelve

Upon the backe, as it was sene.
And so forth with his hurtés grene
In all the hasté that he may
He rode and cam that other day
Unto Gabie the citee

And in he went. And whan that he
Was knowe, anone the gatés shette,
The lordes all upon him sette
With drawe swerdés upon honde.
And Arrons wolde hem nought
withstonde,

And saide: ' I am here at your
wille,

As lefe it is that ye me spille,
As if min owne fader dede.'

And forth within the same stede
He praide hem that they woldd se ;
And shewed hem in what degre
His fader and his brethren bothe,
Which as he saide weren wrothe,
Him hadde beten and reviled
And out of Rome for ever exiled.

And thus he made hem to beleve
And saide, if that he might acheve
His purpos, it shall well be yolde
Be so that they him helpe wolde.
Whan that the lordes hadde sene,
How wofully he was besene,
They toke pite of his greve.
But yet it was hem wonder leve
That Rome him had exiled so.
The Gabiens by counseil tho
Upon the goddes made him swere,
That he to hem shall trouthe bere
And strengthen hem with all his
might.

And they also him hath beight
To helpd him in his quardle.
They shope thanne for his hele
That he was bathed and anoint
Till that he was in lusty point,

And what he woldé than he had,
That he all hole the cite lad
Right as he wolde him self devise.
And than he thought him in what
wise

He might his tirannie shewe,
And to his counseil toke a shrewe¹
Whom to his fader forth he sent.
In his message and he tho went
And praied his fader for to say
By his avise and finde a wey
How they the cité mighten winne
While that he stood so well therinne.
And whan the messenger was come
To Rome and hath in counseil nome
The king, it fell perchaunce so
That they were in a gardin tho,
This messenger forth with the king.
And whan he hadde told the thing
In what manere that it stode,
And that Tarquinius understode
By the messitte how that it ferde,
Anone he toke in honde a yerde,
And in the gardin as they gone
The lilie cropped one and one
Where that they weren sprongen
out

He smote of as they stood about,
And said unto the messagere :
' Lo, this thing which I do now here
Shall be in stede of thin ansldre.
And in this wise as I me bere,
Thou shake unto my sond telle.'
And he no lenger woldé dwelle,
But toke his leve and goth withall
Unto his lorde and tolde him all,
How that his fader haddé do.
Whan Arrons herde him telle so,
Anone he wisté what it ment,
And therto sette all his entent
Till he through fraude and trecher
The princes hevedés of Gaby
Hath smiten of and all was wonne.
His fader cam to-fore the sonne

¹ Shrewe, plotter of evil.

Into the town with the Romains
And toke and slew the citezeins
Withouté reson or pite,
That he ne spareth no degre.
And for the spede of this conquest
He let do make a riche fest
With a solempne sacrifice
In Phebus temple, and in this wise,
Whan the Romains assembled were
In presence of hem alle there,
Upon thalter whan all was dight
And that the firés were alight,
From under thalter sodeinly
An hidous serpent openly
Cam out and hath devoured all
The sacrifice, and eke withall
The firés queint, and forth anone,
So as he cam so is he gone
Into the depe ground ayein.
And every man began to sain,
' Ha lord, what may this signify ?'
And therupon they pray and cry
To Phebus, that they mighten knowe
The cause. And the samethrowe
With gastly vois, that all it herde,
The Romains in this wise answerde
And said, how for the wickednesse
Of pride and of unrightwisnesse
That Tarquin and his sone hath do
The sacrifice is wasted so,
Which might nought ben accept-
able

Upon such sinne abhomindeble.
And over that yet he hem wisseth
And saith, that which of hem first
kisseth

His moder, he shall take wreche
Upon the wronge. And of that
speche

They ben within her hertés glade,
Though they outward no semblaunt
made.

There was a knight, which Brutus
hight,

And he with all the haste he might

To ground felle and there he kiste,
 But none of hem the cause wiste,
 But wenden that he haddé sporned
 Perchaunce and so was overtorned.
 But Brutus all an other ment,
 For he knew well in his entent,
 How therthe of every mannés kinde
 Is moder. But they weren blinde
 And sighen nought so fer as he.
 But whan they leften the citee
 And comen home to Rome ayein,
 Than everyman, which was Romain
 And moder hath, to her he bendo
 And kist, and ech of hem thus wende
 To be the first upon the chaunce
 Of Tarquin for to do vengeaunce,
 So as they herden Phebus sain.
 But every time hath his certain,
 So must it nedes than abide,
 Till afterward upon a tide
 Tarquinius made unskilfully
 A werré, which was faste by,
 Ayein a town with walles stronge,
 Which Arded was clepéd longe,
 And cast a siegè there about
 That there may no man passen out.
 So it befell upon a night
 Arrons, which had his souper dight,
 A parte of the chivalerie
 With him to suppe in compaignie
 Hath bede. And whan they comen
 were
 And setten at the suppe there,
 Among her other worded glade
 Arrons a great spekíngé made,—
 Who hadde tho the beste wife
 Of Rome? And thus began a strife,
 For Arrons saith he hath the best.
 So janglen they withouten reste,
 Till atté last one Collatine,
 A worthy knight and was cousine
 To Arrons, said him in this wise :
 'It is,' quod he, 'of none emprise
 To speke a word, but of the dede
 Wherof it is to taken hede.

Anotte forthy this same tide
 Lepe on thy hors and let us ride,
 So may we knowe bothé two
 Unwarely what our wirés do,
 And that shall be a trewe assay.'

" This Arrons saith nought ones
 nay.
 On horseback anone they lepte
 In such manere and nothing slepte
 Ridendé forth till that they come
 All privelich withinné Rome,
 In strangé place and down they light
 And take a chambre out of sight.
 They be desguised for a throwe,
 So that no life¹ hem shulde knowe.
 And to the paleis first they sought
 To se what thing these ladies
 wrought,
 Of whiche Arrons had made his
 vaunt.
 And they her sigh of glad semblaunt
 All full of merthes and of bords.²
 But among all her other wordes
 She spakenought of her husebomle.
 And whan they had all unclerstor.de
 Of thilke place what hem list,
 They gone hem forth that nene it
 wist
 Beside thilke gate of bras,
 Collacea" which clepéd was,
 Where Collatin hath his dwelling.
 There fouden they at home sitting
 Lucrece his wife all environed
 With women which were abandoned
 To werche, and she wrought eke
 withall
 And bad hem haste and said : ' It
 shall
 Be for min husebondes were,
 Which with his swerd and with his
 spere
 Lith at siege in great disese,
 And if it shulde him nought displese,
 Now woldé God, I had him here.

¹ No life", no body.

- Bordes, jests,

For certes till that I may here
 Some good tiding of his estate,
 My herte is ever upon debate.
 For so as alle men wisesse,
 He is of such an hardiesse,
 That he can nought him selvé spare,
 And that is all my moste care
 When they the walles shuldeassaile.
 But if my wissches might availle,
 I wolde it were a groundles pit
 Be so the siege were unknit,
 And I my husebonde sigh.
 With that the water in her eye
 Arose, that she ne might it stoppe,
 And as men sene the dew bedroppe
 The leves and the floures eke,
 Right so upon her whité cheke
 The wofull salte teres felle.

" When Collatin hath herde her
 telle

The mening of her trewe herte,
 Anone with that to her he sterte
 And saide : ' Lo, my goode dere,
 Now is he come to you here
 That ye most loven as ye sain.
 And she with goodly chere ayein
 Beclipt him in her armes smale.
 And the colour which erst was pale
 To beaute thanne was restored
 So that it mighte nought be mored.
 The kingés sone, which was nigh,
 And of this lady herde and sigh
 The thinges as they ben befallle,
 The reson of his winés alle
 Hath lost, for love upon his parte
 Cam than and of his firy darte
 With such a wounde him hath
 through smite,
 That he must nedés fele and wite
 Of thilke blind malady,
 To which no cure of surgery
 Can helpe. But yet nethéles
 At thilké time he helde his pees
 That he no countenance made
 But openly with wordés glade,

So as he couthe in his manere,
 He spake and made frendely chere
 Till it was timé for to go.
 And Collatin with him also
 His leve toke, so that by night,
 With all the haste that they might,
 They riden to the siege ayein.
 But Arrons was so wo besein
 With thoughtés which upon him
 runne

That he all by the brode sunne
 To beddé goth nought for to reste,
 But for to thenke upon the beste
 And the fairesté forth with alle,
 That ever he sigh or ever shalle,
 So as him thought in his corage
 Where he portreieth her ymage.
 First the fett'n'ds of her face,
 In which nature had alle grace
 Of womanly beaute beset
 So that it mighte nought be bet.
 And how her yelwe hair was tressed
 And her attire so wel adressecl.
 And how she spake, and how she
 wrought,
 And how she wepte, and how she
 thought,

That he foryeten hath no dele
 But all it liketh him so wele
 That in the worde nor in dede
 He lacked nought of womanhede.

" And thus this tirannisshe knight
 Was soupled, but nought half
 aright,

For he none other hede toke,
 But that he might by sommé croke,
 All though it were ayein her wille,
 The tastés of his flesh fulfille,
 Which love was nought resonable ;
 For wher honour is remevable,
 It oughté well to ben avised.
 But he, which hath his lust assised
 With melled¹ love and tirannie,
 Hath found upon his trecherie

¹ *Mdled*, mingled.

A wey the which he thenketh to
 holde,
 And saith, ' Fortune unto the bolde
 Is favorable for to helpe.'
 And thus within him self to yelp,
 As he which was a wilde man
 Upon his treson he began.
 And up he sterte, and forth he wente
 On horsebacke, but his entente
 There knew no wight, and thus he
 name
 The nexte waie, till he came
 Unto Collaced, the gate
 Of Rome, and it was somdele late
 Right even upon the sonne sette.
 And he which haddé shape his nette
 Her innocéncd to betrappe,
 And as it shulde tho mishappe,
 As privelich as ever he might
 He rode and of his hors alight
 To-fore Collatings inn
 And all frendélich goth him in,
 As he that was cousin of house.
 And she which is the goode spouse,
 Lucrecé, whan that she him sigh,
 With goodly chere drewe him nigh
 As she which all honour supposeth
 And him so as she dare opposeth
 How it stood of her husebonde.
 And he tho did her understonde
 With talés feigned in this wise
 Right as he wolde him self devise
 Wherof he might her herté glade,
 That she the better chere made.
 Whan she the gladdé wordés herde
 How that her housdbondé ferde.
 And thus the trouthé was deceived
 With slie treson which was received
 To hire which mente allé good.
 For as the festes thanne stood,
 His souper was right wel arraied,
 But yet he hath no word assaied
 To speke of love in no degre.
 But with covért subtilite
 His frendly speches he affaiteth,

And, as the tigre, his time awaiteth
 In hope for to cacche his pray.

" Whan that the hordés were away
 And they have soupéd in the halle,
 He saith that slepe is on him falle,
 And praith, he mote go to bedde.
 And she with alle haste spedde
 So as her thought it was to done,
 That every thing was redy sone.
 She brought him to his chambre tho
 And toke her leve, and forth is go
 Into her owne chambre by.
 And she that wende certainly
 Have had a frend then had a fo,
 Wherof fell after mochel wo.

"This tiraunt though he lie softe
 Out of his bedde aros full ofte
 And goth about and laid his ere
 To herken till that alle were
 To beddé gone and slepten faste.
 And than upon him self he caste
 A mantel and his swerde all naked
 He toke in honde, and she unwaked
 A beddé lay. But what she mette,¹
 God wot, for he the dore unshette
 So prively that none it herde,
 The softe pas and forth he ferde
 Into the bed where that she slepte,
 All sodeinly and in he crepte.
 And her in bothe his armes toke.
 With that this worthy wife awoke,
 Which thought endrsse of woman-
 bed

Her vois hath lost for purd drede,
 That o word speke she ne dare.
 And eke he bad her to beware,
 For if she madd noise or cry,
 He said, his swerd lay fasté by
 To sleen her and her folke about.
 And thus he brought her herte in
 doubt,

That lich a lamb whan it is sesed
 In wolvés mouth, so was disesed
 Lucrecé, who lay dede oppressed.

¹ Mette, dreamed.

And he, which all him hadde ad-
ressed
To lust, toke thanne what him liste
And goth his wey, that none it wiste,
Into his owne chambre ayein
And clepéd up his chamberlein
To horse lept and forth he rode.
And she, which in her bed abode,
Whan that she wist he was agone,
She cleped after light anone
And up aros long er the day
And cast away her fressh array,
As she which hath the world forsake,
And toke upon the clothes blacke.
And ever upon continuing,
Right as men se a welle spring,
With eyen full of wofull teres
Her hair hangend about her eres
She wepte, and no man wisté why.
But yet among full pitously
Shepraiéd that they noldendrecche¹
Her husebonde for to fecche
Forthwith her fader eke also.
Thus be they comen bothe two,
And Brutus cam with Collatine,
Which to Lucrece was cousine,
And in they wenten allé thre
To chambre, where they mighté se
The wofullest upon this molde,
Which wepte as she to water sholde,²
The chambre dore anone was stoke,²
Er they have ought unto her spoke.
They sigh her clothes all disguised,
And how she hath her self despised
Her haire hangend unkennt about.
But netheles she gan to lout
And knele unto her husebonde
And he, which fain woldunderstonde
The causé why she faréd so,
With softé wordes, axéd tho:
'What may you be,³ mygodéswe?'
And she, which thought her self
unmete

And the lest worth of women alle,
Her woful chere let down falle
For shame and couthe unnethés¹
loke,
And they therof good hede toke
And praiden her in alle way,
That she ne spare for to say
Unto her frendés what her eileth,
Why she so sore her self bewaileth,
And what the sortié woldé mene.
And she, which hath her sorwegrene,
Her wo to tellé thanne assaieth,
But tendre shame her word delaïeth,
That sondry timés as she mente
To speke upon the point she stente.
And they her beden ever in one
To telle forth, and there upon,
Whan that she sigh she muste nede,
Her tale betwene shame and drede
She tolde, nought withoute peine.
And he, which wolde her wo re-
streigne,
Her husebond, a sory man,
Comforteth her all that he can
And swore, and eke her fader both,
That they with hire be nought wroth
Of that is do ayein her wille,
And praiemen her to be stille,
For they to her have all foryive.
But she, which thought nought to
live,
Of hem woll no foryivdnesse
And said, of thilke wickednesse,
Which was to hiré body wrought,
All were it so she might it nought,
Never afterward the world ne shall
Reproven her, and forthwithall,
Er any man therof be ware,
A naked swerd, the which she bare
Within her mantel prively,
Betwene her honds sodeinly
She toke, and through her hert it
throng,
And fell to ground, and ever among,

¹ Drecche, delay.² Stoke, barred.³ What may be to you? How is it with you?¹ Unneths, hardly (not easily).

Whan that she fell, so as she might,
 Her clothes with her hond she right,
 That no man down ward from the knee
 Shuld any thinge of her then se.
 Thus lay this wife honestly,
 All though she diedé wofully.
 Tho was no sonve for to seke,
 Her husbonde and her fader eke
 A swoone upon the body felle.
 There may no mannes tunge telle,
 In which anguishe that they were.
 But Brutus, which was with hem
 there,

Toward him self his herté kept
 And to Lucrece anone he lept,
 The bloody swerde and pulleth out
 And swore the goddés al about
 That he therof shall do vengeance.
 And she tho made a countenaunce
 Her dedly eye and atté laste
 In thinking as it were up cast,
 And so behelde him in the wise
 While she to lokd may suffice.
 And Brutus with a manly herte
 Her husbonde hath made up sterte
 Forth with her fader eke also
 In allé haste and said hem tho,
 That they anone withoute lette
 A beré for the body fette.
 Lucrece and therupon bledénd
 He laide and so forth out criend
 He goth unto the market place
 Of Rome. And in a litel space
 Through cry the cite was assembled,
 And every mannés herté trembled
 Whan they the soth herde of the cas.
 And thereupon the counseil was
 Take of the great and of the smale.
 And Brutus tolde hem all the tale.
 And thus cam into remembraunce
 Of sinné the continuaunce
 Which Arrons hadde do to-fore,
 And eke long time er he was bore
 Of that his fader haddé do,
 The wrong came into placé tho,

So that the comun clamour tolde
 The newé shame of sinnés olde.
 And all the town began to cry:
 ' Away, away the tyranny .
 Of lechery and covetise !'
 And atte last in such a wise
 The fader in the samé while
 Forth with the soné they exile
 And taken better governaunce.

" But yet an otherremembraunce
 That rightwisnesse and lechery
 Accorden nought in compaigny
 With him that hath the lawe on
 honde,

That may a man well understonde.
 As by a tale thou shalt wite
 Of olde ensample as it is write.

" At Rome whan that Appins,
 Whose other name was Claudin-,
 Was governour of the citee,
 There fell a wonder thing to se
 Touchend a gentil maide, as thus,
 Whom Livius Virginius
 Begeten had upon his wife.
 Men saiden, that so faire a life
 As she was nought in all the town.
 This fame, which goth up and
 down,

To Claudius came in his ere,
 Wherof his thought anone was there,
 But she stood upon mariâge.
 A worthy knight of great lighdge,
 llicius which thanne hight,
 Accorded in her faders sight
 Was that he shulde his doughter
 wedde.

But er the cause were fully spedde,
 Her fader, which in Romanie
 The leding of the chivalrie
 In governaunce hath undertake,
 Upon a werré which was take,
 Goth out with all the strength he
 hadde

Of men of armés which he ladde.
 So was the manage left

And stood upon accord till eft.

" The King, which herde telle of this,

How that this maide ordeined is
To mariagé, thought another,
And haddé thilke time a brother,
Which Marchus Claudius was hote,
And was a man of such riote
Right as the King him selvé was;

They two to-gider upon this cas
In counseil founden out the wey,
That Marchus Claudius shall sey
How she by wey of covenaut
To his service apurtenaut
Was hole, and to none other man.

And there upon he saith he can
In every point witnessé take,
So that she shall it nought forsake.¹

Whan that they haddén shapé so
After the lawe which was tho,
While that her fader was absent,
She was somonéd and assent²

To come in presence of the King,
And stood in answeere of this thing.
Her frendes wisten alle wele

That it was falshede every dele,
And comen to the Kinge and saiden
Upon the comun lawe and praiden

So as this noble worthy knight,
Her fader, for the comun right
In thilke time, as was befallé,

Lay for the profit of hem alle
Upon the wilde feldés armed,
That he ne shulde nought ben

harmed

Ne shamed while that he were out.
And thus they praiden all about.

"For all the clamour that he herde
The King upon his lust answeerde

And yaf hem only dalés two
Of respit. For he wende tho,
That in so short a time appere

Her fader might in no manere.
But as therof he was deceived.

¹ Forsake, deny.

² Assent sent for.

For Livius had all conceived
The purpos of the King to-fore,
So that to Rome ayein therfore
In allé hast he came ridénd
And left upon the feld liggend
His host till that he came ayein.
And thus this worthy capitain
Appereth redy at his day,
Where all that ever reson may
By lawe in audience he doth,
So that his doughter upon soth
Of that Marchus her had accused
He hath to-fore the Court excused.

" The King, which' sigh his purpos faile,

And that no sleighte might availe,
Incombred of his lusters blinde
The lawd torneth out of kinde,

And halfe in wrath as though it were
In presence of hem alls' there
Deceived of concupiscence

Yaf for his brother the sentence
And bad him that he shuldé sese
This maide and make him well at
ese.

But all within his own entent
He wist how that the causé went,
Of that his brother hath the wite

He was him selven for to wite.¹
But thus this maiden haddé wronge
Which was upon the King alonge,

But ayein him was none apele,
And that the fader wisté wele.
Wherof upon the tirannfe,

That for the lust of lecherie
His doughter shuldé be deceived,
And that Ilicius was weived

Untruly fro the maridge,
Right as a leon in his rage,
Which of no dredé set accompt

And not what pité shulde amount,
A naked swerde he pulléd out,
The which amongés all the rout

¹ Of that for which his brother had the blame he was himself to be held guilty.

He thresté through his daughters
side,

And all aloude thus he cride:

'Lo, take her there thou wrongfull
king,

For me is lever upon this thing

To be the fader of a maide,

Though she be dede, than if men
saide

That in her life she were shamed

And I therof were evil named.'

Tho bad the king men shulde areste

His body, but of thilké heste

Like to the chacéd wildd bore

The houndés whan he feleth sore

To-throweth and goth forth his wey,

In such a wisé for to sey

This worthy knight with swerd in
honde

His weié made, and they him wonde,¹

That none of hem his strokés kepte,

And thus upon his hors he lepte

And with his swerd droppend of
blood,

The which within his daughter stood,

He cam theas the power was

Of Rome and tolde hem all the cas

And saidhem, that they mighten lere

Upon the wronge of this matere,

That better it weré to redresse

At home the great unrightwisnesse,

Than for to werre in straunge place

And lese at home her owné grace.

For thus stant every mannés life

In jeopartié for his wife

And for his daughter if they be

Passénd an other of beaute.

Of this merveilé which they sigh

So apparaunt to-fore her eye,

Of that the king him hath misbore,

Her othés they have alte swore

That they woll stondé by the right.

And thus of one accorde upright

To Rome at onés home ayein

¹ Wonde, fear.

They torne and shortly for to sain

This tirannie cam to mouth,

And every man saith what he couth,

So that the prive trechery,

Which set was upon lechery,

Cam openly to mannés ere,

And that brought in the comun fere,

That every man the perill dradde

Of him that so hem overladde.

For they, or that¹ it worsé falle,

Through comun counseil of hem alle

They have her wrongful King de-
posed,

And hem in whom it was supposed

The counseil stood of his leding,

By lawe unto the dome they bring,

Where they receiven the penaunce

That longeth to such governaunce.

And thus thunchaste was chastised ;

Wherof they mighten ben avised

That sholden afterward governe,

And by this evidencé lerne

How it is good a Kinge eschue

The lust of vice and vertue sue.

To make an ende in this partie,

Which toucheth to the policie

Of chastete in speciáll,

As for conclusion finall

That every lust is to eschue

By great ensample I may argue,

Howe in Rages a town of Mede

There was a maide, and as I rede,

Sarra she hight, and Raguel

Her fader was. And so befell

Of body bothe and of visage

Was none so faire of the lignage

To seche among hem all, as she,

Wherof the riche of the citee

Of lusty folk, that couthen love,

Assoted were upon her love

And axen hire for to wedde.

One was which atté laste spedde,

But that was moré for liking

To have his lust than for weddfng,

¹ Or that, before.

As he within his herte caste,
Whiche him repenteth atté laste.
For so it fell the firste night,
That whan he was to beddé dight
As he which no thing God be-
secheth,

But all only his hastés secheth,
Asmod, which was a fend of helle
And serveth as the bokes telle
To tempte a man in such a wise,
Was redy there, and thilke emprise
Whiche he hath set upon delite
He vengeth than in such a plite
That he his neck hath writh atwo.
This yongé wife was sory tho,
Which wisté nothing what it ment.
And netheless yet thus it went
Nought only for this firsté man,
But after right as he began,
Six other of her husebondes
Asmod hath take into his hondes,
So that they all abedde deiede,
Whan they her hond toward her
leide,

Nought for the lawe of mariage,
But for that ilke fyry rage
In which that they the lawe excede.
For who that wolde taken hede
What after fell in this matere,
There might he well the sothé here
Whan she was wedded to Thobie,
And Raphael in compaigny
Hath taught him how to be honest.
Asmod wan nought at thilke fest,
And yet Thoby his willé hadde,
For he his lust so godely ladde
That bothe lawe and kinde is
served,

Wherof he hath him self preserved
That he fell nought in the sentence.
Of which an open evidence
By this ensample a man may se,
That whan liking in the degre
Of mariage may forswey,
Well ought him than in other wey

Of lust to be the better avised.
For God the lawés hath assised
As well to reson as to kinde,
But he the bestés woldé binde
Only to lawes of nature,
But to the mannes creature
God yaf him reson forth withall
Wherof that he nature shall
Upon the causes modify,
That he shall do no lechery,
And yet he shall his lustes have,
So ben the lawes bothé save
And everything put out of sclaunder,
As whilom to king Alisaundre
The wise philosophre taught,
Whan he his firste lore caught,
Nought only upon chastete,
But als upon alle honesté.
Wherof a King him self may taste,
How trewe, how large, how juste,
how chaste

Him ought of reson for to be
Forth with the vertue of pite.
Through which he may great thank
deserve

Toward his God, that he preserve
Him and his people in allé welthe
Of pees, richésse, honour and helthe
Here in this worlde and diés eke.

" My sone, as we to-foré speke
In shrifte, so as thou me saidest,
And forthin ese, asthoumepraideest,
Thy love throwes for to lisse,
That I the wolde telle and wisse
The forme of Aristotles lore,
I have it said, and somdele more
Of other ensamples to assaie
If I thy peines mighte alaie
Through any thing whiche I can
say."-

" Do wey, my fader, I you pray;
Of that ye have unto me tolde
I thonké you a thousand folde ;
The talés sounen in min ere,
But yet min herte is elles where ;

I may my selvé nought restreigne
 That I nam ever in lovés peine.
 Such lore couthe I never gete,
 Which mighte make me foryete
 O point, but if so were I slepte,
 That I my tides ayeine kepte
 To thenke of love and of his lawe,
 That herté can I nought with-
 drawe.

Forth my gode fader dere,
 Leve and speke of my matere
 Touchénd of Love as we begonne,
 If that there be ought over ronne
 Or ought foryete or left behinde

Which falleth unto Lovés kinde,
 Wherof it nedeth to be shrive,
 Now axeth, so that while I live
 I might amende that is amis."—

" My godé dere soné, yis.
 Thy shrifte for to maké plein,
 There is yet moré for to sain
 Of lové which is unavised.
 But for thou shalt be well avised
 Unto thy shrifte as it belongeth,
 A point which upon love hongeth
 And is the laste of allé tho,
 I woll the telle, and thanne 'ho."

1 Then slop,

BOOK VIII.

The mighty God. which unbegonne

Stant of him self and hath begonne
All other thinges at his will,
The heven him liste to fulfill
Of alle joie, where as he
Sit enthronized in his see
And hath his atmgels him to serve,
Such as him liketh to preserve
So that they mowe nought forswey,
But Lucifer he put away
With al the route apostazied
Of hem that ben to him allied,
Which out of heven into helle
From aungels into fendes felle,
Where that there is no joy of light,
But more derk than any night,
The peine shall ben endeless.
And yet of fires netheles
There is plente, but they ben blacke,
Wherof no sighte may be take.

" Thus whan the thinge's ben
befalle,
That Luciferes Court was falle
Where dedly pride hem hath con-
veied,
Anone forthwith it was purveied
Through him which alle thinges
may,
He made Adam the sixte day
In Paradise, and to his make
Him liketh Eve also to make
And bad hem cresce and multiply.

For of the mannes progeny
Which of the woman shall be bore,
The nombre of aungels which was
lore

Whan they out fro the blisse felle
He thoughte to restore, and fille
In heven thilke holy place
Which stood tho voide upon his
grace.

But as it is well wist and knowe,"
Adam and Eve but a throwe,
So as it shuld of hem betide,
In Paradise at thilke tide
Ne dwelten, and the causé why
Write in the boke of Genesy
As who saith alle men have herde,
How Raphael the firsywerde
In honde toke and drove hem out
To gete her lives food about
Upon this wofull erthe here.
Metodre saith to this matere,
As he by revelacion
It had upon avision
How that Adam and Eve also
Virginés comen bothé two
Into the world and were ashamed
Till that nature hath hem reclaimed
To love and taught hem thilke lore
That first they kiste and over more
They done that is to kindé due,
Wherof they hadden faire issue,
A sone was the firste of alle,
And Chaim by name they him calle.

Abel was after the secounde
 And in the geste as it is founde
 Nature so the causé ladde,
 Two doughters eke dame Eve hadde,
 The firsté clepéd Calmand
 Was, and that other Delbora.
 Thus was mankinde to beginne,
 Forth that time it was no sinne
 The suster for to take the brother,
 Whan that ther was of chois non
 other.

To Chaim was Calmand betake,
 And Delboram hath Abel take,
 In whom was gete netheles
 Of worldes folk the first encres.
 Men sain that nede hath no lawe,
 And so it was by thilké dawé
 And laste unto the seconde age,
 Till that the grete water rage
 Of Noe, which was said the flood,
 The world, which than in sinné stood,
 Hath dreint, out take livés eight.
 Tho was mankinde of litel weight.

Sem, Cam, Japhét, of thesé thre,
 That ben the sones of Noe,
 The worlde of mannes nation
 Intomultiplication
 Was tho restored new ayein
 So ferforth as these bokés sain,
 That of hem thre and her issue
 There was so large a retenue
 Of nations seventy and two,
 In sondry place eche one of tho
 The wide world have enhabited.
 But as nature hem hath excited,
 They token thanne litel hede
 The brother of the susterhede
 To weddé wivés, till it cam
 Into the time of Abraham,
 Whan the thridde agé was begonne,
 The nedé tho was overonne,
 For there was people inough in londe.
 Then atté first it came to honde,
 That susterhede of maridge
 Was torndé into cousinúge,

So that after the righte line
 The cousin weddeth the cousine.
 For Abraham er that he deied
 This charge upon his servaunt leied
 To him and in this wisé spake,
 That he his sane Isaac
 Do wedde for no worldés good,
 But only to his owne blood.
 Wherof the servaunt as he badde,
 Whan he was dede, his sone hath
 ladde

To Bathuel, where he Rebecke
 Hath wedded with the white necke.
 For she, he wisté well and sigh,
 Was to the childé cousin nigh.

"And thus as Abraham hath
 taught,

Whan Isaac was God betaught,
 His sone Jacob did also
 And of Laban the doughters two.
 Which was his eme,¹ he toke to wife
 And gate upon hem in his life,
 Of her firste' which highté Lie,
 Six sonés of his progenie,
 And of Rachel two sones eke ;
 The remenaunt was for to seke,
 This is to sain of founemo,
 Wherof he gate on Bala two
 And of Zelpha he had eke twey.
 And these twelve, as I the say,
 Through providence of God him
 selve

Ben said² the Patriarkes Twelve.
 Of whom as afterward befel
 The tribés twelf of Israel
 Engendred were, and ben the same,
 That of Hebrews tho hadden name,
 Which of sibred³ in aliaunce
 For ever kepten thilke usaunce
 Most comunly, till Crist was bore.
 But afterward it was forbore
 Among us that ben baptized.
 For of the lawe canonized

¹ Eme, uncle.

² Said, named.

³ Sibred, kindred.

The Pope hath bode to the men,
That none shall wedden of his kin
Ne the seconde ne the thriddé.
But though that Holy Chirche it
bidde,

So to restreigné maridge,
There ben yet upon lovés rage
Ful many of suche now a day,
That taken where they take may.
For love", whiche is unbesein
Of alle reson, as men sain,
Through sotie and through nicete
Of his voluptuosite
He spareth no condicion
Of kin ne yet religion.

My sone, thou shalt understonde,
That such delite is for to blame.
Forthy if thou hast be the same
To love in any such manere,
Tell forth therof and shrive the
here."—

"My fader, nay, God wot the
sothe,

My faire is nought in such a bothe,
So wilde a man yet was I never,
That of my kin, or leve or lever,
Me liste love in such a wise.

And eke I not for what emprise
I shulde assote upon a nonne,
For though I had her lové wonne
It might into no prise amounte,
So therof set I none accompte.
Ye may well axe of this and that,
But sothly for to tellé plat,
In all this world there is but one,
The which my herte hath over gone.
I am toward all other fre."—

"Full well, my soné, now I se
Thy word stant ever upon o place,
But yet therof thou hast a grace,
That thou the might so well excuse
Of lové, such as some men use,
So as I spake of now to-fore.
For all such time of love is lore,
And lich unto the bitter swete,

For though it thenke a man first
swete,

He shall well felen atté laste,
That it is soure and may noughtlaste.
For as a morcel envenfmed,
So hath such love his lust mistimed,
And great ensamples many one
A man may findé therupon.

"**At Rome first** if we begin,
There shal I find howe of this sin
An emperour was for to blame,
Gaius Caligula by name,
Which of his owne susters thre
Berefte the virginité,
And did hem out of londe exile.
But afterward within a while
God hath beraft him in his ire
His life, and eke his large empire.

"Of this sot also I finde
Amon his suster ayein kinde,
Which lighte Thamar, he forlay,
But he that lust another day
Aboughte, whan that Absolon
His owne brother there upon,
Of that he had his suster shent,
Toke of that sinnd vengenant
And slough him with his owne honde.
And thus thunkinde unkindé fonde.

"And for to se more of this thing
The bible maketh a knoueleching,
Wherof thou might take evidence
Upon the soth experience.
Whan Lothés wife was overgone
And shape unto the salte stone,
As it is spoke unto this day,
By both his daughters than he lay.
And so the cause about he ladde,
That eche of hem a sone hadde,
Moab the first and the secounde
Amon; of which as it is founde
Cam afterward to great encres
Two nati6ns. And nethelés
For that the stockés were ungood,
The braunches mighten nought ben
good.

For of the false Moabites
 Forth with the strength of Amonites,
 Of that they weren first misget,
 The people of God was ofte upset
 In Israel and in Judee,
 As in the bible a man may se.

"Lo thus, my sond, as I the say,
 Thou might thy servé be besay
 Of that thou hast of other herdc,
 For ever yet it hath so ferde,
 Of lovés lust if so befallé
 That it in other place falle
 Than it is of the lawd sette.
 He, which his love hath so besette
 Mote afterward repent him sore,
 And every man is others lore.
 Of that befell in time er this,
 The present time which now is
 May ben enformed how it stood,
 And take that him thenkéth good
 And leve that which is nought so.
 But for to loke of time ago,
 How lust of love excedeth lawe,
 It oughts' for to be withérawe.
 For every man it shulde drede
 And namélich in his sibrede,
 Which torneth ofte to vengeaunce,
 Wherof a tale in remembraunce,
 Which is a long process to here,
 I thanke for to tellen here.

Of a cronique in daiés gon,
 The which is cleped Panteon,
 In loves cause I rede thus,
 How that the great Antiochus,
 Of whom that Antioché toke
 His first name, as saith the boke,
 Was coupled to a noble quene,
 And had a daughter hem betwene.
 But such fortune cam to honde,
 That deth, which no kind may with-
 stonde

But every life it mote obey,
 This worthy quené toke away.
 The king, which maddmochel mone,
 Tho stood as who saith all him one

Without wife, but netheles
 His doughter which was perries
 Of beaute dwelt about him stille.
 But whan a man hath welth at wille
 The flesshe is frele and falleth ofte,
 And that this maidd tendreandsofte
 Whiche in her faders chambre
 dwelte

Within a time wist and felte,
 It helpeth nought all though she
 wepe,

For they that shulde her body kepe
 Of women were absent as than,
 And thus this maiden goth to man.
 The wilde fader thus devoureth
 His owne flessch, which none socou-
 reth,

And that was cause of mochel caie.
 But after this unkinde fare
 Out of the chambre goth the king.
 And she lay still and of this thing
 Within her self such sorwe made
 There was no wight, that might
 her glade,

For fere of thilke horrible vice.
 With that came inne the norice,
 Which fro childhodeherhaddekepté
 And axeth if she haddé slepte,
 And why her chere was unglad.
 But she, which hath ben overlad
 Of that she mighte nought bewreke,
 For shamé couth unethes speke.
 And netheles merey she praide
 With wepingeye and thus she saide:
 ' Helas, my suster, wailoway,
 That ever I sigh this ilke day.
 My wordes worship is berefte.'
 With that she swounethnowand efte
 And ever wisseth after deth,
 So that welnigh her lacketh breth.

" That other, which her worded
 herde,

In comforting of her answdrde.
 ' Whan thing is do, there is no bote.
 So suffren they that suffren mote.

There was none other, which it wist.¹
 Thus hath this king all that him list
 And such delite he toke there in,
 Him thoughté that it was no sin.
 And she durst him no thingwithsay.
 But Famé, which goth every way,
 To sondry regnes all aboute
 The greate beaute telleth oute
 Of such a maide of high pardge.
 So that for love of manage
 The worthy princes come and sende,
 As they the which all honour wende
 Andknewnothinghow that it stode.

" The fader whan he understode
 That they his doughter thus be-
 sought,

With all his wit he cast and sought
 How that he mighté finde a lette,
 And such a statute than he sette
 And in this wise his lawe taxeth,
 That what man that his doughter
 axeth,

But if he couthe his question
 Assoile¹ upon suggestion
 Of certain thingés that befelle,
 The which he wolde unto him telle,
 He shulde in certein lese his hede.
 And thus there weré many dede,
 Her hedes standing on the gate,
 Till atte laste long and late
 For lacke of answer in this wise
 The remenaunt that weren wise
 Escheueden to make assay.

" Till it befell upon a day
 Appollinus the prince of Tire,
 Which hath to love a great desire,
 A yonge, a fresh, a lusty knight,
 As he lay musing on a night
 Of the tidmgés, which he herde,
 He thought assay how that it ferde,
 He was with worthy compaignie
 Arraiéd and with good navie
 To ship he goth, the winde him
 driveth,

¹ Assoile, solve.

And saileth till that he arriveth
 Sauf in the porte of Antioche.

He londeth and goth to approche
 The kingés court and his presence.

" Of every natural science
 Whiche any clerké couth him teche
 He couth inough, and in his speche
 Of wordes he was eloquent.

And whan he sigh the king present,
 He praieth he mote his doughter
 have.

The king ayein began to crave
 And tolde him the condicidn,
 How first unto his question
 He mote answer and failé nought,
 Orwith his heved it shall be bought.
 And he him axeth, what it was.

" The king declareth him the cas
 With sterne loke and stordy chere,
 To him and said in this manere:

' With felony I am upbore,
 I ete, and have it nought forlore.
 My moders flesh, whose husbonde,
 My fader, for to seche I fonde,
 Which is the sone eke of my wife.
 Herof I am inquisitife.

And who that can my talé save
 Al quite he shall my doughter have.
 Of his answer and if he faile,

He shall be dede withoute faile.
 Forth my soné, quod the king,
 Be wel avisdd of this thing,

Which hath thy life in jeopartie.
 Appollinus for his partie

Whan he that question had herde,
 Unto the king he hath answeVde
 And hath reherced one and one
 The points and saidé therupon :

' The question, which thou hast
 spoke,

If thou wolt that it be unloke,
 It toucheth all the privete
 Betwene thin owne child and the
 And stant all hole upon you two.¹
 The king was wonder sory-tho

And thought, if that he said it out,
 Than were he shamed all about
 With slighe wordes and with felle
 He saith: ' Mysone, I shall the telle,
 Though that thou be of litel wit,
 It is no great merveile as yit,
 Thin age may it nought suffice.
 But loke wel thou nought despise
 Thin owne life, for of my grace
 Of thritty daies full a space
 I graunté the, to ben avised.'

" And thus with leve and time
 assised

This yongé princé forth he wente
 And understode wel what it mente.
 Within his herte as he was lered,
 That for to maken him afered
 The kinge his time hath so delaied,
 Wherof he drad and was amaied
 Of treson that he deie sholde
 For he the king his sothé tolde.
 And sodeinly the nightes tide,
 That more wolde he nought abide,
 Al privély his barge he hente
 And home ayein to Tire he wente.
 And in his owne wit he saide,
 For drede, if he the king bewraide
 He knew so wel the kinges herte
 That deth ne shulde he nought
 asterte,¹

The king him wolde so pursue.
 But he that wolde his deth escheue
 And knewe all this to-fore the honde,
 Forsake he thought his owné londe,
 That theré wolde he nought abide.
 For wel he knew that on some side
 This tiraunt of his felonie
 By some manere of trecherie
 To greve his body woll nought leve.

" Forthy withouten taking leve
 As privelich as ever he might
 He goth him to the see by night,
 Her shippes ben with wheté laden,
 Her takil redy tho they maden

• ¹ Asterte, escape.

And haleth sail and forth they fare.
 But for to tellen of the care,
 That they of Tire baren tho,
 Whan that they wist he was ago,
 It is a pité for to here.
 They losten lust, they losten chere,
 They toke upon hem such penaunce,
 There was no song, there was no
 daunce,

But every merthe and melody
 To hem was than a malady,
 For unlust of that aventure.
 Therewasnomanwhichtoketonsure,
 In dolfull clothes they hem clothe.
 The bathés and the stewes bothe
 They shetten in by every wey.
 There was no life which liste pley
 Ne take of any joie kepe,
 But for her lege lord to wepe,
 And every wight said as he couth:
 ' Helas, the lusty floure of youth,
 Ourprince, our heved ourgovernour,
 Through whom stonden in
 honour,

Withoute the comune assent,
 That sodeinly is fro us went!'
 Such was the clamour of hem alle.

" But se we now what is befallé
 Upon the firste tale pleine
 And torne we therto ayeine.

" Antiochus the grete sire,
 Which full of rancour and of ire
 His herte bereth so as ye herde
 Of that this prince of Tire answerde,
 He had a felow bachelor,
 Which was his prive counseiler
 And Taliart by name he hight.
 The king a strong pois6n him dight
 Within a buist¹ and gold therto,
 In allé haste and bad him go
 Straught unto Tire and for no cost
 Ne sparé till he haddé lost
 The princé which he woldé spill.²
 And whan the king hath said his will

¹ Buút, box. ² Spill, destroy.

This Taliart in a galey
 With all the haste he toke his wey.
 The wind was good, they saileth blive,
 Till he toke lond upon the rive
 Of Tire and forth with all anone
 Into the burgh he gan to gone
 And toke his inne and bodeath rowe.
 But for he wolde nought be knowe,
 Desguised than he goth him out.
 He sigh the weping all about
 And axeth, what the cause was.
 And they him tolden all the cas,
 How sodeinly the prince is go.
 And whan he sigh that it was so
 And that his labour was in veine
 Anone he torneth home ayeine
 And to the king whan he cam nigh
 He tolde of that he herde and sigh,
 How that the prince of Tire is fled,
 So was he come ayein unsped.
 The king was sory for a while
 But whan he sigh that with no wile
 He might acheve his cruelté,
 He stint his wrath and let him be.

"But over this now for to telle
 Of adventurés that befelle
 Unto this prince, of which I tolde,
 He hath his righté cours forth holde
 By stone and nedel till he cam
 To Tharse, and ther his londe he
 nam.

A bourgeois riche of golde and fee
 Was thilke time in that citee,
 Which clepéd was Strangulio,
 His wife was Dionise also.
 This yonge prince, as saith the boke,
 With him his herbergagé toke.
 And it befell that citee so
 Befóre time and than also
 Through strong famin whiche hem
 lad

Was none that any wheté had.
 Appollinus, whan that he herde
 The mischefe, how the citee ferde,
 All frelich of his owné yifte

His whete among hem for to shifte,
 The which by ship he haddé brought,
 He yave, and toke of hem right
 nought.

But sithen first this world began,
 Was never yet to such a man
 More joie made, than they him made.
 For they were all of him so glade
 That they for ever in remembraunce
 Made a figure in resemblaunce
 Of him and in a comun place
 They set it up, so that his face
 Alight every maner man beholde
 So as the citee was beholde,
 It was of laton¹ over gilt.
 Thus hath he nought his yifte spilt.

"Upon a time with a route
 This lord to pleie goth him oute
 And in his way of Tire he mette
 Aman, which on his knees him grette,
 And Hellican by name he hight,
 Which praide his lord to have in-
 sight

Upon him self and said him thus,
 How that the great Antiochus
 Awaiteth if he might him spille.
 That other thought and helde him
 stille

And thonked him of his warning
 And bad him telle no tiding,
 Whan he to Tire cam home ayeine,
 That he in Tharse him haddé seine.

"Fortune hath ever be mudble
 And may no whilé stondé stable.
 For now it higheth, now it loweth,
 Now stant upright, now over-
 throweth,

Now full of bliss and now of bale,
 As in the telling of my tale
 Here afterward a man may lere,
 Which is great routhé for to here.

"This lord, which woldé done
 his best,

¹ *Laton*, latten, an alloy of copper with tin ;
 the material of ancient church brasses.

Within him self hath litel rest
And thought he wolde his place
chaunge

And seke a centré moré straunge.
Of Tharsiens his leve anone
He toke and is to shippé gone.
Hiscourshenamwith saileupdrawe,
Where as Fortuné doth the lawe
And sheweth as I shall reherce
How she was to this lord diverse,
The which upon the see sheferketh.¹
The winde aros, the wether derketh,
It blew and madé such tempest,
None anker may the ship arest,
Which hath to-broken all his gere.
The shipmen stood in such a fere,
Was none that might him self
bestere,

But ever awaite upon the lere²
Whan that they sholden drenche
at ones.

There was inough within the wones
Of weping and of sorwe tho.

The yonge king maketh mochel wo
So for to se the ship travaille,
But all that might him nought availe,
The mast to-brake, the sail to-rofe,³
The ship upon the wawés drofe,
Till that they se the londes coste,
Tho madeavowthe leste and moste,
Be so they mighten come a londe.
But he which hath the se on honde,
Neptunus, woldé nought accorde,
But all to-brake cable and corde,
Er they to londé mighte approche.
The ship to-clef upon a roche
And all goth down into the depe.
But he that allé thing may kepe
Unto this lord was mercidble
And brought him sauf upon a table⁴
Which to the londe him hath upbore,
The remenaunt was all forlore.
Herof he made mochel mone.

¹ *Ferketh*, hastens. ² wait to learn.

³ *To-rofe*, was riven to shreds.

⁴ *Table*, plank.

"Thuswas this yongé lorde alone
All naked in a pouer plite.

His colour which was whilom white
Was than of water fade and pale,
And eke he was so sore a cale,¹
That he wist of him self no bote,²
It helpe him no thing for to mote²
To gete ayein that he hath lore.
But she which hath his dethforbore,
Fortune, though she woll nought
yelpé,³

All sodeinly hath sent him helpe
Whan him thought allé grace away.
There came a fissher in the wey
And sigh a man there naked stonde.
And whan that he hath understonde
The cause, he hath of him great
routh

And onlich of his pouér trouth
Of suché clothes as he hadde
With great pité this lord he cladde.
And he him thonketh as he sholde
And saithhimthat it shall be yolde,⁴
If ever he gete his state ayein,
And praieth, that he wolde him sain
If nigh were any town for him.
He saidd : ' Ye, Pentopolim,
Where bothé king and queue
dwellen.'

Whan he this tale herde tellen,
He gladdeth him and gan beseche,
That he the wey him woldd teche.
And he him taught. And forth he
went

And praidé God with good entent
To sende him joy after his sorwe.

" It was nought passed yet miel-
morwe,⁵

Than thidenvard his wey he nam,
Where soneupon the none he cam.
He ete such as he might gete,
And forth anone whan he had etc,

¹ *A cale*, a cold.

³ *Yelpt*, boast.

² *Mote*, sue.

⁴ *Yoldei* repaid.

⁵ *Midmonve*, halfway between sunrise and noon,

He goth to se the town about,
 And cam there as he found a rout
 Of yonge lusty men withall.
 And as it shulde tho befall,
 That day was set of such assise,
 That they shulde in the londes gise
 As he herde of the people say
 Her comun game thanné pley.
 And criéd was, that they shuld come
 Unto the games all and some
 Of hem that ben deliver¹ and wight
 To do such maistry as they might.
 They made hem naked as they
 sholde,

For so that ilké game wolde
 And it was tho custume and use,
 Amonge"s hem was no refuse.
 The floure of all the town was there
 And of the court also there were,
 And that was in a largé place
 Right even before the lungés face,
 Whiche Artestrates thanné hight.
 The pley was pleied right in his sight,
 And who most worthy was of dede
 Receive he shulde a certain mede
 And in the citee bere a price.

"Appollinus which ware and wise
 Of every gamé couth an ende,
 He thought assay how so it wende.
 And fell among hem into game,
 And there he wanne him such a
 name,

So as the king him self accompteth,
 That he all other men surmounteth
 And bare the prise above hem alle.
 The king bad that into his halle
 At souper time he shall be brought.
 And he cam than and lefte it nought,
 Withouté campaign alone.
 Was none so semelich of persone,
 Of visage and of limmés bothe,
 If that he haddé what to clothe.
 At souper time netheles

The king amiddes all the pres
 Let clepe him up amonge hem alle
 And bad his mareshall of his halle
 To setten him in such dégré
 That he upon him mighté se.
 The king was soné sette and served,
 And he which had his prise deserved
 After the kingés owné worde,
 Was made begin a middel borde
 That bothé king and quene him sigh.
 He sette and cast about his eye,
 And sigh the lordes in estate
 And with him self wax in debate
 Thenkénd of what he hadde lore,
 And such a sorwe he toke therfore,
 That he sat ever still and thought,
 As he which of no meté rought.

"The king behelde his hevinesse
 And of his grete gentillesse
 His doughter which was faire and
 good

And atte bord before him stood,
 As it was thilké time usdge,
 He bad to go on his message
 And foundé¹ for to make him glad.
 And she did as her fader bad
 And goth to him the softé pas
 And axeth whenne and what he was,
 And praith he shulde his thoughts
 leve.

"Hesaith: 'Madame, by your leve.
 My name is hote Appolhnus,
 And of my richessé it is thus,
 Upon the see I have it lore.
 The contré where as I was bore,
 Where that my lond is and my rente,
 I lefte at Tíre whan that I wente,
 The worship there of which I ought
 Unto the God I there betought.'
 And thus to-gider as they two speke,
 The tarés ran down by his cheke.
 The king, which therof toke good
 kepe,

Had great pite to se him wepe

¹ Deliver, supple. Chaucer's Squire was
 "wondeily deliver and grete of strength."

And for his doughter send ayein
 And praid her faire and gan to sain
 That she no lenger woldé drecche,¹
 But that she wolde anone forth
 fecche

Her harpe and done all that she can
 To gladdé with that sory man.
 And she to done her faders hest
 Her harpe set and in the feste
 Upon a chare which they sette
 Her self next to this man she sette.
 With harpé both and eke with
 mouthe

To him she did all that she couthe
 To make him chere, and ever he
 siketh,

And she him axeth how him liketh.

'Madamé, certés well,' he saide,
 'But if ye the mesuré plaide
 Which, if you list, I shall you lere,
 It were a glad thing for to here.'

'Ha, leve sire,' tho quod she,
 'Now take the harpe and let me se,
 Of what mesuré that ye mene.'

"Tho praith the king, tho praith
 the quene,

Forth with the lordés all arewe,
 That he some merthé woldé shewe.
 He taketh the harpe and in his wise
 He temprerth, and of suche assise
 Singend he harpeth forth withall
 That as a vois celestiall
 Hem thought it sounéd in her ere,
 As though that he an aungel were.
 They gladen of his melody,
 But most of all the company
 The kingés doughter, which it herde,
 And thought eke of that heanswerde
 Whan that it was of her apposed,
 Within her hert hath well supposed
 That he is of great gentillesse;
 His dedés ben therof witnesse
 Forth with the wisdome of his lore,
 It nedeth nought to seché more.

¹ *Drecche*, delay.

He might nought have such manere,
 Of gentil blood but if he were.
 Whan he hath harped all his fill
 The kingés hesté to fulfill,
 Away goth dish, away goth cup,
 Down goth the bord, the cloth was
 up,

They risen and gone out of halle.

"The king his chamberlein let
 calle

And bad, that he by alle wey
 A chambre for this man purvey,
 Which nigh his owne chambre be.
 'It shall be do, my lord,' quod he.

"Appollinus, of whom I mene,
 Tho toke his leve of king and quene
 And of the worthy maide also,
 Which praid unto her fader tho,
 That she might of the yongé man
 Of tho sciences which he can,
 His loré have. And in this wise
 The king her graunteth his apprise,
 So that him self therto assent.

Thus was accorded er they went
 That he with all that ever he may
 This yonge fairé freshe may¹
 Of that he couthe shulde enforme.
 And ful assented in this forme
 They token leve as for that night.

"And whan it was on morweright,
 Unto this yonge man of Tere
 Of clothes and of good attire
 With gold and silver to despende
 This worthy yonge lady sende.
 And thus she made him well at ese,
 And he with all that he can plesse
 Her serveth well and faire ayeine.
 He taught her till she was certeine
 Of harpd, citole and of riote²
 With many a tune and many a note,
 Upon musfque, upon mesure,
 And of her harpe the temprure

¹ *May*, maid.

² *Citole*, a stringed instrument played with the fingers; *riote* rote, three-stringed fiddle played with a bow.

He taught her eke, as he well couth.
But as men sain that frele is youth,
With leiser and continuaunce,
This maide fell upon a chaunce,
That love hath made him a quarele
Ayeine her youthe fresh and frele,
That malgre where¹ she wold or
nought,

She mot with all her hertes thought
To love and to his lawe obey.
And that she shall full sore abey,
For she wot never what it is.

But ever among she feleth this,
Thenkend upon this man of Tire,
Her herte is hote as any fire,
And otherwise it is acale.²

Now is she red, now is she pale
Right after the condition
Of her ymagination.

But ever among her thoughtés alle,
She thoughte, what so may befallé,
Or that she laugh, or that she wepe,
She wolde her gode name kepe
For fere of womanisshé shame.

But what in ernest, what in game,
She stant for love in such a plite
That she hath lost all appetite
Of mete and drinke, of nightes rest,
As she that not³ what is the best.
But for to thenken all her fille
She helde her ofte tímés stille
Within her chambre and goth
nought out.

The king was of her life in doubt,
Which wisté nothing what it ment.

" But fell a time, as he out went
To walke, of princes sones thre
There came and felle to his knee,
And eche of hem in sondry wise
Besought and profreth his service,
So that he might his daughter have.
The king, which wold her honour
save,

¹ *Where*, whether.

² *Acóle*, acold.

³ *Not*, knows not.

Saith, she is sike, and of that speche
Tho was no time to beseche,
But eche of hem to make a bille
He bad and write his owne wille,
His name, his fader and his good.
And whan she wist how that it stood,
And had her billes oversein,
They shulden have answeere ayein.
Of this counseil they weren glad
And writen as the king hem bad,
And every man his owne boke
Into the king's hond betoke.
And he it to his doughter sende
And praide her for to make an ende
And write ayein her owne honde,
Right as she in her herte fonde.

"The billes weren well received,
But she hath all her loves weived
And thoughte tho was time and space
To put her in her faders grace
And wrote ayein and thus she saide:.

' The shame which is in a maide
With speche dare nought beunloke,
But in writing it may be spoke.
So write I to you, fader, thus,
But if I have Appollinus,
Of all this world what so betide
I woll non other man abide.

And certes if I of him faile
I wot right well withoute faile
Ye shull for me be doughterles.'
This letter came, and there was pres
To-fore the king there as he stode.
And whan that he it understode,
He yave hem answeere by and by.
But that was done so prively,
That none of others counseil wiste.
They toke her leve, and where hem
liste,

They wente forth upon her wey. .

" The king ne wolde nought
bewrey

The counseil for no maner high,¹
But suffreth till he time sigh.

¹ *Hight* for hie, haste.

And whan that he to chambre is
come,

He hath unto his counseil nome
This man of Tire and lete him se
The letter, and all the privete
The which hisdoughter tohimsente.
And he his kne to grounde bente
And thonketh him and her also.
And er they wenten than a two
With good herte and with good
corage

Of full love and full mariage
The kingeand heben holeaccorded.
And after, whan it was recorded
Unto the doughter how it stood,
The yifte of all this worlde's good
Ne shuld have made her half so
blithe,

And forth withallthekingealsswithe,
For he woll have her good assent,
Hath for the quene her moder sent.
The quene is come, and whan she
herde

Of this matere how that it ferde,
She sigh debate she sigh dise
But if she wolde her doughter plese,
And is therto assented ful,
Whiche is a dede wonderful,
For no man knew the sothe cas,
But he him self, what man he was.
And netheles so as hem thought
His dede's to the sothe wrought,
That he was come of gentil blood,
Him lacketh nought but worlde's
good,

And as therof is no despeire,
For she shall be her faders heire
And he was able to governe,
Thuswoll theynoughtthelovewerne¹
Of him and hire by no wise,
But all accorded they devise
The day and time of mariage,
Where love is lorde of the corage.
Him thenketh longe er that he spede,

¹ Werne, forbid

But atté laste unto the dede
The time is come, and in her wise
With great offrénd and sacrifice
They wedde and make a riche fest,
And every thing was right honest
Withinné hous and eke without.
It was so done, that all about
Of great worship and great noblesse
There cried many a man largesse
Unto the lordés high and loude.
The knightes, that ben yonge and
proude,

They jeste¹ first and after daunce.
The day is go, the nightés chaunce
Hath derked all the brighte sonne.
This lord hath thus his lové wonne.

" Now have I tolde of the spou-
sailes.

But for to speke of the merveiles,
Which afterward to hem befelle,
It is a wonder for to telle.

" It fell a day they riden out
Thekingeandquene and all the rout
To pleidn hem upon the stronde,
Where as they seen toward the londe
A ship saildnd of great array;
To knowé what it mene may,
Till it be come they abide.

Than se they stonde on every side
Endlong the shippés bord to shewe
Of penouncels a riche rewe.
Theyaxen whenne the ship is come.
Fro Tire, anone answerde some.
And over this they saiden more
The causé why they comen fore
Was for to seche and for to finde
Appollinus, which is of kinde
Her lege lord. And he appereth
And of the talé which he hereth
He was rightglad, fortheyhim tolde,
That for vengeaunce, as God it wolde,
Antiochus as men may wite
With thunder and lightning is for-
smite.

¹ Jeste joust,

His daughter hath the same chaunce.
 So be they both in o balaunce,
 Forth, our lege lord, we say
 In name of all the lond and pray,
 That left all other thing to done
 It like you to come sone
 And se your owné lege men
 With other that ben of your ken
 That live in longing and desire
 Till ye be come ayein to Tire.
 This tale after the king it had
 Pentapolim all oversprad.
 There was no joie for to seche,
 For every man it had in speche
 And saiden all of one accorde :
 'A worthy king shall ben our lorde;
 That thought us first an hevinesse
 Is shape us now to great gladnéssc.'
 Thus goth the tiding over all.

"But nede he mot that nede shall.
 Appollinus his leve toke,
 To God and all the lond betoke¹
 With all the people longe and brode,
 That he no lenger there abode.

"The king and quene sorwe made,
 But yet somdele they weren glade
 Of such thing as they herden tho.
 And thus betwene the wele and wo
 To ship he goth, his wifewith childe,
 The which was ever meke and milde
 And wolde nought departe him fro,
 Such lové was betwene hem two.
 Lichorida for her office
 Was take, which was a norice,
 To wende with this yonge wife,
 To whom was shape a wofull life.
 Within a time, as it betid,
 Whan they were in the see amid,
 Out of the north they sigh a cioude,
 The storme aros, the windés loude
 They blewen many a dredefull blast,
 The welken was all overcast.
 The derke night the sonne hath
 under,

¹ *Betok* Betoke, commended, entrusted.

There was a great tempest of
 thunder.

The mone and eke the sterrés bothe
 In blacke cloudes they hem clothe,
 Wherof her bright loke they hide.
 This yongé lady wept and cride
 To whom no comfort might availe,
 Of childe she began travaile
 Where she lay in a caban close.
 Her wofull lord fro her arose,
 And that was long er any morwe,
 So that in anguish and in sorwe
 She was delivered all by night
 And deiede in every mannés sight.

"But netheles for all this wo
 A maide child was boré tho.

"Appollinus whan he this knewe,
 For sorwe a swoune he overthrewe
 That no man wist in him no life.
 And whan he woke, he saide: 'Ha,
 wife,

My joy, my lust and my desire,
 My welth and my recoverire,
 Why shall I live, and thoushaltdeie?
 Ha, thou Fortune, I the defie,
 Now hast thou do to me thy werst.
 Ha, herté, why ne wolt thou berst,
 That forth with her I mighte passe?
 My paines were well the lasse.
 In such weping and suché crie
 His dede wife which lay him by
 A thousand sithés he her kiste,
 Was never man that sigh ne wiste
 A sorwe to his sorwe liche,
 Was ever among upon the liche.¹
 He fell swounende as he that thought
 His owne deth, which he besought
 Unto the goddes all above
 With many a pitous word of love.
 But suche wordes as tho were '
 Yet herdé never marinés ere,
 But only thilke which he saide.
 The maister shipman came and
 praide

¹ *The lliche*, the body (of his dead wife).

With other such as ben therinne,
 And sain that he may nothing winne
 Ayein the deth, but they him rede
 He be well ware and také hede,
 The see by wey of his nature
 Receive may no creature
 Within him self as for to holde
 The which is dede. Forthy they
 wolde,

As they counseflen all about,
 The dede body casten out.
 For better it is, they saiden all,
 That it of hird so befall,
 Than if they shulden allé spille.

"The king, which understode
 her will

And knew her conseil that was
 trewe,

Began ayein his sorwe newe
 With pitous hert and thus to say:
 'It is all reson that ye pray.

I am,' quod he, 'but one alone,
 So wolde I nought for my persone
 There felle such adversite.

But whan it may no better be
 Doth thannd thus upon my worde,
 Let make a coffre stronge of borde,
 That it be firm with led and piche.'
 Anone was made a coffre siche

All redy brought unto his honde.
 And whan he sighe and redy fonde
 This coffre made and well englued,
 The dede body was besewed

In cloth of gold and laid therinne.
 And for he wolde unto her winne
 Upon some coste¹ a sepulture,
 Under her heved in adventure
 Of gold he laidd sommes great
 And of juels a strong beyete
 Forth with a letter, and said thus :

'I, king of Tire, Appollinus
 Doth allé maner men to wite,
 That here and se this letter write,
 That helpeles withoute rede

Here lith a kingés doughter dede,
 And who that hapneth her to finde
 For charité take in his minde
 And do so that she be begrave
 With this tres6r which he shal have.'

" Thus whan the letter was full
 spoke,

They have anone the coffre stoke
 And bounden it with iron faste,
 That it may with the wawes laste,
 And stoppen it by such a wey
 That it shall be withinne drey,
 So that no water might it greve.
 And thus in hope and good beleve
 Of that the corps shall well arrive,
 They cast it over borde as blive.

" The ship forth on the wawes
 went.

The prince hath chaunged his entent,
 And saith, he woll nought come at
 Tire

As thanne, but all his desire
 Is first to sailen unto Tharse.

The windy storm began to scarce,
 The sonne arist, the weder clereth,
 The shipman which behinde stereth,
 Whan that the sigh the windéssaught,
 Towardés Tharse his cours he
 straught.

" But now to my matere ayein,
 To telle as olde bokés sain
 This dede corps of which ye knowe
 With winde and water was forth
 throwe,

Now here, now there, till atte last
 At Ephesim the see upcast
 The coffre and all that was therinne.
 Of great merveile now beginne
 May here who that sitteth still.
 That God woll save may nought spill.
 Right as the corps was throwe a
 londe,

There cam walkend upon the stronde
 A worthy clerke and surgien
 And eke a great phisicien,

1 Coste, coast.

Of all that lond the wisest one,
Which highte maister Cerimon.
There were of his disciples some.
This maister is to the coffre come,
He peiseth there was somewhat in
And had hem here it to his inne,
And goth him selvé forth with all.
All that shall falte, falte shall.

"They comen home and tarie
nought.

This coffre into his chambre is
brought,

Which that they findé faste stoke,
But they with craft it have unloke.
They loken in, whereas they founde,
A body dede, which was iwounde
In cloth of gold, as I said ere.
The tresor eke they founden there
Forthwith the letter, which they rede.
And tho they token better hede.

Unsowed was the body sone,
As he that knewe what was to done,
This noble clerk with alle haste
Began the veinés for to taste.¹

And sigh her agé was of youthe;
And with the craftés which he
couthe

He sought and found a signe of life.
With that this worthy kinges wife
Honestely they token out
And maden firés all about.

They laid her on a couché softe,
And with a sheté warmed ofte
Her coldé brest began to hete,
Her herte also to flacke² and bete.
This maister hath her every jointe
With certain oil and balsmeointe,
And put a liquour in her mouthe
Which is to fewé clerkes couthe,
So that she covereth atte³ laste.

And first her eyen up she caste,
And whan she more of strengthe
caught,

Her armés bothe forth she straught,

1 Taste, try by touch.

2 Flacke, flutter.

Held up her hond and pitousty
She spake and saidd: 'Where am I?
Where is my lord, what world is
this?'

As she that wot nought how it is.
But Cerimon that worthy leche
Answerde anone upon her speche
And said: 'Madame, ye ben here,
Where ye be sauf, as ye shall here
Hereafterward, forth as now
My counseil is, comftftrteth you.
For tristeth wel, without faile,
There is no thing which shall you
faile,

That ought of reson to be do.'
Thus passen they a day or two;
They speke of nought as foranende,
Till she began somdele amende,
And wist her selven what she mente.

"Tho for to knowe her hole
entente

This maister axeth all the cas,
How she cam there, and what she
was.

'How I came here, wote I nought,'
Quod she, 'but wel I am bethought
Of other thingés all about
Fropoint to point, and tolde him out
Als ferforthly as she it wiste.

And he her tolde how in a kiste
The see her threwe upon the londe,
And what tresor with her he fonde,
Which was all redy at her vill,
As he that shope him to fulfill
With al his might what thing he
shuld.

She thonketh him that he so wolde,
And all her herté she discloseth
And saith him well that she sup-
poseth,

Her lord be dreint, her childe also.
So sigh she nought but alte wo.
Wherof as to the world no more
Ne woll she torne and praieth ther-
fore,

That in some temple of the citee
To kepe and holde her chasteté
She might among the women dwelle.
Whan he this talé herdé telle
He was right glad, and made her
known

That he a doughter of his owen
Hath, which he woll unto her yive
To servé while they bothé live,
In stede of that which she hath loste;
All only at his owne coste
She shall be rendred forth with her.
She saith, ' Graunt mercy, leve sir,
God quite it you, there I ne may.'
And thus they drivé forth the day
Till timé cam that she was hole.
And tho they take her counseil hole
To shape upon good ordenaunce
And make a worthy purveaunce
Ayein the day whan they be veiled.
And thus whan that they were
counselled,

In blacke clothes they hem clothe
This lady and the doughter bothe
And yolde hem to religion.
The feste and the professidn
After the reule of that degrd
Was made with great solempnité,
Where as Diane is sanctified.
Thus stant this lady justified
In ordre where she thenketh to
dwelle.

" But now ayeinward for to telle,
In what plite that her lord stood inne.
He saileth till that he may winne
The haven of Tharse, as I saide ere.
And whan he was arrived there,
Tho it was through the cité knowe,
Men mighté se within a throwe
As who saith all the towne at ones.
They come ayein him for the nones
To yiven him the reverence,
So glad they were of his presence.
And though he were in his corage
Diseséd, yet with glad visdge

He made hemchere and to his inne,
Where he whilom sojourned in,
He goth him straught and was
received.

And whan the press of people is
weived,

He taketh his host unto him tho
And saith, ' My frend Strangulio,
Lo thus and thus it is befallé.
And thou thy self art one of alle,
Forth with thy wife, which I most
trist,

Forthf if it you bothé list,
My doughter Thaisé by your leve
I thenké shall with you beleve
As for a time, and thus I pray
That she be kept by allé way,
And whan she hath of agé more,
That she be set to bokes lore.
And this avow to God I make,
That I shall never for her sake
My berdé for no liking shave
Till it befallé that I have
In covendble time of age
Besette her unto maridghe.

"Thus they accorde, and all is
well.

And for to resten him somdele
Yet for a while he ther sojorneth,
And than he taketh his leve and
torneth

To ship and goth him home to Tire,
Where every man with great desire
Awaiteth upon his coming.
But whan the ship cam in sailing
And they perceiven it is he,
Was never yet in no citee
Such joid made, as they tho made.
His hert also began to glade
Of that he seeth his people glad.
Lo, thus Fortune his hap hath lad,
In sondry wise he was travailed.
But how so ever he be assailed,
His latter endé shall be good.

"And for to speke how that it stood

Of Thaise his donghter, wher she dwelleth,

In Tharse as the croniqué telleth
She was well kept, she was welllooked,
She was wel taught, she was wel boked,

So well she sped her in her youth
That she of every wisdom couth,
That for to seche in every londe
So wise an other no man fonde
Ne so well taught at mannés eye.
But wo worth ever false envý.

For it befell that timé so,
A daughter hath Strangulio,
The which was cleped Philotenne.
But Famé, which woll ever renne,
Came all day to her moders ere
And saith, wher ever her daughter were

With Thaise set in any place
The comunvoisthe commungrace
Was all upon that other maide,
And of her daughter no man saide.
Who was wroth but Dionise than?
Her thought a thousand yere till whan

She mighte be of Thaise wreke
Of that she herde folk so speke.
And fell that ilke same tide,
That dede was trewe Lichoride
Whiche hadde be servaunt to Thaise,

So that she was the wors at ese.
For she hath thanné no servise
But onely through this Dionfse
Which was her dedlich enemy.
Through puré treson and envy
She that of allé sorwe can
Tho spake unto her bonésman
Which clepéd was Theophilus
And made him swere in counseil thus,

That he such time as she him set
Shall come Thaisé for to fet
And lede her out of allé sight

Where that no man her helpe might
Upon the strondé nigh the see,
And there he shall this maiden slee.
This cherlés hert is in a traunce,
As he which drad him of vengeance
Whan time comth an other day.
But yet durst he nought said nay,
But swore and said he shall fulfill
Her hestés at her owné will.

"The treson and the time is shape,
So fell it that this cherlish knape¹
Hath lad this maiden where he wold
Upon the stronde, and what she sholde

She was adrad, and he out braide
A rusty swerde and to her saide:
'Thou shalt be dede.' 'Alas,'
quod she,

'Why shall I so?' 'Lo thus,' quod he,
'My lady Dionise hath bede,
Thou shalt be murdred in this stede.'
This maiden tho for feré shrighte
And for the love of God Allmighte
She praith that for a litel stounde
She mighte knele upon the grounde
Toward the heven for to crave,
Her wofull sotile if she may save.
And with this noise and with this cry,
Out of a barge fasté by,
Which hid was there on scomer-fare,"
Men sterten out and weren ware
Of this felon, and he to go,
And she began to crié tho,
'Ha, mercy, help for Goddes sake,'
Into the barge they her take,
As the vésshulde, and forth they went.
Upon the see the wind hem hent
And malgre where they wolde or none
To-fore the weder forth they gone,
There halp no sail there halp none ore
For storméd and forblown sore

¹ *Knappe*, *lad*.

¹³ *Scomer-fare*, ?for lying in wait in creeks from some word having its root in *sca* or *sen*, to cover and conceal, whence *skua*, *sceddo*, shadow.?

In great peril so forth they drive,
Till atte laste they arrive
At Miteléne the citee.
In haven sauf and whan they be
The maister shipman made him
boun¹

And goth him out into the towne
And profreth Thaise for to selle.
One Leonin it herde telle,
Which maister of the bordel was,
And bad him gon a redy pas
To fecchen her, and forth he went
And Thaise out of his barge he hent
And solde her to the bordel tho.
No wonder is though she be wo
Clos in a chambre by her self.
Eche after other ten or twelf
Of yongé men in to her went.
But suche a grace God her sent,
That for the sorwe which she made,
Was none of hem which power had
To done her any vilainy.

" This Leonin let ever aspy
And waiteth after great beyetc,
But all for nought, she was forlete,
That no man woldé there come.
Whan he therof hath hede nome
He sent his man, but so it ferde,
Whan he her wofull pleintes herde
And he therof hath také kepe,
Him listé better for to wepe
Than don ought elles to the game.
And thus she kepte her selffro shame
And kneted down to therthe and
praide

Unto this man and thus she saide :

' If so be, that thy maister wolde
That I his gold encresé sholde
It may nought fallé by this wey,
But suffre me to go my wey
Out of this hous where I am in,
And I shall make him for to win
In some place diés of the town,
Be so it be of religioun,

1 Bouné, ready.

Where that honésté women dwelle.
And thus thou might thy maister
telle,

That whan I have a chambre there
Let him do cry ay wide where,
What lord that hath his doughter
dere

And is in will that she shall lere
Of such a scold that is tiewe,
I shall her teche of thinges newe
Whiche as none other woman can
In all this londe.' And tho this man
Her tale hath herde he goth ayein
And tolde unto his maister plein,
That she hath saide. Andtherupon,
Whan that he sigh beyeté none
At the borddi because of hire,
He bad his man to gon and spire
A place where she might abide,
That he may winne upon some side
By that she can. But atté lest
Thus was she sauf of this tempest.

" He hath her fro the bordel take,
But that was nought for Goddes
sake,

But for the lucre, as she him tolde.
Now comen tho that comen wolde,
Of women in her lusty youth
To here and sewhat thing she couth.
She can the wisdomé of a clerke,
She can of any lusty werke
Which to a gentil woman longeth.
And some of hem she underfongeth
To the citole and to the harpe,
And whom it liketh for to carpe
Proverbes and demaundés sligh
An other such they never sigh
Which that sciencé so well taught,
Wherof she grete yiftés caught,
That she to Leonin hath wonne.
And thus her name is so begonne
Of sondry thingés that she techeth,
That all the londé to her secheth
Of yongé women for to lere.

" Now lette we this maiden here

And speke of Dionise ayeine
 And of Theophile the vilaine
 Of which I spake of now to-fore,
 Whan Thaise shulde havebeforlore.
 This falsé cherle to his lad
 Whan he cam home all prively.
 He saith, 'Madame, slain I have
 This maide Thaise, and is begrave
 In prive place, as ye mé bede.
 Forthy, madame, taketh hede
 And kepe counseil, how so it
 sonde.'

This fend, which hath this under-
 sonde,
 Was glad and weneth it be soth.
 Now herke, hereafter how she doth.
 She wepeth, she sorweth, she com-
 pleigneth,
 And of sikeness which she feigneth,
 She saith, that Thaisé sodeinly
 By night is dede, as she and I
 To-gider lien nigh my lorde.
 She was a woman of recorde,
 And all is leved that she saith.
 And for to yive a moré feith,
 Her husébonde and eke she bothe
 In blacke clothes they hem clothe,
 And make a great enterrement.
 And for the people shall be blent
 Of Thaise as for the remembraunce,
 After the real¹ olde usaunce
 A tumbe of laton noble and riche
 With an ymâge unto her liche
 Liggénd abové therupon
 They made and set it up anon.
 Her epitaphe of good assise
 Was write about, and in this wise
 It spake: 'O ye, that this beholde,
 Lo, here lieth she, the which was
 holde

The fairest and the floure of alle,
 Whose namé Thaisis men calle.
 The king of Tire Appollinus
 Her fader was, now lieth she thus.

1 Real, regal.

Fourtene yere she was of age,
 Whan deth her toke to his viage.'

Thus was this falsé treson hid,
 Which afterward was widé kid,
 As by the tale a man shall here.
 But to declare my matere
 To Tire I thanké torne ayein
 And telle as the cronfqués sain.
 Whan that the king was comen home
 And hath left in the saké fome
 His wife which he may nought
 foryete,

For he some comfort woldé gete
 He let sommone a parldment,
 To which the lordes were assent.¹
 And of the time he hath ben out,
 He seeth the thingés all about;
 And toldehemeke, how he hath fare,
 While he was out of londé fare,
 And praide hem alle to abide,
 For he wolde at the samé tide
 Do shape for his wivés minde² -
 As he that woll nought ben unkinde.
 Solempné was that ilke office,
 And riche was the sacrifice,
 The festé redlly³ was holde.
 And therto was he well beholde:
 For suche a wife as he had one
 In thilké daiés was there none.

" Whan this was done, than he
 him thought

Upon his doughter, and besought
 Such of his lordes as he wolde,
 That they with him to Tharsé sholde
 To fet his doughter Thaisé there,
 And they anone all redy were.
 To ship they gone and forth they went
 Till they the haven of Tharsé hent.
 They londe and faile of that they
 seche,

By coverture and sleight of speche.
 This falsé man Strangulio
 And Dionise his wife also,

¹ Assent, summoned.

² In memory of his wife,

a Redlly, royally.

That he the better trowe might,
 They ladden him to have a sight,
 Where that her tombe was arraied,
 The lasse yet he was mispaied.
 And netheles so as he durst,
 He curseth and saith all the worst
 Unto Fortune, as to the blinde,
 Which can no siker weid finde,
 For she him neweth ever amonge
 And medleth sorwe with his songe.
 But sithe it may no better be,
 He thonketh God and forth goth he
 Saileide' toward Tire ayeine.
 But sodeinly the winde and reine
 Began upon the see debate,
 So that he suflfre mote algate
 The lawe, which Neptune
 deineth,

Wherof full ofte time he pleigneth
 And held him wel the more esmaied
 Of that he hath to-fore assaied.
 So that for pure sorwe and care
 Of that he seeth this world so fare,
 The reste he leveth of his cabdn,
 That for the counseil of no man
 Ayein therin he nolde come
 But hath beneth his place nome,
 Where he wepend allone lay
 There as he sigh no light of day.

"And thus to-fore the wind they
 drive

Till longe and latd they arrive
 With great distresse, as it was sene,
 Upon this town of Mitelene,
 Which was a noble cite tho.
 And happneth thilke time so,
 The lorde's both and the commune
 The highe festes of Neptune
 Upon the strond at the rivage,
 As it was custume and usage,
 Solempneliche' they besigh.

" Whan they this straungg vessel
 sigh

Come in, and hath his saile aveled,¹

¹ *Aveled*, lowered.

The town therof hath spoke and
 taled.

The lord which of that cité was,
 Whose name is Athenagoras,
 Was there and said, he wolde se
 What ship it is, and who they be
 That ben therin. And after sone,
 Whan that he sigh it was to done,
 His bargé was for him arraied,
 And he goth forth and hath assaied.
 He found the ship of great array,
 But what thing it amount may,
 He sigh they maden hevvy chere,
 Butwellhimthenkethbythemanere,
 That they be worthy men of blood,
 And axeth of hem how it stood.
 And they him tellen all the cas,
 How that her lord fordrivé was,
 And what a sorwe that he made
 Of which there may no man him
 glade.

He praieth that he her lord may se.
 But they him tolde it maynought be,
 For he lith in so derke a place
 That there may no wight sen his face.
 But for all that, though hem be loth,
 He found the ladder and down he
 goth

And to him spake, but none answer
 Ayein of him ne might he bere,
 For ought that he can do or sain.
 And thus he goth him up ayein.

" Tho was there spoke in many
 wise

Amongés hem that weren wise,
 Now this, now that, but atté last
 The wisdom of the town thus cast,
 That yongé Thaisé were assent.
 For if there be amendenent
 To gladd with this wofull king,
 She can so moch of every thing
 That she shall gladen him anone,

" A messenger for her is gone.
 Anéshecamewithherharponhonde
 And saide hem, that she woldé fonde

By allé weids that she can,
 To gladcte with this sory man.
 And what he was, she wiste nought.
 But all the ship her hath besought
 That she her wit on him despende
 In aunter if he might amende,
 And sain, ' It shall be well aqinV
 Whan she hath understonden it,
 She goth her down, there as he lay,
 Where that she harpeth many a lay
 And lich an atmigel sang with alle.
 But he no moré than the walle
 Toke hede of any thing he herde.
 And whan she sigh that he so ferde,
 She falleth with him unto wordes,
 And telleth him of sondry bordes,
 And axeth himdemaundes straunge
 Wherof she made his herte chaungc,
 And to her speche his ere he laide
 And hath merveile, of that shesaide.
 For in proverbe and in probleme
 She spake and bade he shuldedeme
 In many a subtil question.
 But he for no suggestion
 Which toward him she couthe stere
 He wolde nought o word answer,
 But as a mad man atté laste,
 His heved weping away he caste
 And half in wrath he bad her go.
 But yet she wolde nought do so,
 And in the derkd forth she goth,
 Till she him toucheth, and he wroth
 And after hiré with his honde
 He smote. And thus whan she
 him fonde
 Diseséd, courteisly she saide?
 ' Avoy my lorde, I am a maide.
 And if ye wisté what I am,
 And out of what lignage I cam,
 Ye woldé nought be so salvage.'
 With that he sobreth his cordge
 And put away his hevychere.
 But of hem two a man may lere,
 What is to be so sibbe of blood.
 None wist of other how it stood,

And yet the fader atté last
 His herte upon this maidé cast,
 That he her loveth kindly,
 And yet he wisté never why;
 But all was knoweer that they went.
 For God, which wote her hole entent,
 Her hertés both anone descloseth.
 This king unto this maide opposeth
 And axeth first, What is her name,
 And where she lernéd all this game,
 And of what kin that she was come?
 And she, that hath his wordésnome,
 Answereth and saith: ' My name
 is Thaise,
 That was sometime well at ese.
 In Tharse I was forthérawe and
 fedde,
 There lerned I till I was spedde
 Of that I can. My fader eke
 I not¹ where that I shulde him seke,
 He was a king, men tolde me.
 My moder dreint was in the see,
 Fro point to point all she him tolde,
 That she hath longe in herté holde,
 And never durst make her mone,
 But only to this lord allone,
 To whom her herté can nought hele,²
 Torne it to wo torne it to wele,
 Torne it to good torne it to harme.
 And he tho toke her in his arme.
 But such a joy as he tho made
 Was never sene; thus be they glade
 That sory hadden be to-forne.
 Fro this day forth Fortune hath
 sworne
 To set him upward on the whele;
 Sogoth the world; now wo, now wele.
 "This king hath foundé newd
 grace,
 So that out of his derké place
 He goth him up into the light
 And with him cam that sweté wight
 His daughter Thaise, and forth anone
 They bothe into the caban gone

1 Net, know not.

2 Hele, conceal.

Which was ordeindé for the kinge.
 And there he did of all his thinge
 And was arraied really,
 And out he cam all openly
 Where Athenagoras he fonde
 The which was lorde of all the
 londe.

He praieth the king to come and se
 His castell bothe and his citee.
 And thus they gone forth all in fere,
 This king, this lord, this maiden
 dere.

This lord tho made hem riche feste
 With every thing which was
 honeste

To plesé with this worthy kinge,
 Ther lacketh hem no maner thinge.
 But yet for al his noble array
 Wifeles he was unto that day,
 As he that yet was yonge of age.
 So fell there into his corage
 The lusty wo, the gladdé peine
 Of love which no man restreigne
 Yet never might as now to-fore.
 This lord thenketh all his world
 forlore

But if the king woll done him grace.
 He waiteth time he waiteth place
 Him thought his herté woll to-breke,
 Till he may to this maidd speke
 And to her fader eke also
 For maridge. And it fell so,
 That all was do, right as he thought,
 His purpos to an ende he brought,
 She wedded him as for her lorde;
 Thus be they alle of one accorde.

"Whan al was do right as they
 wolde,

The kinge unto his sone tolcle
 Of Tharsd thilké treterie,
 And said, how in his compaignie
 His daughter and him selven eke
 Shall go vengeaunce for to seke.
 The shippés were redy sone.
 And whan they sigh it was to done

Without? let of any went,¹
 With saile updrawd forth they wente
 Towardés Tharse upon the tide.
 But he that wot what shall betide,
 The highe God which wolde him
 kepe,

Whan that this king was fastea slepe
 By nightés time he hath him bede
 To saile unto another stede;
 To Ephesim he bad him drawe,
 And as it was that tim lawe,
 He shall do there his sacrifice.

And eke he bad in allé wise,
 That in the temple amongés alle
 His Fortune, as it is befallé,
 Touchend his daughter and his wife
 He shall beknowe upon his life.

The king of this avisidn
 Hath great ymaginacion
 What thinge it signifie may.
 And nethtSles whan it was day
 He bad cast anker and abode.
 And while that he on anker rode,
 The wind, which was to-fore
 straunge,

Upon the point began to chaunge
 And torneth thider as it shulde.
 Thoknewe he well, that God it wolde,
 And bad the maister make him yare,
 To-fore the wind for he wold fare
 To Ephesim, and so he dede.
 And whan he came into the stede,
 Where as he shuldd Ionde, he londeth
 With all the haste he may, and
 fondeth

To shapen him in suche a wise,
 That he may by the morwe arise
 And done after the maundément
 Of him, which hath him thider sent.
 And in the wisé that he thought,
 Upon the morwe so he wrought.
 His daughter and his sone he nome
 And forth unto the temple he come

¹ Let of any watt, hindrance of any turning
 aside.

With a great route in compaign
 His yiftes for to sacrify.
 The citezeins tho herden say
 Of such a king that came to pray
 Unto Diané the goddesse
 And lefie all other businesse,
 They comen thider for to se
 The king and the solempnite.

"With worthy knightés enviroñned
 The king him self hath abandéñned
 Into the temple in good entente.
 The dore is up and in he wente,
 Whereas with great devocion
 Of holy contemplacidoñ
 Within his hertehemade his shrifte.
 And after that a riché yifte
 He offreth with great reverence,
 And there in open audience
 Of hem that stoden all about
 He tolde hem and declareth out
 His hap such as him is befallé;
 There was no thing foryete of alle.
 His wife, as it was Goddes grace,
 Which was professed in the place
 As she that was abbesse there,
 Unto his tale hath laid her ere,
 She knew the vois and the visdge,
 For pure joy as in a rage
 She straught unto him all at ones
 And fell a swoune upon the stones
 Wherof the temple flore was paved.
 She was anone with water laved,
 Till she came to her self ayein.
 And thannd she began to sain:
 'Ha, blessed be the highe sonde,
 That I may se min husbonde,
 Which whilom he and I were one.'
 The king with that knewe heranone
 And toke her in his arme and kist,
 And all the town thus sone it wist.
 Tho was there joié manyfold,
 For every man this tale hath told
 As for miracle, and were glade.
 But never man such joie made
 As doth the king which hath his wife.

And whan men herde how that her
 life

Was savéd and by whom it was,
 They wondren all of suche a cas.
 Through all the londe arose the
 speche

Of maister Cerimon the leche
 And of the curé which he dede.
 The king him self tho hath him bede
 And eke this quené forth with him,
 That he the town of Ephesim
 Woll leve and go where as they be,
 For never man of his degre
 Hath do to hem so mochel good.
 And he his profite understood
 And graunteth with hem for to
 wende.

And thus they maden there anende
 And token leve and gone to ship
 With all the note felaship.

"This king, which now hath his
 desire,

Saith he woll holde hiscours to Tire.
 They hadden wind at wille tho
 With topsail-cole,¹ and forth they go.
 And striken never till they come
 To Tire wher as they haven nome,
 And londen hem with mochel blisse.
 There was many a mouth to kisse,
 Eche one welcometh other home.
 But whan the quene to londé come
 And Thaise her doughter by her side,
 The joie which was thilke tide
 There may no mannes tungé telle.
 They saiden all, 'Here cometh the
 welle

Of alle womanisshe grace.'
 The king hath take his real place,
 The quene is into chambre go;
 There was great feste arraiéd tho.
 Whan time was they gone to mete,
 All oldd sorwes ben foryete,
 And gladen hem with joies newe.
 The descoloured pale hewe

¹ See note, page 353.

Is now become a ruddy cheke,
There was no merthé for to seke,
But every man hath what he wolde,
The king as he well couthe and
sholde

Maketh to his people right good
chere.

And after sone, as thou shalt here,
A parlement he hath sommoned,
Where he his doughter hath coroned
Forth with the lorde of Mitelene,
That one is king, that other quene.
And thus the faders ordenaunce
This londe hath set in governaunce,
And saide that he woldé wende
To Tharsé for to make an ende
Of that his doughter was betraied,
Wherof were allé men well paied,
And said, how it was for to done.

"The shippes weren redy sone.
A strong power with him he toke,
Up to the sky he cast his loke
And sigh the wind was covendble.
They hale up anker with the cable,
They sail on high, the stere on honde,
They sailen till they come a londe
At Tharse nigh to the citee.
And whan they wisten it was he,
The town hath done him reverence.
He telleth hem the violence.

Which the tretour Strangulio
And Dionise him haddé do
Touchendehis doughter, as yeherde.
And whan they wisté how it ferde,
As he which pees and lové sought,
Unto the town this he besought
To done him right in jugement.
Anone they were both assent
With strengthe of men, and comen
sone,

And as hem thought it was to done,
Atteint they were by the lawe
And demed for to honge and drawe
And brent and with the wind to'
blowe,

That all the world it mighte knowe,
And upon this condicidn
The dome in execuci6n

Was put anone without faile.
And every man hath great merveile,
Whiche herdé tellenof this chaunce,
And thonketh Goddés purveaunce,
Which dothmercy forth with justice.
Slain is the mordrer and mordrice
Through verry trowth of right-
wisnesse,

And through mercsauf issimplesse
Of hiré whom mercy preserveth ;
Thus hath hewel thatwel deserveth.

"Whan all this thing is done
and ended,

This king which loved was and
frended,

A letter hath, which came to him
By shippe fro Pentapolim,
In which the lond hath to him write
That he wolde understonde and
wite,

How in good minde and in good pees
Dede is the kinge Artestrates,
Wherof they all of one accorde
Him praiden, as her lege lorde,
That he the letter wol conceive
And come his regne to receive
Which God hath yove him and
Fortune.

And thus besought the commune
Forth with the greté lordés alle.
This king sigh how it was befallé,
Fro Tharse and in prosperite
He toke his leve of that citee
And goth him into ship ayein.

The wind was good, the se was plein,¹
Hem nedeth nought a riff to slake,¹
Till they Pentapolim have take.
The lond which herde of that tidfng
Was wonder glad of his coming.
He resteth him a day or two
And toke his counseil to him tho

1 To slacken a reef.

And set a time of parlement,
Where all the londe of one assent
Forth with his wife have him co-
roned,

Where alte good him was foisoned.¹

"Lo, what it is to be well
grounded.

For he hath first his love founded
Honestelich as for to wedde,
Honestelich his love he spedde
And hadde' children with his wife,
And as him list he lad his life.
And in ensample his life was write,
That alle lovers mighten wite
How atte last it shal be sene
Of love what they wolden mene.
For se now, on that other side,
Antiochus with all his pride
Which set his love unkindely,
His ende he hadde sodeinly
Set ayein kinde upon vengeaunce,
And for his lust hath his penatince.

"Lothus, mysone, might thoulere,
What is to love in good manere,
And what to love in other wise.
The mede ariseth of the service,
Fortune though she be nought
stable,

Yet at sometime is favourable
To hem that ben of love trewe.
But certes it is for to rewe
To se love ayein kinde falle,
For that maketh sore a man to falle,
As thou might of to-fore rede.
Forthy my sone, I wolde rede
To let all other love away,
But if it be through such a wey
As love and reson wold accorde."—

My fader, howso that it stonde,
Your tale is herde and understonde,
As thing which worthy is to here,
Of great ensample and grete matere,
Wherof, my fader, God you quite.
But in this point my self aquite

¹ Foisoned, poured out profusely.

I may right wel, that never yit
I was assoted in my wit,
But onely in that worthy place
Where alle lust and allé grace
Is set, if that Daunger ne were,
But that is all my mosté fere.
I not what ye Fortune accompte,
But what thing Daunger may
amounte

I wot wel, for I have assaied.
For whan inin hert is best arraied
And I have all my wit through sought
Of love to beseche her ought,
For all that ever I skills' may
I am concluded with a nay,
That o silléble hath over throwe
A thousand wordes on a rowe
Of suche as I best speke can,
Thus am I but a lewde man.
But fader, for ye ben a clerke
Of love, and this matere is derke
And I can ever lenger the lasse
But yet I may nought let it passe.
Your holé counseil I beseche,
That ye me by some weie teche,
What is my best, as for an ende."—

"Mysone, unto the trouthe wende
Now woll I for the love of the
And lete all other trifles be.

"The more that the nede is high,
The more it nedeth to be sligh
To him which hath the nede on
honde.

I have well herd and understonde,
My sone, all that thou hast me saied
Ande ke of that thou hast me praied.
Nowe at this time that I shall
As for conclusion flndtt
Counseil upon thy nede set,
So thenke I finally to knet
Thy causé where it is to-broke,
And make an ende of that is spoke.
For I behighte the that yift
First whan thou come under my
shrift,

That though I toward Venus were,
 Yet spake I suche wordés there,
 That for the presthode which I have,
 Min order and min estate to save,
 I saide, I wolde of min office
 To vertu more than to vice
 Encline and teche" the my lore.
 Forth to speken overmore
 Of Lové which the may availe,
 Take Lové where it may nought faile.
 For as of this which thou art in,
 By that thou seest it is a sinne,
 And sinnd may no prise deserve,
 Without prise and who shall serve
 I not what profit might availe.
 Thus folweth it, if thou travaile
 Where thou no profit hast ne prise
 Thou art toward thy self unwise,
 And sith thou mightest lust atteine,
 Of every lust the ende is peine
 And every pein is good to flee.
 So it is wonder thing to se
 Why such a thing shall be desired.
 The more that a stock is fired
 The rather¹ into ashe it torneth.
 The fote which in the weie sporneth
 Full ofte his heved hath overthrowe.
 Thus Love is blinde and can nought
 knowe
 Where that he goth till he be falle.
 Forth but if it so befallé
 With good counseil that he be lad,
 Him oughté for to ben adrad.
 For counseil passeth alle thing
 To him which thinketh to ben a
 king.
 And every man for his party
 A kingéom hath to justify,
 That is to sain, his owné dome.
 If he misreule" that kingdome,
 He lest him self, and that is more,
 Than if he loste ship and ore
 And all the worldés good with all.
 For what man that in speciall

¹ Rather, sooner.

Hath nought him self, he hath
 nought diés,
 No more the perils than the shelles,
 All is to him of o value—
 Though he had all his retenue
 The widé world right as he wolde—
 Whan he his hert hath nought
 witholde
 Toward him self, all is in vein.
 And thus, my sone, I woldé sain,
 As I said er, that thou arise
 Er that thou falle in such a wise
 That thou ne might thy self rekever;
 For Lové, which that blind was ever,
 Maketh all his servaunts blinde also.
 "My sone, and if thou have be so,
 Yet it is timd to withérawe
 And set thin hert under that lawe
 The which of Reson is governed
 And nought of Will. And to be
 lerned
 Ensamples thou hast many one
 Of now and eke of timd gone,
 That every lust is but a while.
 And who that woll him self beguile,
 He may the rather be deceived.
 My sond, now thou hast conceived
 Somwhat of that I wolde mene,
 Here afterward it shall be sene,
 If that thou leve upon my lore.
 For I can do to the no more,
 But teche the the righte way.
 Now chese, if thou wilt live or
 deie."—
 "My fader, so as I have herde
 Your tale, but it were answerde,
 I were mochel for to blame.
 My wo to you is but a game,
 That feleth nought of that I fele.
 The feling of a mannés hele
 May nought be likened to the herte;
 I wot that though I wolde asterte
 And ye be fre from all the peine
 Of lové wherof I me pleiue,
 It is right esy to commaunde.

The hert which fre goth on the launde
 Not¹ of an oxe what him eileth,
 It falleth oft a man merveiloth
 Of that he seeth another fare.
 But if he knew himself the fare
 And felt it as it is in soth,
 He shuldé do right as he doth
 Or diés wors in his degré.
 For wel I wote and so do ye,
 That love hath ever yet ben used,
 So mote I nedes ben excused.
 But fader, if ye woldé thus
 Unto Cupide and to Venus
 Be frendly toward my quarele,
 So that my herte were in hele
 Of love which is in my breste,
 I wot wel than a better preste
 Was never made to my behove.
 But all the whilé that I hove
 In none certein betwene the two,
 And not where² I to well or wo
 Shall torné, that is all my drede,
 So that I not what is to rede.
 But for findll conclusion
 I thenke a supplicacið
 With pleine wordés and expresse
 Write unto Venus the goddessse,
 The which I praie you to bere
 And bring ayein a good answer."

Tho was betwene my prest
 and me

Debate and great perplexete.
 My Reson understode him wele
 And knewe it was soth every dele
 That he hath said, but nought forth
 My Will hath no thing set ther by.
 For touching of so wise a porte
 It is unto love no disporte.
 Yet might never man beholde
 Res6n, where Lové was witholde,³
 They be nought of o governaunce.
 And thus we fellen in distaunce
 My prest and I, but I spake faire

¹ Not, knows not.

² Not where, know not whether.

³ Witholde, held with.

And through my wordés debonaire
 Than atté laste we accorden,
 So that he saith, he woll accorden
 To speke and stond upon my side
 To Venus both and to Cupide,
 And bad me write what I wolde.
 And said me truly that he sholde
 My letter bere unto the quene.
 And I sat down upon the grene
 Fulfilled of Loves fantasy
 And with the terés of min eye
 In stede of inke I gan to write
 The wordés which I wol endite
 Unto Cupide and to Venus,
 And in my letter I saide thus:—

The wofull peine of love's
 maladie,

Ayeiu the which may no phisfque
 availe, [sotie,
 Min hert hath so bewhapped with
 That where so that I reste or travaile
 I finde it ever redy to assaile
 Myreson, which that can him nought
 defende.

Thus seche I help wherof I might
 amende.

First to Nature if that I me com-
 pleine,

There finde I how that every creature
 Somtime a yere¹ hath love in his
 demaine,

So that the litel wrenne in his mesure
 Have yet of kinde a love under his
 cure.

And I but one desire, which I misse,
 And thus but I hath every kinde his
 blisse.

The reson of my wit it overpasseth,
 Of that Nature teche' me the way
 To love and yet no certein she
 compasseth

¹ At some time in each year.

How shal I specie; and thus between
the twey
I stonde and not¹ if I shall live or dey.
For though Resdn ayein my will
debate,
I may nought flee that I ne love
algate.

Upon my self this ilké tale come,
How whilom Pan, which is the god
of kinde,
With Love wrestled and was over-
come,
For ever I wrestle and ever I am
behinde,²
That I no strength in all min herte
finde
Wherof that I may stonden any
throwe,
Sofermywitwithloveisoverthrowe.

Whomnedeth help, he mot his helpé
crave
Or helpéles he shall his nede spille.
Pleinly throughsought my wittes al
I have,
But none of hem can help after my
wille.
And al so well I mighte site stille
As pray unto my lady of any helpe,
Thus wote I nought wherof my self
to helpe.

Unto the grete Jove and if I bid
To do me grace of thillké swete tonne
Which under key in his cellar amid
Lith couchéd, that Fortune is over-
ronne;
But of the bitter cuppe I have be-
gonne, [game,
I not how ofte, and thus finde I no
For ever I axe and ever it is the same.

¹ Not, know not.

² For éer I wrestl' and e'er I am behind. So
in last line of next stanza but one, "éer" . . .
"e'er."

I se the world stond ever upon
eschaunge,
Now windés loudé, now the weder
softe,
I mayseekethegreté monechaunge,
And thing which now is low is eft
alofté;
The dredful werrds into pees ful ofte
They torne, and ever is Daunger in
o place,
Which wold chaunge his Will to
do me grace.

But upon this the greté clerk Ovfde,
Of Love whan he maketh renem-
braunce,
He saith: Ther is the blinde god
Cupide,
The which hath love under his
governaunce
And in his hond with many a firy
launce
He woundeth ofte where he woll
nought hele,
And that somdele is cause of my
quarele.

Ovide eke saith, that lové to performe
Stant in the hond of Venus the
goddésse,
But whan she taketh counseil with
Satorne
There is no grace, and in that time
I gesse
Began my love, of which min hevi-
nesse
Is now and ever shall, but if I spede,
So wot I nought my self what is to
rede.

Forthy to you, Cupide and Venus
both,
With all min hertés obeisaunce I
pray,
If ye were atté firste time wroth,

Whan I began to loven, I you say,
Now stint, and do thilke Fortune
away,
So that Daungér, which slant of
retenue
With my lad, his place may remue.

O thou Cupidé, god of loves lawe,
That with thy dart brennénd hast
set a fire

My herte", do that woundé be with-
drawe,

Or yivé me salve, suche as I desire.
For service in thy court withouten
hire

To me which ever yet have "kept
thin heste,
May never be to lovés lawe honeste.

O thou, gentile Venus, loves quene,
Without gilt thou dost on me thy
wreche,

Thou wost my pain is ever alich grene
For love, and yet I may it nought
arecche.¹

Thus wolde I for my lasté word
beseche

That thou my love aquite as I
deserve,

Or ellés do me plainly for to sterve.

Whan I this supplication
With good deliberacido,
In suche a wise as ye now wite,
Had after min entente write
Unto Cupide and to Vends,
This preste which night Genius
It toke on hondd to presente.
On my message and forth he wente
To Venus for to wit her wille.
And I bode in the place stille
And was there but a litel while
Noughtfull the mountance of a mile,
Whan I behelde and sodeinty

¹ *Arecche*, reach to.

I sigh where Venus stood me by.
So as I might, under a tree
To grounde I felle upon my knee
And preid her for to do me grace.
She cast her chere upon my face
And as it were halving a game
She axeth me, what was my name.
'Madame,' I saidé, 'lohan Gower.'
'Now lohan,' quod she, 'in my
power

Thou must as of thy love stonde.
For I thy bill have understonde
In which to Cupide and to me
Somdelethou hast compleigné the;
And somdele to Nature also,
But that shall stonde among you two
For therof have I nought to done,
For Nature is under the mone
Maistresse of every lives kinde,
But if so be that she may finde
Some holyman that woll withérawe
His kindly lust, ayein her lawe.
But seldwhan it falleth so,
For fewé men there ben of tho.
But of these other inowe be,
Whiche of her ownd nicité
Ayein Nature and her office
Deliten hem in sondry vice
Wherof that she full oft hath
pleigned;

Andeke my Court it hath disdeigned
And ever shall, for it receiveth
None such that kindé sodesceiveth.
For all onlich of gentil love
My Court stant alle Courts above
And taketh nought into retenue
But thing which is to Kindé due.
For diés it shall be refused,
Wherof I holdé the excused.
For it is many daies gone,
That thou amongés hem were one
Which of my court shall be witholde,
So that the more I am beholde
Of thy disesé to commune
And to remué that Fortune

Which many dates hath the graved.
 But if my counseil may be leved,
 Thou shalt be eséd er thou go
 Of thilke unsely jolif wo
 Wherof thou saist thin hert is fired.
 But as of that thou hast desired
 After the sentence of thy bill,
 Thou must therof done at my will
 And I therof me woll avise.
 For be thou hole, it shall suffice ;
 My medicine is nought to seke
 The which is holsome to the seke,
 Noughtall perchaunceas yeitwolde
 But so as ye by reson sholde,
 Accordant unto lovés kinde.
 For in the plite which I the finde,
 So as my Court it hath awarded,
 Thou shalt be duely rewarded.
 And if thou woldest moré crave,
 It is no right that thou it have,'

Venus, which stant withoute
 lawe,

In none certeine, but as men drawe
 Of rageman upon the chaunce,
 She laith no peise in the balaunce,
 But as her liketh for to weie
 The trewe man full ofte aweie
 She put, which hath her grace bede,
 And sette an untrue in his stede.

Lo, thus blindly the world she
 demeth

In Lovés cause, as to me semeth,
 I not what other men wold sain
 But I algate am so beseine,
 And stonde as one amonges alle
 Which am out of her gracé falle.
 It nedeth take no witnesse,
 For she, which said is the goddessse
 To whether parte of love it wende,
 Hath set me for a finall ende
 The point wherto that I shall holde.

For whan she hath me well beholde
 Halving of scorne she saidé thus :
 " Thou wost well that I am Venus,
 Which all onty my lustés seche.

And well I wot though thou beseche
 My lové lustes ben there none
 Which I may take in thy persone,
 For lovés lust and lockes hore
 In chatnbre accorden nevermore.
 And though thou feigne a yong
 cordge,

It sheweth well by thy visage,
 That olde grisel is no fole.
 There ben full many yeres stole
 With the and other suché mo
 That outward feignen youthé so
 And ben within of pouer assay.
 ' My herté wolde, and I ne may,'
 Is nought beloved now a daies.
 Er thou make any such assaies
 To love, and faile upon thy fete,
 Bet is to make *beau retreté*

" My sone, if that thou well be-
 thought,

This toucheth the, foryete it nought,
 The thing is tornéd into 'was,'
 The which was whilome grene gras
 Is welkéd heie as timé now.
 Forthy my counseil is, that thou
 Remembre well how thou art olde."

Whan Venus hath her talé tolde,
 And I bethought was all aboute,
 And wisté wel withouten doubt
 That there was no recoverire,
 And as a man the blase of fire
 With water quencheth, so ferde I.
 A coldé me caught sodeinly;
 For sorwe that my herté made
 My dedly facé pale and fade
 Becam, and swoune I fel to grounde.

And as I lay the samé stounde
 Ne fully quick, ne fully dede,
 Me thought I sigh to-fore min hede
 Cupfde with his bowé bent
 And like unto a parldment
 Which were ordeiné for the nones,
 With him cam all the world atones
 Of gentil folke, that whilom were
 Lovers, I sigh hem alle there

Forth with Cupfde in sondry routes.
 Min eye and as I cast aboutes
 To know among hem who was who,
 I sigh where lusty youthe tho,
 As he which was a capitein
 To-fore all other upon the plein
 Stood with his route well begon,
 Her hedes kempt, and therupon
 Garlondés, nought of o colour,
 Some of the lefe some of the floure,
 And some of greté perles were.
 The newe guise of Beawme there
 With sondry thinges well devised
 I sigh, wherof they be queintised.
 It was all lust that they with ferde.
 There was no song that I ne herde
 Which unto lové was touching,
 Of Pan and all that was liking,
 As in piping of melodie
 Was herde in thilké compaignie,
 So loude that on every side
 It thought as all the heven cride
 In suche accorde and suche a sounne
 Of bombarde and of clarioune
 With cornemuse and with shalmele,
 That it was half a mannes hele
 So glad a noise for to here.

And as me thought in this manere
 All fresshe I sigh hem springe and
 daunce,

And do to love her entendaunce
 After the lust of youthes hest,
 There was inough of joy and fest.
 For ever among they laugh and pley
 And putten care out of the wey,
 That he with hem ne sat ne stode.
 And over this I understode,
 So as min ere it might arecche,
 The moste matere of her speche
 It was of knighthode and of armes,
 And what it is to ligge in armes
 With lové whan it is acheved.

There was Tristram, which was
 beleved

With Bele Isolde, and Lancelot

Stode with Gunnor, and Galahot
 With his lady, and as me thought,
 I sigh where Jason with him brought
 His love, which Creúsa night.
 And Hercules which mochel might
 Was theré bering his great mace,
 And most of all in thilké place
 He peineth him to make chere
 With Eolen which was him dere.
 Theseus though he were untrewé
 To love, as alle women knewe,
 Yet was he there nethéles
 With Fedra which to love he ches.
 Of Grece eke there was Thelamon,
 Which fro the kinge Lamedon
 At Troy his doughter reft away
 Eseonen as for his pray,
 Which také was whan Jason cam
 Fro Colchos and the citee nam
 In vengeaunce of the firsté hate
 That made hem after to debate
 Whan Priamus the newe town
 Hath made. And in avisioun
 Me thought that I sigh also
 Hector forth with his brethern two,
 Him self stood with Pantasilee,
 And next to him I mightc see,
 Where Paris stood with faire Heleine,
 Which was his joie souveraine.
 And Troilus stood with Creseide,
 But ever among although he pleide,
 By semblaunt he was hevvy chered.
 For Diomede, as him was lered,
 Claimeth to be his partenere.
 And thus full many a bachelere,
 A thousand mo than I can sain,
 With youth I sigh there well besein
 Forth with her lovés glad and blith.
 And some I sigh, which ofte sith
 Compleignen hem in sondry wise,
 Among the which I sigh Narcise
 And Piramus, that sory were.
 The worthy Greke also was there,
 Achilles, which for lové deied.
 Agamenon eke as men saied,

And Menelay the King also
 I sigh with many an other mo
 Which hadden be fortrined sore
 In lovés cause. And evermore
 Of women in the samé cas
 With hem I sigh where Dido was
 Forsaké which was with Enee.
 And Phillis eke I mighté see,
 Whom Demophon deceived hadde,
 And Adriagne her sorwe ladde,
 For Theseus her suster toke
 And her unkindély forsoke.
 I sigh there eke among the pres
 Compleigning upon Hercules
 His firsté love Deianire,
 Which set him afterward a fire.
 Medea was there eke and pleigneth
 Upon Jason for that he feigneth
 Without cause and toke a newe,
 She saidd, 'Fie on all untrewé !'
 I sigh there Defdamie,
 Which hadde lost the compaignie
 Of Achilles, whan Diomedé
 To Troy him fet upon the nedc.
 Among these other upon the grene
 I sigh also the wofull quene
 Cle6patrás, which in a cave
 With serpents hath her self begrave
 All quick,¹ and so she was to-tore
 For sorwe of that she haddé lore
 Antonie, which her love hath be.
 And forth with her I sigh Tisbe,
 Which on the sharpd swerdés pointe
 For love deicd in sory pointe.
 And as min ere it mightté knowe,
 She saidé, 'Wo worth alle slowe.'
 The pleint of Progne and Philomene
 There herde I what it woldé mene,
 How Tereus of his untrouthe
 Undid hem both, and that was
 routhe.
 And next to hem I sigh Canace,
 Which for Machair her faders grace
 Hath lost and deied in wofull plitc.

¹ *Bgrave all quick, buried alive.*

And as I sigh in my spirfte,
 Me thought amongs other thus
 The doughter of king Priamus,
 Polfxena, whom Pirrus slough,
 Was there and made sorwe inough,
 As she which deide gilteles
 For love, and yet was lovéles.
 And for to také the desporte
 I sigh there some of other porte,
 And that was Circes and Calipse,
 That couthen do the mond clipse,
 Of men and chaungé the liknesse,
 Of artmagique sorceresse,
 They helde in honde many one
 To lové, where they wolde or none.
 But above allé that there were
 Of women I sigh fourd there,
 Whose name I herdé most com-
 mended.
 By hem the court stode all amended.
 For where they comen in presence
 Men diden hem the reverence
 As though they hadden ben god-
 desses
 Of all this world or emperesses.
 And as me thought an ere I laid
 Andherde, how that these others said:
 'Lo, thesé ben the foure wives,
 Whose feith was proved in her lives
 For in ensample of all good
 With maridg so they stood
 That Fame, which no great thing
 hideth
 Yet in cronfque of hem abideth.'
 Penelope that one was hote,
 Whom many a knight hath loved
 hote
 While that her lorde Ulixes laie
 Full many a yere and many a daie
 Upon the greté siege of Troy:
 But she which hath no worldés joy
 But only of her husdbonde,
 While that her lord was out of londe,
 So well hath kept her womanhede,
 That all the world therof toke hede

And nameich of hem in Grece.
 That other woman was Lucrece,
 Wife to the Romain Collatine.
 And she constreigné of Tarquine
 To thing which was ayein her will,
 She wolde nought her selven still,
 But deide only for drede of shame
 In keping of her godé name,
 As she which was one of the beste.
 The thridde wife was hote Alceste,
 Which whan Admetus shuld die
 Upon his grete maladie,
 She praied unto the goddes so,
 That she receiveth all the wo
 Andéeied her self to yive him life,—
 Se where this were a noble wife !
 The fertilé wife which I there sigh,
 I herde of hem that were nigh,
 How she was cleped Alcione,
 Which Ceix hire lord allone
 And to no mo her body kepte,
 And whan she sighe him dreint,
 she lepte
 Into the wawes where he swam,
 And there a see foule she becam.
 And with her wingés him besprad
 For lové that she to him had.

Lo, these fouré weren tho,
 Which I sigh as me thoughte tho
 Among the grete compaignie,
 Which lové haddé for to gie.¹
 But Youthe, which in speciáll
 Of Lovés court was mareshall,
 So besy was upon his lay,
 That he none hede where he lay
 Hath take. And than as I behelde,
 Me thought I sigh upon the felde.
 Where Elde came a softé pas
 Toward Venus, there as she was,
 With him great compaignie he ladde,
 But nought so fele as Youthé hadde.
 The moste part were of great age,
 And that was sene in her visage,
 And nought forthy, soas they might,

¹ Gie, guide.

They made hem yongly to the sight.
 But yet herde I no pipés there
 To maké merth in mannés ere,
 But the musique I mighté knowe
 For olde men, which souned lowe
 With harpe and lute and with citole
 The hove daunce and the carole,¹
 In suche a wise as love hath bede,
 A softé pas they daunce and trede,
 And with the women otherwhile
 With sobre chere among they smile,
 For laughter was there none on
 high.

And netheles full well I sigh
 That they the more queint it made
 For love in whom they weren glade.
 And there me thought I mighté sec
 The king David with Bersabee,
 And Salomon was nought withoute
 Passing an hundred in a route
 Of wives and of concubines;
 Jewesses eke and Sarazines
 To him I sigh all entendaunt,
 I not where he were suffisaunt.
 But nethéles for all his wit
 He was attached with that writ
 Which Lové with his hondenseleth,
 From whom none erthly man ap-
 peleth.

And over this, as for no wonder,
 With his leon, which he put under,
 With Dalila Sampson I knewe,
 Whos love his strength all over-
 threwe.

I sigh there Aristotle also,
 Whom that the quene of Grece al so
 Hath bridled, that in thilké time
 She made him such a silogime,
 That he foryate all his logique,
 There was none arte of his practique,
 Through which it mighte ben ex-
 cluded,
 That he ne was fully concluded

¹ Hove daunce, court dance, Carole, an old round dance.

To love and did his obeisaunce.
 And eke Virgile of aqueintatince
 I sigh, where he the maiden praid
 Which was the doughter, as men
 said,

Of themperour whilom of Rome.
 Sortés and Plato with him come,
 So did Ovfdé the poete.

I thoughté than how love is swete
 Which hath so wisé men reclaimed,
 And was my self the lasse ashamed
 Or for to lese or for to winne
 In the mischefe that I was inne,
 And thus I lay in hope of grace.
 And whan they comen to the place,
 Where Venus stood and I was falle,
 These olde men with o vois alle
 To Venus praiden for my sake.
 And she that mighté nought forsake
 So great a clamour as was there,
 Let pité come into her ere
 And forth with all unto Cupide
 She praieth that he upon his side
 Me woldé through his gracé sende
 Some comfort, that I might amende
 Upon the cas which is befallé.

And thus for me they praiden alle
 Of hem that weren old aboute,
 And eke some of the yongé route,
 Of gentillesse and puré trowth
 I herde hem tel it was great routh,
 That I withouten help so ferde.
 And thus me thought I lay and herde.

Cupide, which maie hurt and hele
 In Lovés cause, as for min hele
 Upon the point which him was praid
 Cam with Venés where I was laid
 Swounéd upon the grené gras.
 And as me thought anone there was
 On every sidé so great pres,
 That every life began to pres,
 I wot nought wel how many score,
 Suche as I spake of now to-fore,
 Lovers, that comen to beholde,
 But most of hem that weren olde.

They stoden there at thilke tide
 To se what endé shall betide
 Upon the cure of my sotie.
 Tho might I heré great partie
 Spekend, and eche his own avis
 Hath tolde, one that another this.
 But among alte this I herde,
 They weren wo that I so ferde,
 And saiden that for no riote
 An oldé man shuld nought assote.
 For as they tolden redely
 There is in him no causé why,
 But if he wold him self be nice,
 So were he well the moré nice.
 And thus desputen some of tho,
 And somé saiden no thing so,
 But that the wildé loves rage
 In mannas life forbereth none age,
 While there is oilé for to fire
 The lampe is lightly set a fire
 And is full hard ér it be queint,
 But only if he be some seint,
 Which God preserveth of his grace.
 And thus methought in sondry place,
 Of hem that walken up and down
 There was divers opinioun.
 And for a while so it laste,
 Till that Cupid to the laste,
 Forth with his moder full avised
 Hath determinéd and devised,
 Unto what point he woll descend.
 And all this time I was liggénd
 Upon the ground to-fore his eyen.
 And they that my disese sighen
 Supposen nought I shuldé live.
 But he which woldé thanné yive
 His grace, so as it maie be,
 This blindé god which may nought se
 Hath gropéd till that he me fonde.
 And as he putté forth his honde
 Upon my body, where I lay,
 Me thought a firy lancegay
 Which whilom through my hert he
 cast
 He pulleth out, and al so fast

As this was do, Cupidé nam
His wey; I not where he becam;
And so did all the remenaunt
Which unto him was entendaunt
Of hem that in avision
I had a revelacion,
So as I tolde now to-fore.

But Venus wente nought ther-
fore,

Ne Genius, which thilké time
Abiden bothe faste by me.
And she, which may the hertesbinde
In lovés cause and eke unbinde,
Er, I out of my traunce arose,
Venés, which helde a buisté close
And wolde nought I sholdé deie,
Toke out, more colde then ony keie
An oignement, and in such point
She hath my wounded hert anoint,
My temples and my reins also.
And forth with all she toke me tho
A wonder mirroure for to holde,
In which she bad me to behokle
And take hede of that I sigh;
Wherin anone min hertés eye
I cast and sigh my colour fade,
Min eien dim and all unglade,
My chekés thinne, and all my face
With elde I mighte se deface,
So riveled and so wo besein
That there was nothing full ne plein.
I sigh also min haíres hore,
My will was tho to se no more,
On which for there was no plesaunce.
And than into my remembraunce
I drough min oldé daiés passed,
And as reson it hath compassed,
I made a likenesse of my selve
Unto the sondry monthes twelve,
Wherof the yere in his estate
Is made, and stant upon debate,
That lich til other none accordeth.
For who the tímés wel recordeth,
And than at Marche if he beginne,
Whan that the lusty yere comth inne

Till Augstbepassed and Septembre,
The mighty youth hemay remembre,
In which the yere hath his deduit¹
Of grass, of lefe, of floure, of fruit,
Of corne, and of the winy grape.
And afterward the time is shape
To frost, to snow, to wind, to rain,
Till eft that March be come ayein.
The Winter woll no Somer knowe,
The grené lefe is overthrowe,
The clothed erth is thanné bare,
Despuiled is the somer fare,
That erst was hete is thanné chele.
And thus thenknde thoughtés fele
I was out of my swoune affraid,
Wherof I sigh my winés straid
And gan to clepe hem home ayein.

And whan Aleson it herde sain
That loves ragé was away,
He cam to me the righte wey
And hath remeved the sotie
Of thilke unwise fantasie
Wherof that I was wont to plein,
So that of thilké firy peín
I was made sobre and hole inough.
Venus beheld me than and lough
And axeth, as it were in game,
"What love was?" And I forshame
Ne wisté what I shulde answer.
And nethéles I gan to swere
That "By my trouth I knewe him
nought,"

So fer it was out of my thought,
Right as it haddé never be.

"My gode soné," tho quod she,
"Now at this time I leve it wele,
So goth the fortune of my whele.
Forth my counseil is, thouleve."—

"Madame," I saidé, "by your
leve,

Ye weten well, and so wote I,
That I am unbehovely
Your Court fro this day for to serve.
And for I may no thank deserve,

¹ *Deduit*, delight.

And also for I am refused,
 I praié you to ben excused.
 And nethéles as for to laste,
 While that my wittés with me laste,
 Touchende my confession,
 I axe an absolution
 ·Of Genius, er that I go."

The prest anone was redy tho,
 And saidé: "Sone, as of thy shrifte,
 Thou hast full pardon and foryifte.
 Foryete it thou, and so will I."

"Min holy fader, graunt merey,"
 Quod I to him, and to the quene
 I fell on knees upon the grene,
 And toke my leve for to wende.
 But she, that wolde make an ende,
 As therto, which I was most able,
 A paire of bedés blacke as sable
 She toke and heng my necke about.
 Upon the gaudés all without
 Was write of gold *pur reposer*.
 "Lo," thus she said, "lohan Gower,
 Now thou art atté lasté caste,
 Thus have I for thin ese caste
 That thou no more of lové seche.
 But my will is, that thou beseche
 And pray hereafter for the pees,
 And that thou make a plein relees
 To love which taketh litel hede
 Of olde men upon the nede,
 Whan that the lustes ben away,
 Forthy to the nis but o wey,
 In which let Reson be thy guide.
 For he may sone him self misguide,
 That seeth nought the perfl to-fore."

"My soné, be well ware therfore
 And kepe the sentence of my lore
 Tarie thou in my court no more,
 But go there vertue moral dwelleth,
 Wherebenthy bokes, as men telleth,
 Whicheof long timé thou hast write.
 For this I do the well to wite,
 If thou thin **hele** wok purchéce
 Thou might nought maké sute and
 chace

Where that the game is nought
 provable,
 It were a thing unresonable,
 A man to be so overseie.
 Forthy take hede of that I saie.
 For in the lawe of my commune
 We be nought shapé to commune,
 Thy self and I, never after this.
 Now have I said all that there is
 Of love, as for thy final ende.
 Adieu, for I mot fro the wende."¹

¹ MS. Harl. 3490:

And gretewell Chaucer, whan ye mete,
 As my disciple and my poete.
 For in the floures of his youth,
 In sondry wise, as he well couth,
 Of dittees and of songes glade,
 The which he for my sake made,
 The lond fulfilled is over all,
 Wherof to him in speciall
 Above all other I am most holde.
 Forthy now in his daies olde
 Thou shalt him telle this message,
 That he upon his later age
 To sette an end of all his werke,
 As he, which is min owne clerke,
 Do make his testament of love,
 As thou hast do thy shrifte above,
 So that my court it may recorde.
 Madame, I can me well accorde,
 Quod I, to telle as ye me bidde.
 And with that worde it so betidde
 Out of my sight all sodeinly,
 Enclosed in a sterry sky,
 Up to the heven Venus straught.
 And I my righte waie sought
 Home fro the wode and forth I wente,
 Where as with al min hole entente
 Thus with my bedes upon honde
 For hem that true love fonde
 I thenke bidde while I live,
 Upon the point which I am shrive.
 He, which withinne daies seven
 The large world forth with the heven
 Of his eternal providence
 Hath made and thilke intelligence
 In mannes soule resonable,
 Wherof the man of feture
 Of alle erthly creature
 After the soule is immortal,

And with that word all sodeinly
 Enclosed in a sterréd sky
 Venus, which is the quene of love,
 Was take into her place above,
 More wist I nought where she
 becam.

And thus my leve of her I nam.
 And forth with al that same tide

To thilke lord in speciall
 As he, which is of alle thinges
 The creator and of the kinges
 Hath the fortune upon honde
 His grace and mercy for to fonde,
 Upon my bare knees I pray,
 That he my worthy king convey
 Richard by name the secounde,
 In whom hath ever yet be founde
 Justice medled with pite,
 Largesse forth with charite,
 In his persone it may be shewed,
 What is a king to be well thewed
 Touching of pite namely,
 For he yet never unpetuously
 Ayein the leges of his londe
 For no defeaute which he fonde
 Through cruelte vengeance sought.
 As though the worldes chaunce in
 brought

Of infortune great debate,
 Yet was he nought infortunate,
 For he, which the fortune ladde,
 The highe god him overspradde
 Of his justice and kept him so,
 That his estate stood evermo
 Sauf as it oughte wel to be
 Lich to the sonne in his degre,
 Which with the cloudes up alofte
 Is derked and beshadewed ofte,
 But how so that it trouble in thnire
 The sonne is ever bright and faire
 Within him self and nought unpeired,
 All though the weder be despeired,
 The heved planete is nought to wite.
 My worthy prince, of whom I write,
 Thus stant he with him selve clere
 And doth what lith in his powere,
 Nought only here at home to seke
 Love and accorde, but outward eke,
 As he, that save his people wolde.
 So ben we alle well beholde

Her Prest, which wolde nought
 abide,

Or be me lefe or be me loth,
 Out of my sighte forth he goth.
 And I was left withouten helpe,
 So, wist I nought wherof to yelp,
 But only that I haddé lore
 My time and was sorie therefore.

To do service and obeisaunce
 To him, which of his high suffraunce
 Hath many a great debate appesed
 To make his lege men ben esed,
 Wherefore that his cronique shall
 For ever be memoriall
 To the loenge of that he doth.
 For this wote every man in soth,
 What king that so desireth pees,
 He taketh the way which Criste ches,
 And who that Christes weies sueth,
 It proveth well that he escheueth
 The vices and is vertuous,
 Wherof he mot be gracious
 Toward his god and acceptable.
 And so to make his regne stable
 With all the will that I may yive
 I pray and shall while that I live,
 As I which in subjection
 Stonde under the protection
 And may my selven nought bewelde,
 What for sikennesse and what for elde.
 Which I receive of goddes grace,
 But though me lacke to purchase
 My kinges thank as by deserte,
 Yet the simplesse of my pouerte
 Unto the love of my legeaunce
 Desireth for to do plesaunce.
 And for this cause in min entent
 This pouer book here I present
 Unto his highe worthinesse
 Write of my simple businesse,
 So as sikennesse it suffre wolde,
 And in such wise as I first tolde,
 Whan I this boke began to make,
 In some partie it may be take
 And for to laugh and for to play,
 And for to loke in other wey
 It may be wisdom to the wise, '
 So that somedele for good apprise,
 And eke somedele for lust and game
 I have it made for thilke same.

And thus bewhapéd in my
thought,
Whan all was tornéd into nought,
I stood amaséd for a while,
And in my self I gan to smile,
Thenkend upon the bedés blacke,
And how they weren me betake
For that I shuldé bid and praie.
And whan I sigh none other waie,
But only that I was refused,
Unto the life whiche I had used
I thoughté never torne ayein.
And in this wisé soth to sain
Homward a softé pas I went,
Where that with all min hole entent,
Upon the point that I am shrive,
I thenke biddé while I live.

Se, which withinne daies seven
This large worlde forth with the
heven,
Of his eternal providence
Hath made, and thilke intelligence
In manne's soule resonable
Hath shape to be perdurable,
Wherof the man of his feture
Above all erthly creature
After the soule is immortall,
To thilke lorde in speciall,
As he which is of alle things
The Creator and of the kinges
Hath the fortunes upon honde,
His grace and mercy for to fonde,
Upon my bare knees I praie,
That he this londe in siker waie
Woll set upon good governaunce.
For if men take in remembraunce,
What is to live in unite,
There is no state in his degre,
That ne ought to desire pes,
Withoute which it is no les
To seche and loke into the past,
There may no worlde's joie last,
First for to loke the clergie,

Hem oughte well to justifie
Thing which belongeth to their cure,
As for to praie and to procure
Our pees toward the heven above,
And eke to sette rest and love
Among us on this erthe here;
For if they wrought in this manere
After the reule of charite"
I hope that men sholden se
This lond amende.

And over this
To seche and loke how that it is
Touchend of the chivalerie,
Which for to loke in some partie
Is worthie for to be commended
And in some part to be amended,
That of her large retenue
The lond is full of maintenue,
Which causeth that the comun right
In fewe centres stont upright.
Extorci6n, kontek, ravine
Witholde ben of that covine.
All day men here great compleint
Of the disese, of the constreint,
Wherof the people is sore oppressed,
God graunt it mote be redressed.
For of knighthode thorder wolde,
That they defende and kepe sholde
The comun right and the fraunchise
Of Holy Chirche in alle wise,
So that no wicked man it dere,
Andtherofservethshieldeandspere.
But for it goth now other waie,
Our grace goth the more awaie.

And for to loken evermore,
Wherof the people pleignen sore
Toward the lawes of our londe,
Men sain that trouth hath broke
his bonde

And with brocdge is gone away,
So that no man can se the wey,
Where for to finde rightwisnesse.

And if men sech in sikernesse
Upon the lucre of marchandie,
Compassement and trecherie

Of singular profit to winne,
Men sain is cause of mochel sinne,
And namely of division,
Which many a noble worthy town
Fro welth and fro prosperite
Hath brought to great adversite ;
So were it good to ben all one.
For mochel gracé therupon
Unto the citees shuldé fall,
Which might availé to us all,
If these estates amended were,
So that the Vertues stoden there,
And that the Vices were away,
Me thenketh I dorste thanne say,
This londes grace shulde arise.

But yet to loke in other wise,

There is a state, as ye shall here,
Above all other on erthé here,
Which hath the londe in his
balaunce;

To him belongeth the legeaunce
Of clerke, of knight, of man of lawe,
Under his honde all is forthérawe
The marchaunt and the laborer,
So stant it all in his powér
Or for to spille, or for to save.

But though that he such power have,
And that his mightes ben so large,
He hath hem nought withouten
charge

To which that **every king** is swore.

So were it good, that he therfore
First unto rightwisnesse entende,
Wherof that he him self amende
Toward his God, and leve vice,
Which is the chefe of his office.

And after all the remenaunt
He shall upon his covenaut
Governe and lede in such a wise,
So that there be no tirannise
Wherof that he his people greve.
Or elles may he nought acheve
That longeth to his Regalie.

For if a king will justifie

His londe and hem that ben withinne,

First at him self he mot beginne
To kepe and reule his own estate,
That in him self be no debate
Toward his God. For otherwise
Ther may none erthly King suffice
Of his kingéom the folk to lede,
But he the King of Heven drede.
For what King sette him upon pride
And taketh his lust on every side
And will nought go the righté weie,
Though God his gracé cast aweie,
No wonder is, for atté last
He shall well wite it maynought last,
The pompé whiche he secheth here.
But what King that with humble
chere

After the Lawe of God escheueth
The Vices, and the Vertues sueth,
His grace shall be suffisaunt
To governe all the remenaunt,
Which longeth unto his dueté;
So that in his prosperite
The people snail nought be op-
pressed,

Wherof his namé shall be blessed
For ever and be memoriall.

And now to speke as in finall
Touchende that I undertake
In English for to make a boke
Which stant betwene ernést and
game,

I have it made as thilke same,
Which axe for to be excused,
And that my boke be nought refused
Of lered men whan they it se
For lack of curiosite;

For thilke scole of eloquence
Belongeth nought to my science,
Upon the forme of rhetorique
My wordes for to peint and pike,
As Tullius sometime' wrote.

But this I knowe and this I wote,
That I have do my trewe peine
With rude wordes and with pleine

In all that ever I couthe and might,
 This boke to write as I behight,
 So as siknese it suffer wolde.
 And also for my dalés olde
 That I am feble and impotent,
 I wot nought how the worlde is
 went,¹

So pray I to my lordés alle,
 Now in min age, how so befallé,
 That I mot stonden in her grace.
 For though me lacké to purchase
 Her worthy thank, as by deserte,
 Yet the simplésse of my pouerte
 Desireth for to do plesaunce
 To hem under whose governaunce
 I hopé siker to abide.

But now, upon my laste tide,
 That I this boke have made and
 write,

My Musé doth me for to wite
 And saith, it shall be for my beste,
 Fro this day forth to take reste,
 That I no more of love make,²
 Which many a herte hath overtake
 And overtornéd as the blinde
 Fro reson into lawe of kinde,

¹ Went, turned.

² Make, write poetry.

Where as the wisdom goth aweie
 And can nought se the righté weie
 How to governe his own estate,
 But every day stant in debate
 Within him self and can nought leve.

And thus forth by my synall leve

I take now for evermore
 Withouté making¹ any more
 Of love and of his dedly hele,
 Which no phisicien can hele.
 For his nature is so divers,
 That it hath ever some travers
 Or of to moch or of to lite,
 That pleinely may no man delite,
 But if him faile or that or this.
 But thilké Love, which that is
 Within a mannés herte affirmed
 And stant of Charite confirmed,
 Such Love is goodly for to have,
 Such Lové may the body save,
 Such Lové may the soule amende,
 The Highe God such Love us sende
 Forth with the remenaunt of grace,
 So that above in thilké place,
 Where resteth Love and alle Pees,
 Our joie may ben endélés.

¹ Making, writing poems.

*Explicit iste liber qui transeat obsecro liber
 Ut sine livore vigeat lectoris in ore.
 Qui sedet in scamnis celi det, ut ista Johannis
 Perpetuis annis stet pagina grata Britannis.*

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