

THIRD EDITION,  
OF THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN  
CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE REIGN OF CHARLES II.



CHARLES II. VIZI. XI.

For the History of the reign of the  
said King, see the History of the  
said King, by James Oglethorpe.

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THE *Original*  
POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN GOSWOLD  
GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----  
Of ditees and of songes glade,  
The which he---made,  
The londe fullfilled is over all.

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GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne---  
Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,  
Sith of our laggage he was the lode-sterre---  
That made first to dystylle and rayne  
The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence  
Into our tunge through his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede---  
My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,  
Mirroure of fructuous entendement,  
Universel fadir in science---

This londis verray tresour and richesse---  
The firste fynder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,  
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,  
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,  
Myky fountane, clere strand, and rois riall,  
Of fresche endite throw Albion iland braid.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rethouris all,  
As in oure toung flour imperial  
That raise in Brittain evir, quha reidis right  
Thou beiris of Makars the triumphs royall,  
The fresche enamilt termes celestiaall:  
This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,  
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,  
Surmounting every toung terrefriall  
As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnight.

DUNBAR.

VOL. XI.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.

THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. XI.

CONTAINING HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

DREAMES,  
ASSEMBLE OF FOULES,  
PYTE IS DEDE,

|| CUCKOWE & NIGHTINGALE,  
GODE COUNSAILE,  
A, B, C,

&c. &c. &c.

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But natheles certain

I can right now no thrifty Tale sain,  
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly  
On metres and on riming craftily)  
Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can  
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;  
And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,  
In o book, he hath sayd hem in another----

Who so that wol his large Volume seke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of English undefil'd,  
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----  
Old Dan Geffrey, in whose gentle spright  
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----  
He whilst he lived was the soveraigne head  
Of shepherds all-----

SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,  
To us discovers day from far;  
His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd  
Which our dark nation long involv'd;  
But he descending to the shades  
Darkness again the age invades.

DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd  
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe  
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles  
Of homely life, thro' each estate and age  
The fashions and the follies of the world  
With cunning hand portraying-----  
Him who in times-----

Dark and untaught began with charming verse  
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

AKENSIDE.

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## MISCELLANIES.

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### CHAUCER'S DREAME,

*Newly before the year 1597 printed, that which heretofore  
hath gone under the name of his Dreame is The Book of the  
Duchesse, or, The Death of Blanch Duchesse of Lancaster.*

WHEN Flora the quene of Pleasaunce,  
Had whole achievid th' obeysaunce  
Of the fresh and the new feson  
Therow out evèry region,  
And with her mantle whole covert 5  
That wintir made had discovert,  
Of avinture withoutin light  
In May I lay upon a night  
Alone, and on my lady thought,  
And how the Lord that her ywrought 10

*Chaucer's Dreame]* This Dreame, devised by Chaucer, seemeth to be a covert report of the mariage of John of Gaunt, the king's sonne, with Blanch the daughter of Henry Duke of Lancaster, who after long love (during the time whereof the poet saith them to be dead) were in the end by consent of friends happily married, figured by a bird bringing in her bill an hearbe which restored them to lyfe againe. Here also is shewed Chaucer's match with a certain gentlewoman, who although she was a stranger was notwithstanding so well liked and loved of the Lady Blanch and her lord, as Chaucer himselfe also was, that gladly they concluded a marriage betweene them. *Urry.*

Couth well entayle in imagery,  
And shewid had grete maistiry,  
When he in so litil a space  
Made such a body and a face,  
So grete beautie with swich fetures,  
More than in othir creätures;  
And in my thoughtis as I lay  
Within a lodge out of the way,  
Beside a well in a forest,  
Where astir hunting I toke rest, 20  
Nature and kind so in me wrought  
That halfe on slepe they me ybrought,  
And gan to dreme to my thinking  
With mind of knowliche like making,  
For what I dremid, as me thought, 25  
I saw it, and I sleptin nought,  
Wherefore is yet my full beleve  
That some gode spirit that ilke eve,  
By mene of some curious port,  
Bare me where I saw payue and sport; 30  
But whether it were I woke or slept  
Well wot I oft I lough and wept;  
Wherefore I woll in remembraunce  
Put whole the payne and the plesaunce,  
Which was to me axin and helc; 35  
Would God ye wist it everydele,  
Or at the lest ye might o night  
Of such apothir have a sight,

Although it were to you a payne,  
Yet on the mo'row ye would be fayne,  
And wish that it might long endure,  
Then might ye say ye had gode cure,  
For he that dremes and wenes he se  
Mock'it the better yet maie he  
Ywit what, and of whom, and where,  
And eke the lasse it woll hindere  
To thinke I se this with mine eene,  
Iwis this may not dremè kene,  
But signe or a signifaunce  
Of hasty thing souning plesaunce;  
For on this wise upon a night,  
As ye have herd, withoutin light,  
Not all wakyng ne full on slepe,  
About such hour as lovirs wepe  
And crie astir ther ladies grace,  
Befell me tho this wondir cace,  
Which ye shall here, and all the wise,  
So wholly as I can devise:  
In playne English evill writtin,  
For slepe writir, well ye wittin,  
Excusid is though he do mis  
More than one whiche that waking is,  
Wherefore here of your gentilnesse  
I you requyre my boistousnesse  
Ye lettin passe as thingè rude,  
And herith what I woll conclude,

And of the' endityng taketh no hede,  
 Ne of the termes, so God you spede,  
 But let all passe as nothing were,  
 For thus befell, as you shall here.

Within an yle methought I was  
 Where wall and yate was all of glasse,  
 And so was closid round about  
 That levelesse none come in ne out,

Uncouth and straungè to behold,  
 For evèry yate of fine gold

A thousand fanis aie turning  
 Entunid had, and briddes singing  
 Divers, and on eche fane a paire  
 With opin mouth again the aire;

And of a fute were all the toures,  
 Subtily corvin astir floures,

Of uncouth colours during aye,  
 That nevir ben none sene in May,

With many a small turret hie;  
 But man on live could I non sie,

Ne creturis, save ladies play,  
 Which werin such of ther array

That as me thought of godelihed  
 They passeden all and womanhed,

For to behold them daunce and sing  
 It semid like none erthly thing,

Such was ther uncouth countinaunce  
 In every play of right usaunce,

79

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85

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And of one age everichone 95  
They semid all save onely one,  
Which had of yeris suffisaunce,  
For she might neythir sing ne daunce,  
But yet her countenaunce was so glad,  
As she so few yeris had had 100  
As any ladie that was there,  
And as litil it did her dere  
Of lustines to laugh and tale  
As she had full stuffid a male  
Of disportis and new playis; 105  
Faire had she ben in her dayis,  
And maistresse semid well to be  
Of all that lusty companie,  
And so she might, I you ensure,  
For one the conningist creture 110  
She was, and so said everichone,  
That er her knew, there failid none,  
For she was sober, and well avised,  
And from every fault disguised,  
And nothing used but faith and truth; 115  
That she n'as young it was grete ruth,  
For every where and in ech place  
She govirnid her, that in grace  
She stode alway with pore and riche,  
That at a word was none her liche, 120  
Ne halfe so' able maistres to be  
To such a lusty companie.

Befell me so, when I avised  
Yhad the yle that me suffised,  
And whole th' estate evèry where  
That in the lusty yle was there,  
Which was more wondir to devise  
Than is the joyous paradise,  
I dare well say, for floure ne tre,  
Ne thing wherein plesaunce might be,  
There saylid none, for every wight,  
Had they desirid day and night  
Richis and hele, beauty and ese,  
With every thing that them might plesse,  
But thinke and have, it cost no more; 135  
In such a country there before  
Had I not ben ne herdin tell  
That livis creäture might dwell.  
And when I had thus all about  
The yle avifid thoroughout 140  
The state, and how they were arayed,  
In my hert I wexe well appayed,  
And in my selfe I me assured  
That in my body' I was well ured,  
Sithin I might have such a grace 145  
'To se the ladies and the place,  
Which were so faire, I you ensure,  
That to my dome though that Nature  
Would evir strive and do her paine  
She should not con ne mow attaine 150

The left feture for to amend,  
 Though she would all her conning spende,  
 That unto beaütie might availe,  
 It were but paine and lost travaile,  
 Such part in ther nativitie 155  
 Was then alangid of beaütie;  
 And eke they had a thing notable  
 Unto ther deeth ay durable,  
 And was, that ther beauty should dure,  
 Which was nevir fene in cature, 160  
 Save only thore (as I trow)  
 It ne bath not be wist ne know,  
 Wherefore I praife with ther conning  
 That during beaütie, richè thing,  
 Had they ben of ther lives certaine 165  
 They had ben quite of every paine.  
 And when I wend thus all have fene  
 The state, the riches, that might bene,  
 That me thought impossible were  
 To se one thing more than was there 170  
 That to beaütie or glad conning  
 Serve or availe might any thing,  
 All sodainly as I there stode  
 This lady, that couth so much gode,  
 Unto me came with smiling chere, 175  
 And said, *Benedicite!* this yere  
 Saw I nevir man here but you;  
 Tell me how ye come hidir now,

And your name, and where that ye dwell,  
 And whom ye feke eke mote ye tell, 180  
 And how ye come be to this place;  
 The soth well told may cause you grace,  
 And ellis ye mote prifoner be  
 Unto the ladies here and me  
 That have the governaunce of this yle; 185  
 And with that word she gan to smile,  
 And so did all the lusty rout  
 Of ladies that stode her about.  
 Madame, (quod I) this night ypast  
 Lodgid I was and sleptè fast 190  
 In a forest beside a well,  
 And now am here, how should I tell?  
 Wot I not by whose ordinance,  
 But onely Fortune's purveiance,  
 Which puttith many, as I gesse, 195  
 To travaile, paine, and businesse,  
 And lettith nothing for ther truth,  
 But some sleeth eke, and that is ruth,  
 Wherefore I doubt her brittilnes,  
 Her variance and unstedfastnes, 200  
 So that I am as yet afraid,  
 And of my beyng here amaid,  
 For wondir thing it semith me  
 Thus many fresh ladies to se  
 So faire, so cunning, and so yong, 205  
 And no man dwelling them among;

Not I not how I hidir come,  
 Madame, (quod I) this all and some :  
 What should I faine a long proceffe  
 To you, that seme such a princeffe? 210  
 What plesith you commaund or say,  
 Here I am redy to obay  
 To my powir, and all fulfill,  
 And prifonis bide at your will,  
 Till you duly enformid be 215  
 Of every thing ye aske me.

This lady there right well apaid  
 Me by the hande ytoke, and said,  
 Welcome, prifoner adventurus,  
 Right glad am I ye have said thus, 220  
 And for ye doubt me to displese  
 I will affay to do you ese :  
 And with that word, ye, right anon,  
 She and the ladies everichon  
 Assembrid, and to counsaile went, 225  
 And aftir that sone for me sent,  
 And to me said on this manere,  
 All word for word, as ye shall here :

To se you here us thinke marvaile,  
 And how withoutin bote or faile, 230  
 By any subtilty or wyle,  
 Ye get have entre in this yle,  
 But not for that yet shall ye se  
 That we gentill women ybe.

Loth to displein any wight,  
 Notwithstanding our gretè right;  
 And for ye shall well undirstond  
 The oldè custome of this lond,  
 Which hath continued many yere,  
 Ye shall well wete that with us here  
 Ye may not bide, for causis twaine  
 Which we be purposed you to faine.

235

240

The one is this; our ordinance,  
 Which is of long continuance,  
 Ne woll not, sothly we you tell,  
 That no man here among us dwell,  
 Wherefore ye mote nedis retourne;  
 In no wise may you here sojourne.

245

The othir is eke, that our quene  
 Out of the relme, as ye maie sene,  
 Is, and may be to us a charge  
 If we let goe you here at large,  
 For whichè cause the more we doubt  
 To doe a fault while she is out,  
 Or suffir that may be noyfance  
 Againe our old accustomedance.

250

255

And when I had these causis twaine  
 Yherd, o God! what mochil paine  
 All sodainly about mine hert  
 There came at onis, and how smert!  
 In creping soft as who should stele  
 Or doe me robbe of all mine hele,

260

And made me in my thought so fraid  
 That in courage I stode difmaid;  
 And standing thus, as was my grace,  
 A lady came more than apace, 265  
 With a huge preifè her about,  
 And told how that the quene without  
 Was arivid, and would come in;  
 Well were they that hidir might twin;  
 They hied so they would not abide 270  
 The bridiling ther horse to ride,  
 By five, by fixe, by two, by thre;  
 There was not one abode with me;  
 The quene to mete evèrichone 275  
 They went, and bode with me not one;  
 And I went aftir a soft pafe,  
 Imagining how to purchase  
 Grace of the quene there to abide  
 Till gode fortune some happy guide 280  
 Me fendin might, that would me bring  
 Where I was borne, to my wonning,  
 For way ne fote ne knew I none,  
 Ne whithirward I n'ist to gone,  
 For all was se about the yle; 285  
 No wondir though me list not smile,  
 Seing the case uncouth and straunge;  
 And so in like a perilous change,  
 Imagi'ning thus walking alone  
 I saw the ladies everichone, 290

So that I might fomwhat offer,  
Sone aftir that I drew me nere,  
And tho I was ware of the quene,  
And how the ladies on ther knene  
With joyous words gladly advised 295  
Her welcomed so that it suffised  
Though she the princes whole had be  
Of all environed is with se;  
And thus avising with chere sad  
All sodainly I was right glad, 300  
That gretir joy, as mote I thrive,  
I trow had nevir man on live  
Than I tho, ne an hert more light,  
When of my lady I had sight,  
Which with the quene ycome was there, 305  
And in one clothing both they were;  
A knight also there well befene  
I saw that come was with the quene,  
Of whom the ladies of that yle  
Had hugè wondir a long while, 310  
Till at the last right sobirly  
The quene her self full cunningly,  
With softè wordis in gode wise,  
Said to the ladies yong and nise,  
My sistirs, how it hath befall 315  
I trow ye know it one and all  
That of long time here have I bene  
Within this yle biding as quene,

Living at ese, that nevir wight  
 More parfit joy havin ne might, 320  
 And to you ben of govirnance  
 Such as you found in whole plesance,  
 In evèry thing as ye know  
 Aftir our custome and our low,  
 Which how they first yfoundin were 325  
 I trow ye wote all the manere;  
 And who the quene is of this yle,  
 As I have ben this longè while,  
 Ech sevin yeres mote of usage  
 Vifit the hevenly armitage 330  
 Which on a rock so high ystonds,  
 In strangè se out from all londs,  
 That to makin the pilgrimage  
 Is called a long peri'lous viage,  
 For if the wind be not gode frend 335  
 The journey duris to the end  
 Of him whiche that it undirtakes;  
 Of twenty thousand one not scapes;  
 Upon which rock growith a tre  
 That certaine yeres beres applis thre, 340  
 Which thre applis who so may have  
 Ben from all displefaunce ysave  
 That in the sevin yere may fall,  
 This wote ye well bothe one and all,  
 For the first apple and the hext 345  
 Which ygrowith unto you next

Yhath thre vertues notable,  
 And kepith youth aie durable,  
 Beauty and loke evir in one,  
 And is the best in everichone. 350

The second apple red and grene,  
 Onely with lokis of your yene  
 You nourishis in grete plesaunce  
 Bettir than partridge or fesaunce,  
 And fedis every liv'is wight 355  
 Plesantly onely with the sight.

And the third apple of the thre,  
 Which growith lowist on the tre,  
 Who it beris ne may not faile  
 That to his plesaunce may availe, 360  
 So your plesure and beauty rich  
 Your during youth evir yliche,  
 Your truth, your cunning, and your wele,  
 Hath aye flourid, and your gode hele,  
 Without sicknes or displesaunce, 365  
 Or thing that to you was noysaunce,  
 So that you have as goddeffes  
 Livid above all princeffes:  
 Now is befall, as ye may se,  
 To gathir these said applis thre, 370  
 I have not failed againe the day  
 Thithirwardis to take the way,  
 Wening to spede as I had oft;  
 But when I come I find aloft

My listir, which that here ystand, 375  
 Having those applis in her hands,  
 Avising them, and nothing said,  
 But lokid as she were well paid;  
 And as I stode her to behold,  
 Thinking how my joyis were cold 380  
 Sith I those applis have ne might,  
 Evin with that so came this knight,  
 And in his armes of me aware  
 Me toke, and to his ship me bare,  
 And said, though him I ner had sene 385  
 Yet had I long his lady ben,  
 Wherefore I should with him ywend,  
 And he would to his liv'is end  
 My servant be, and gan to sing  
 As one that had wonne a rich thing: 390  
 Tho were my spirits fro me gone  
 So sodainly evèrichone  
 That in me apperid but deth,  
 For I felt neithir life ne breth,  
 Ne gode ne harmè none I knewe; 395  
 The sodaine paine me was so new,  
 That had not the hasty grace be  
 Of this lady, that fro the tre  
 Of her gentilnesse so hyid  
 Me to comfort I had dyid, 400  
 And of her thre applis she one  
 Into mine hand there put anone,

Which brought againe my mind and breth,  
 And me recovered from the deth;  
 Wherefore to her so am I hold 405  
 That for her all things do I wold,  
 For she was lech of all my smert,  
 And from grete paine so quite mine hert,  
 And, as God wote, right as ye here  
 Me to comfort with frendly chere 410  
 She did her prowesse and her might;  
 And truly eke so did this knight  
 In that he couth, and oftin said  
 That of my wo he was ill paid,  
 And cursed the ship that them there brought, 415  
 The mast, the mastir that it wrought:  
 And as ech thing mote have an end,  
 My sistir here, your brothir frend,  
 Con with her words so womanly  
 This knight entrete and conningly, 420  
 For mine honour and his also,  
 And said that with her we should go  
 Both in her ship, where she was brought,  
 Which was so wondirfully wrought,  
 So clene, so rich, and so araid, 425  
 That we were both content and paid;  
 And me to comfort and to plesse,  
 And mine hert for to put at ese,  
 She toke grete paine in litil while,  
 And thus hath brought us to this yle, 430

As ye may se; wherfore echone

I pray you thanke her one and one

As hertly as ye can devise

Or imagine in any wife.

At once there tho men mightin seen

435

A world of ladies fall on kneen

'Fore my lady, that there about

Was left neȝe standing in the rout,

But altogether they went at ones

To knele; they spared not for the stones,

440

Ne for estate, ne for ther blode;

Well shewid there they couth much gode:

To my lady they made such fest,

And with such wordis, that the lest

So frendly and so faithfully

445

Ysaid was and so cunningly,

That wondir was, seing ther youth,

To here the language that they couth,

And wholly how they governed were

In thanking of my lady there,

450

And said by will and maundement

They were at her commaundement,

Which was to me as grete a joy

As winning of the toune of Troy

Was to the hardy Grekis strong

455

When they it wan with siegè long,

To se my lady' in such a place,

And so recevid as she was.

And when they talkid had a while  
 Of this and that, and of the yle, 460  
 My lady and the ladies there,  
 Altogithir as they ywere,  
 The quene her self began to play,  
 And to the agid lady say,  
 Now semith you not gode it were, 465  
 Sith we be altogithir here,  
 To ordaine and devise the best  
 To set this knight and me at rest,  
 For *Woman is a feble wight*  
*To vere a warre against a knight;* 470  
 And sith he here is in this place,  
 At my lest in dangir or grace,  
 It were to me grete villany  
 To do him any tiranny;  
 But faine I would, now will ye here, 475  
 In his owne country that he were,  
 And I in pece and he at ese;  
 This were a way us both to plese;  
 If it might be I you beseche  
 With him hereof you fall in speche. 480  
 This lady tho began to smile,  
 Avising her a litil while,  
 And with glad chere she said anone,  
 Madam, I will unto him gone,  
 And with him speke, and oftin fele 485  
 What he desiris every dele:



Blode was there none in nothir cheke,  
 Wordlesse he was, and semid sicke;  
 And so it provid well he was,  
 For without moving any paas,  
 All sodainly as thing dying,  
 He fell at onis downe fowning; 520  
 That for his wo this lady fraid  
 Unto the quene her hyed, and said,  
 Cometh on anon, as have you blisse,  
 But ye be wise; thing is amisse;  
 This knight is ded or will be sone, 525  
 Lo! where he lyith in a swone  
 Withoutin word or anfwiring  
 To that I have said any thing;  
 Wherefore I doubt moche that the blame  
 Might be hindiring to your name, 530  
 Which flourid hath so many yere,  
 So longè that for nothing here  
 I would in no wise that he dyed,  
 Wherefore it gode were that ye hyed,  
 His life to favin at the left; 535  
 And aftir that his wo be cest  
 Commaundith him to voide or dwell,  
 For in no wise dare I more mell  
 Of thing wherein such perill is  
 As like is now to fall of this. 540  
 This quene right tho, full of grete fere,  
 With all the ladies present there,

Unto the knight came where he lay,  
 And made a lady to him say,  
 Lo! here the quene; awake, for shame!  
 545 What will you doe? is this gode game?  
 Why lye you here? what is your mind?  
 Now is well sene your wit is blind,  
 To se so many ladies here  
 And ye to make none othir chere;  
 550 But as ye set them all at nought  
 Arise for his love that you bought.  
 But what she said a word not one  
 He spake, ne answere gave her none.  
 The quene of very pittty tho,  
 555 Her worship and his life also  
 To savin, there she did her paine,  
 And quoke for fere, and gan to faine,  
 For woe, alas! what shall I doe!  
 What shall I say this man unto?  
 560 If he die here lost is my name:  
 How shal I play this perillous game?  
 If any thing be here amisse  
 It shall be said it rigour is,  
 Whereby my name impayrin might;  
 565 And like to die eke is this knight:  
 And with that word her hand she laid  
 Upon his brest, and to him said,  
 Awake, my knight! lo! it am I  
 That to you speke: now tell me why  
 570

Ye fare thus, and this paine endure,  
 Seing you be in country sure,  
 Among such frends that would you hele,  
 Your hert'is ese eke and your wele?  
 And if I wist what you might ese, 575  
 Or know the thing that you might plese,  
 I you ensure it should not faile  
 That to your hele you might availe;  
 Wherefore with all my hert I pray  
 Ye rise, and let us talke and play: 580  
 And se how many ladies here  
 Be comin for to make gode chere!  
 All was for nought, for still as stone  
 He lay, and word ne spoke he none;  
 Long while was or he might braid; 585  
 And of all that the quene had said  
 He wist no word; but at the last  
 O mercy! twise he cryid fast,  
 That pittie was his voice to here,  
 Or to behold his painefull chere, 590  
 Which was not feined was well to seyn  
 Both by his visage and his eyn,  
 Which on the quene at once he cast,  
 And sighid as he would to brast,  
 And astir that eke he shright so 595  
 That wondir was to se his wo,  
 For sithin that payne was first named  
 Was nex more wofull payne attained,

For with voyce ded he gan to plaine,  
 And to himselfe these wordis faine; 600  
 I, wofull wight full of malure,  
 Am worse than ded, and yet I dure,  
 And maugre any paine or deth  
 Against my will I fele my breth:  
 Why n'am I ded, sith I ne serve, 605  
 And sith my lady will me sterve?  
 Where art thou, Deth? art thou agast?  
 Well shall we mete yet at the last  
 Though thou the hide it is for nought,  
 For where thou dwelst thou shalt be sought: 610  
 Maugre thy subtill double face  
 Here will I die right in this place.  
 To thy dishonour and myne ese  
 Thy mannir is no wight to plesse:  
 What nedis the, sith I the seche, 615  
 So the to hide, my payne to eche?  
 And well wost thou I will not live  
 Who would me all this world here give,  
 For I have with my cowardise  
 Lost joy, and hele, and my servise, 620  
 And made my soveraigne lady so  
 That while she lives I trow my fo  
 She will be evir to her end;  
 Thus have I neithir joy ne frend.  
 Wote I not whethir hast or sloth 625  
 Hath causid this now by my troth,

For at the hermitage full hie,  
 When I her saw first with myne eye,  
 I hyid till I was aloft,  
 And made my pacè small and soft, 630  
 Till in mine armes I had her fast,  
 And to my ship bare at the last,  
 Whereof she was displeid so  
 That endles there semid her wo,  
 And I thereof had so grete fere 635  
 That me repent that I come there,  
 Which hast I trow gan her displese,  
 And is the cause of my disese.  
 And with that word he gan to cry,  
 Now Deth, Deth, come, twyis or thry, 640  
 And motrid I n'ot what of slouth :  
 And even with that the quene of routh  
 Him in her armis toke, and sayd,  
 Now, mine owne knight ! be' not ill apayd  
 That I a lady to you sent 645  
 'To have knowledge of your entent,  
 For in gode faith I men't but well,  
 And would ye wist it every dele,  
 Nor will not do to you ywis ;  
 And with that word she gan him kisse, 650  
 And prayed him rise, and said she would  
 His welfare by her truth, and told  
 Him how she was for his disese  
 Right fory, and faine would him plese,

His lyfe to save. These wordis tho  
655  
She said to him, and many mo,  
In comforting, for from the paine  
She would he were delivered faine.  
The knight tho up ycast his een,  
And when he saw it was the quene  
660  
That to him had these wordis said,  
Right in his wo he gan to braid,  
And him up dressis for to knele,  
The quene avising wondir wele ;  
But as he rose he ovirthrew, 665  
Wherefore the quene yet eft anew  
Him in her armis anone toke,  
And pitiously gan on him loke ;  
But for all that nothyng she sayd,  
670  
Ne spake not like she were well payd,  
Ne no chere made nor sad ne light,  
But all in one to every wight  
There was sene conning with estate  
In her without noyse or debate,  
675  
For save onely a loke piteous  
Of womenhed undispiteous,  
That she showid in countenance,  
Far semed her hert from obeisance,  
And not for that she did her reine  
680  
Him to recovir from the peine,  
And his hert for to put at large,  
For her entent was to his barge

Him for to bryng agaynst the eve,  
 With certaine ladies, and take leve,  
 And pray him of his gentilnesse 685  
 To suffir her thenceforth in pece,  
 As othir princis had before,  
 And from thenceforth for evirmore  
 She would him worship in all wise  
 That gentilnesse ymight devise, 690  
 And payne her wholly to fulfill  
 In honour his plesure and will.  
 And during thus this knightis wo,  
 Present the queene and othir mo,  
 My lady' and many' an othir wight, 695  
 Ten thousand shippis at a fight  
 I saw come oer the wawy flode  
 With sayle and ore, that as I stode  
 Them to behold I gan marvaile  
 From whom might come so many' a faile, 700  
 For sith the tyme that I was bore  
 Such a navie there ne're before  
 Had I not sene, ne so arayed,  
 That for the fight my hert yplayed  
 Aye to and fro within my brest 705  
 For joy; long was or it would rest;  
 For there was saylis full of floures,  
 Aftir castils with hugè toures,  
 Yfeming full of armis bright,  
 That wondir lusty was the fight, 710

With large toppis and mastis long,  
 Richly depeint, and reare among  
 At certaine timis gan repayre  
 Smalè birdis doune from the aire,  
 And on the shippis bounds about 715  
 Yfate and song with voyce full out  
 Ballades and layes right joyoufly,  
 As they cowth in ther harmony,  
 That you to write that I there se  
 Mine excuse is it may not be; 720  
 For why? the mattir were to long  
 To name the birds and write ther song;  
 Whereof anon the tydings there  
 Unto the quene sone brought ywere,  
 With many' alas and many' a doubt, 725  
 Shewing the shippis there without:  
 Tho gan the agid lady wepe,  
 And said, Alas! our joy on slepe  
 Sone shal be brought, ye, long or night,  
 For we discried ben by this knight, 730  
 For certes it may none othir be  
 But he is of yond companie,  
 And they be come him here to seche;  
 And with that word her faylid speche.  
 Without reme'dy we be destroid, 735  
 Full oft said all, and gan conclude  
 Wholy at onis at the last  
 That best was shait ther yatis fast,

And arme them all in gode langage,  
As they had done of old ufage, 740  
And of fayre wordis make ther fhote;  
This was ther counsaile and the knot,  
And othir purpofe toke they none,  
But armed thus forth they all gone  
Toward the wallis of the yle; 745  
But or they comin there long while  
They mettin the grete lord of bove  
That callid is the god of Love,  
That them avifid with fuch chere,  
Right as he with them angry were: 750  
Avayled them not ther wals of glaffe;  
This mighty lord let not to paffe  
The fhutting of ther yatis faft;  
All they had ordained was but waft;  
For when his fhips had foundin land 755  
This lord anon, with bow in hand,  
Into this yle with hugè prefe  
Yhyd faft, and would not cefe  
Till he came there the knight ylay:  
Of quene ne lady by the way 760  
Toke he no hede, but forth he pafte,  
And yet all followed at the laft.  
And when he came where lay the knight  
Well fhewid he he had grete might,  
And forth the quene callid anone 765  
And all the ladies everichone,

And to them said, Is not this routh,  
To se my fervaunt for his trowth  
Thus lene, thus sicke, and in this payne,  
And wot not unto whom to playne, 770  
Save onely one withoutin mo,  
Which might him hele, and is his fo?  
And with that word his hevy brow  
He shewed th<sub>3</sub> quene, and lokid row.  
This mighty lord forth tho anone 775  
With o loke her faultis echone  
He can her shew in litil spech,  
Commaunding her to be his lech.  
Withoutin more, shortly to say,  
He thought the quene sone should obay, 780  
And in his hond he shoke his bow,  
And said right sone he would be know;  
And for she had so long refused  
His service, and his lawes not used,  
He let her wit that he was wroth, 785  
And bent his bow, and forth he goth  
A pace or two, and evin there  
A largè draught up to his ere  
He drew, and with an arrow ground  
Bothe sharpe and new the quene a wound 790  
He gave that perfed unto the hert,  
Which astirward full sore gan smert,  
And was not whole of many yere;  
And even with that Be of gode there,

My knight, quod he; I will the hele,  
 And the restore to parfite wele,  
 And for ech payne thou hast endured  
 To have two joies thou art enured:  
 And forth he passid by the rout,  
 With sobir chere walking about, 800  
 And what he said I thought to here;  
 Well wist he which his servaunts were  
 And as he passed anon he fond  
 My lady', and her toke by the hond,  
 And made her chere as a goddes, 805  
 And of Beaute called her Princes,  
 Of Bounty eke gave her the name,  
 And sayd there was nothyng to blame  
 In her, but she was vertuous,  
 Saving she would no pity use, 810  
 Which was the cause that he her fought  
 To put that far out of her thought;  
 And sithin she had whole richesse  
 Of womanhed and frendlinesse,  
 He said it was nothing fitting 815  
 To void Pity his owne leggyng;  
 And gan her prech and with her play,  
 And of her beauty told her aie,  
 And said she was a creäture  
 Of whom the namè should endure, 820  
 And in bokis full of plesaunce  
 Be put for er in remembraunce;

And as me thought in more frendly,  
Unto my lady and godelily  
He spake than any that was there; 825  
And for the' applis I trow it were  
That she had in possession,  
Wherefore long in procession  
Many a pace arme undir other  
He welke, and so did with none other: 830  
But what he would commaund or say  
Forthwith nedis all must obay,  
And what he desired at the lest  
Of my lady was by request:  
And when they long together had bene 835  
He brought my lady to the quene,  
And to her said, So God you spede  
Shew grace, and consent, that is nede.  
My lady tho full conningly,  
Right well avised and womanly, 840  
Downe gan to knele upon the floures  
Which Aprill nourished had with shoures,  
And to this mighty lord gan say,  
That plefith you I woll obay,  
And me restraine from othir thought; 845  
As ye woll all thyng shall be wrought:  
And with that word kneling she quoke.  
That mighty lord in armes her toke,  
And said, You have a servaunt, one  
That truir living is there none, 850

Wherefore gode were, feing his trouthe,  
 That on his painis ye had routh,  
 And purpose you to here his spech,  
 Fully avisid him to lech,  
 For of one thyng ye may be sure, 855  
 He will be yours while he may dure.  
 And with that word right on his game  
 Me thought he lough, and told my name,  
 Which was to me marvaile and fere,  
 That what to do I ne wist there, 860  
 Ne whethir was me bet or none  
 There to abide or thus to gone,  
 For well wend I my lady wold  
 Imagin or deme I had told  
 My counsaile whole, or made complaint 865  
 Unto that lord, that mighty faint,  
 So verily ech thing unfought  
 He said as he had knowne my thought,  
 And told my trouthe and mine unese  
 Bet than I couth have for mine ese, 870  
 Though I had studied all a weke:  
 Well wist that lord that I was feke,  
 And would be lechid wondir faine;  
 No man me blame, mine was the paine.  
 And when this lord had all ysaid, 875  
 And long while with my lady plaid,  
 She gan to smile with spirit glade;  
 This was the answer that she made,

Which put me there in double peine,  
 That what to do ne what to feine 880  
 Wist I not, ne what was the best;  
 Ferre was my hert then fro his rest,  
 For as I thought that smiling signe  
 Was token that the hert encline  
 Would to requestis resonable, 885  
 Because *Smiling is favorable*  
*To every thing that shall thrive,*  
 So thoughtin I tho anon blive  
 That *Worldlesse answer in no toun*  
*Was tane for obligacioun,* 890  
 Ne callid surety in no wise  
 Amongst them that callid ben wise:  
 Thus was I in a joyous dout,  
 Sure and unfurist of that rout;  
 Right as mine hert ythought it were 895  
 So more or lesse wexin my fere,  
 That if one thought ymade it wele  
 Anothir shent it everydele,  
 Till at the last I couth no more,  
 But purposed as I did before 900  
 To serve truly my lyv'is space,  
 Awaiting er the yere of grace,  
 Which may yfall yet or I sterve,  
 If that it plese her that I serve,  
 And servid have, and woll do ever, 905  
 For thyng is none that me is lever

Than is her service, whose presence  
 Mine heven is whole, and her absence  
 An hell all full of divers paines,  
 Whych to the deth full oft me straines. 913  
 Thus in my thoughtis as I stode,  
 That unneth felt I harme ne gode,  
 I saw the quene a litil paas  
 Come where this mighty lord ywas, 915  
 And knelid downe in presence there  
 Of all the ladies that there were,  
 With sobir countinaunce avised,  
 In few wordis that well suffised,  
 And to this lord anon present  
 A bill, wherein whole her entent 920  
 Was writtin, and how she besought,  
 As he knew every will and thought,  
 That of his godhed and his grace  
 He would forgyve all old trespace,  
 And undisplefed be of time past, 925  
 For she would evir be stedfast,  
 And in his service to the deth  
 Use every thought while she had breth,  
 And sight and wept, and said no more,  
 Within was writtin all the fore : 930  
 At whychè bill the lord gan smyle,  
 And said he would within that yle  
 Be lord and fyre both est and west,  
 And cal'd it there his new conquest,

And in grete councell toke the quene; 935  
 Long were the talis them betwene :  
 And ovir her bill he red thrise,  
 And wondir gladly gan devise  
 Her fetures faire and her visage,  
 And bad gode thrift on that image, 940  
 And saied he trowid her compleint  
 Should afir cause her be corseint ;  
 And in his sleve he put the bill,  
 Was there none that yknew his will,  
 And forth he walke apace about, 945  
 Beholding all the lusty rout,  
 Halfe in a thought with smiling chere,  
 Till at the last, as ye shall here,  
 He turned unto the quene ageine,  
 And said, To morne here in this pleine 950  
 I woll that ye be and all yours,  
 That purposid ben to were flours,  
 Or of my lusty colour use,  
 It may not be to you excuse,  
 Ne to none of yours in no wise, 955  
 That able be to my servise ;  
 For as I said have here before  
 I will be lord for evirmore  
 Of you, and of this yle, and all,  
 And of all yours that havin shall 960  
 Joy, pece, or ese, or in plesaunce  
 Your livis use without noyfaunce ;

Here will I in flate be ysene,  
 And turned his visage to the quene,  
 And you give knowledge of my will, 963  
 And a full answer of your bill.

Was there no nay, ne wordis none,  
 But very' obeysaunt semed echone;  
 The quene and othir that were there  
 Well semid it they had grete fere, 970

And there toke lodging every knight,  
 Was none departid of that night,  
 And some to rede old romances  
 Them occupied for ther plesances,  
 Some to make verelaies and laies, 975

And some to othir diverse plaies,  
 And I to me a romance toke,  
 And as I reding was the boke  
 Methought the spñere had so run  
 That it was rising of the sun, 980

And such a pres into the plaine  
 Assemble gone. that with grete paine  
 One might for othir go ne stand,  
 Ne none take othir by the hand,  
 Withoutin they distourbid were, 985  
 So huge and gret the pres was there.

And astir that within two houres  
 This mighty lord clad all in floures  
 Of divers colours many' a paire  
 In his estate up in the aire 990

Well nigh two fathom, as his hight,  
 He set him there in all ther fight,  
 And for the quene and for the knight,  
 And for my lady' and every wight,  
 In hast he sent, so that ner one 995  
 Was there absent, but come echone :  
 And when they thus assemblid were,  
 As ye have heard me say you here,  
 Without more tarrying on hight,  
 There to be fene of every wight, 1000  
 Up stode among the pres above  
 A counsaylir, seruaunt of Love,  
 Which semid well of gret estate,  
 And shewid there how no debate  
 Othir then godely might be used 1005  
 In gentilnesse and be excused,  
 Wherefore he said his lord'is will  
 Was every wight there should be still  
 And in pees, and of one accord,  
 And thus commaundid at a word, 1010  
 And can his tongue to swiche language  
 To turne, that yet in all mine age  
 Herd, I nevir so conningly  
 Man speke, ne halfe so faithfully,  
 For evèry thing he said there 1015  
 Semid as it infelid were,  
 Or approvid for very trew :  
 Swiche was his cunning language newe,

And well according to his chere,  
 That where I be me thinke I here IC20  
 Him yet alway, when I mine one  
 In any place may be alone :  
 First con he of the lusty yle  
 All the astate in lityl whyle  
 Reherse, and wholly every thing IC25  
 That causid there his lord's comming,  
 And every wele and every wo,  
 And for what cause eche thing was so  
 Well shewed he there in esie spech,  
 And how the sicke had nede of lech; IC30  
 And that whiche whole was and in grace  
 He told plainly why ech thing was,  
 And at the last he con conclude,  
 Voidid evèry language rude,  
 And said, That prince, that mighty lord, IC35  
 Or his departing would accord  
 All the parties were there present,  
 And was the fine of his entent,  
 Witnesse his presence in your sight,  
 Which fits among you in his might; IC40  
 And knelid downe withoutin more,  
 And not o word yspake he more.

Tho gan this mighty lord him dresse,  
 With chere avised, to do largesse,  
 And said unto this knight and me, IC45  
 Ye shall to joy re florid be,

And for ye have ben true ye twaine  
 I graunt you here for every paine  
 A thousand joies evèry weke,  
 And loke ye be no lengir feke, 1050  
 And both your ladies, lo 'hem here!  
 Take ech his own; beth of gode chere,  
 Your happie day is new began  
 Sith it was rising of the sun,  
 And to all othir in this place 1055  
 I graunt wholly to stand in grace  
 That servith truely without flouth,  
 And to avauncid be by trowth.  
 Tho gan this knight and I downe knele,  
 Wening to doin wondir wele, 1060  
 Seing, O lord! your grete mercy  
 Us hath enriched so opinly  
 That we deserve may nevir more  
 The lestè part, but evirmore  
 With soule and body truely serve 1065  
 You and yours till that we ysterve:  
 And to ther ladies there they stode  
 This knight, that *couth so mikil gode*,  
 Ywent in hast, and I also;  
 Joyous and glad werin we tho, 1070  
 And al so rich in every thought  
 As he that all hath and ought nought,  
 And them besought in humble wise  
 Us to accept to ther service,

And shew us of ther frendly cheres, 1075  
 Which in ther tresure many yeres  
 They keptin had, us to grete paine,  
 And told how ther servauntis twaine  
 We were, would be, and so had ever,  
 And to the deth change would we never, 1080  
 Ne doe offence, ne thinke like ill,  
 But fill ther ordinance and will;  
 And made our othis freshe and new,  
 Our old service for to renew,  
 And wholly ther's for evirmore 1085  
 We there become; what might we more?  
 And well awaiting that in slouth  
 We made no fault ne in our trowth,  
 Ne thought not do, I you ensure,  
 With our will, whilis we may dure. 1090  
 This seson past, againe an eve  
 This lord of the quene toke his leve,  
 And said he would hastely returne,  
 And at gode leisure there sojourne,  
 Both for his honour and his ese, 1095  
 Commaunding fast the knight to please,  
 And gave his statutes in papirs,  
 And orderit divers officirs,  
 And forth to ship the samè night  
 He went, and sone was out of sight. 1100  
 And on the morow when the aire  
 Attemprid was and wondir faire,

Erly at rising of the sun,  
 After the night away was run,  
 Yplaying us on the rivage, 1105  
 My lady spake of her voyage,  
 And said she madin small journies,  
 And held her in straunge counteries,  
 And forthwith to the quenè went,  
 And shewed her wholly her entent, 1110  
 And toke her leve with chere weping,  
 That pitty was to se that parting;  
 For to the quene it was a paine,  
 As to a martyr new yflaine,  
 That for her woe, and she so tender, 1115  
 Yet I wepe oft when I remember:  
 She offerid there to resigne  
 To my lady eight times or nine  
 Th' astate, the yle, shortly to tell,  
 If it might plese her there to dwell, 1120  
 And said, for evir her lineage  
 Should to my lady doe homage,  
 And hers be whole withoutin more,  
 Ye, and all thers for evirmore.  
 Nay, God forbid! my lady est, 1125  
 With many conning word and soft,  
 Said, that evir such a thing should bene  
 That I consent should that a quene  
 Of your estate, and so well named,  
 In any wise should be attamed, 1130

But would be faine with all my hert,  
 What so befell or how me smert,  
 To doin thing that you might plese  
 In any wise or be your ese,  
 And kissid there and bad gode night, II 35  
 For which leve wept many a wight.  
 There might men here my lady praised,  
 And such a name of her araised,  
 What of cunning and frendlinesse,  
 What of beauty with gentilnesse, II 40  
 And what of glad and frendly cheres  
 That she usid in all her yeres,  
 That wondir was here every wight  
 To say well how they did ther might,  
 And with a pres upon the morow II 45  
 To ship her brought, and what a forow  
 They made when she should undir saile,  
 That and ye wist ye would mervaile.  
 Forth goeth the ship, out goeth the fond,  
 And I as a wode man unbond, II 50  
 For doubt to be left behind there,  
 Into the se withoutin fere  
 Anon I ran, till with a waw  
 All sodenly I was oerthraw, II 55  
 And with the watir to and fro  
 Backward and forward travailed so  
 That mind and breth nigh was ygone,  
 For gode ne harme ne knew I none,

Til at the last with hokis tweine  
 Men of the ship with mikil peine 1160  
 To save my life did such travaile  
 That and ye wist ye would mervaile,  
 And in the ship me drewe on hie,  
 And saidin all that I would die,  
 And laid me long downe by the mast, 1165  
 And of ther clothis on me cast;  
 And there I made my testament,  
 And wist my selfe not what I ment,  
 But when I said had what I would,  
 And to the mast my wo all told, 1170  
 And tane my leve of every wight,  
 And closed mine eyen and lost my fight,  
 Avised to die without more spech,  
 Or any remedy to fech  
 Or gracè new, as was grete nede, 1175  
 My lady of my paine toke hede,  
 And her bethought how that for trouth  
 To se me die it were grete routh,  
 And to me came in sobir wise,  
 And softly said, I pray you rise; 1180  
 Come on with me; let be this fare;  
 All shall be wel; have ye no care;  
 I will obey ye and fulfill  
 Wholly in al that lordis will  
 That you and me not long ago 1185  
 Aftir his list commaundid so,

That there againe no resistance  
 May be withoutin gret offence,  
 And therefore now loke what I say,  
 I am and will be frendly aye; 1190  
 Rise up, behold this avauntage,  
 I grauntin you in heritage  
 All peceably withoutin strive  
 During the dayis of your live;  
 And of her applis in my fleve 1195  
 One she yput, and toke her leve  
 In wordis few, and said, Gode hele  
 He that all made you send, and wele!  
 Wherewith my painis all at ones  
 Tokin such leve, that all my bones, 1200  
 For the new durenfè plesauce,  
 So as they couth desired to daunce,  
 And I as whole as any wight  
 Up rose with joyous hert and light,  
 Whole and unficke, right wele at ese, 1205  
 And all forget had my difese,  
 And to my lady where she plaid  
 I went anone, and to her said;  
 He that all joies persons to plesse  
 First ordainid with parfite ese, 1210  
 And every plesure can depart,  
 Send you, Madame, as large a part,  
 And of his godis such plenty,  
 As he has done you of beauty,

With hele, and all that may be thought, 1215  
 He fend you all as he all wrought.  
 Madame, (quod I) your servaunt trew  
 Have I ben long, and yet will new,  
 Withoutin chaunge or repentaunce  
 In any wise or variaunce, 1220  
 And so will do, as thrive I ever,  
 For thing is none that me is lever  
 Than you to please how er I fare,  
 Mine hert's lady and my welfare,  
 My life, mine hele, my lech also 1225  
 Of every thing that doth me wo,  
 My helpe at nede, and my surete  
 Of every joy that longs to me,  
 My succours whole in alle wise  
 That may be thought or man devise, 1230  
 Your grace, Madame, such have I found,  
 Now in my nede, that I am bound  
 To you for er, so Christ me save,  
 For hele and live of you I have,  
 Wherefore is resoun I you serve 1235  
 With due obeisaunce till I sterve,  
 And ded and quicke be ever yours,  
 Late, erly, and at alle hours.  
 Tho came my lady small alite,  
 And in plaine English con consite, 1240  
 In wordis few whole her entent  
 She shewed me there, and how she ment

To me ward in evèry wise,  
 Wholly she came at ther devise,  
 Without proceffe or long travell, 1245  
 Charging me to kepin counsell,  
 As I would to her grace attaine,  
 Of which commaundement I was faine;  
 Wherefore I passe oer at this time,  
 For counsell cords not well in rime, 1250  
 And eke the oth that I have swore  
 To breke me were bettir unbore;  
 Why? for untrue for evirmore  
 I should be hold, that nevirmore  
 Of me in place should be report 1255  
 Thing that availe might, or comfort  
 To mewardis in any wise,  
 And eche wight wouldin me dispise  
 In that they couth, and me repreve,  
 Which were a thing fore for to greve, 1260  
 Wherefore hereof more mencion  
 Make I not now ne long sermon,  
 But shortly thus I me excuse,  
 To rime a counsell I refuse.  
 Sailing thus two dayis or thre 1265  
 My lady towards her countre,  
 Ovir the wavis high and grene,  
 Which werin large and depe betwene,  
 Upon a time me called and said,  
 That of my hele she was well paid, 1270

And of the quene and of the yle  
 She talkid with me a long while,  
 And of all that she there had fene,  
 And of th' estate and of the quene,  
 And of the ladies name by name, 1275  
 Two houres or mo this was her game,  
 Till at the last the wind can rise,  
 And blew so fast and in such wise  
 The ship, that every wight can say  
 Madame, er eve be of this day, 1280  
 And God tofore, ye shall be there  
 As ye would fainist that ye were,  
 And doubtith not within fixe hours  
 Ye shall be there as all is yours :  
 At which wordis she gan to smile, 1285  
 And said that was no longè while  
 That they her set ; and up she rose,  
 And all about the ship she gose,  
 And made gode chere to every wight,  
 Till of the land she had a sight, 1290  
 Of whichè sight glad, God it wot,  
 She was abashid and abote,  
 And forth goeth, shortly you to tell,  
 Where she accustomed was to dwell,  
 And recevid was, as gode right, 1295  
 With joyous chere and hert'is light,  
 And as a glad new avinture  
 Plefant to evèry cature ;

With which landing tho I awoke,  
 And found my chambir full of smoke, 1300  
 My chekis eke unto the eres,  
 And all my body, wet with teres,  
 And all so feble' and in such wise  
 I was. that unneth might I rise,  
 So far travaillid and so faint, 1305  
 That neithir knew I kirke ne faint,  
 Ne what was what ne who was who,  
 Ne avised what way I would go;  
 But by an adventurous grace  
 I rise and walkt, fought pace and pace, 1310  
 Till I a winding staire yfound,  
 And held the vice aye in my hond,  
 And upward softly so can crepe  
 Till I came where I thought to slepe  
 More at mine ese, and out of prece, 1315  
 At my gode leisure and in pece,  
 Till somwhat I recomfort were  
 Of the travill and the grete fere  
 That I endurid had before,  
 This was my thought withoutin more; 1320  
 And as a wight witleffe and faint,  
 Without more, in a chambir paint  
 Full of stories old and divers,  
 More than I can as now reherse,  
 Unto a bed full sobirly, 1325  
 So as I mightin, full southly,

Pace aftir other, and nothing said,  
Till at the last downe I me laid,  
And as my mind would give me leve  
All that I dremid had that eve 1330  
Before that all I can reherse,  
Right as a child at schole his verse  
Doth aftir that he thinketh to thrive,  
Right so did I for all my live,  
I thought to have in remembraunce 1335  
Both the paine and eke the plesaunce,  
The Dreame whole as it me befell,  
Which was as ye herin me tell :  
Thus in my thoughtis as I lay  
That happy or unhappy day, 1340  
Ne wot I not, so have I blame,  
Of the two which shulde be the name,  
Befell me so that there a thought  
By processe new on slepe me brought,  
And me governed so in a while 1345  
That ones againe within the yle  
Me thought I was, where of the knight  
And of the ladies I had sight,  
And were assemblid on a grene,  
Bothe knight and lady with the quene, 1350  
At which assembly there was said  
How that they all content and paid  
Weria wholly as in that thing  
That the knight there should be the king,

And they would all for sure witnesse  
 Yweddid be both more and lesse, 1355  
 In remembraunce, withoutin more,  
 Thus they consent for evirmore,  
 And was concludid that the knight  
 Departin should the samè night, 1360  
 And forthwith there toke his voiage  
 To journey for his marriage,  
 And returnin with such an host  
 That weddid might be lest and most :  
 This was concluded, written and seled, 1365  
 That it ne might not be repeled  
 In no wise, but continue firme,  
 And all should be within a terme,  
 Without more excufation,  
 Both fest and coronation. 1370  
 This knight, which had thereof the charge,  
 Anon into a little barge  
 Ybrought was late against an eve,  
 Where of all he ytoke his leve,  
 Which barge was as a man'is thought 1375  
 Aftir his plesure to him brought,  
 The quene her selfe accustomed aye  
 In the same barge oft for to play,  
 It nedith neithir mast ne rothir,  
 I have not herd of such another, 1380  
 No maistir for the govirnaunce,  
 He saylid by thought and plesaunce,

Withoutin labour est and west,  
 All ywas one calme or tempest,  
 And I went with at his request, 1385  
 And was the first praied to the fest.  
 When he came into his countre,  
 And passid had the wavy se,  
 In an havin bothe depe and large  
 He left his rich and noble barge, 1390  
 And to the court, shortly to tell,  
 He went where he was wont to dwell,  
 And was recevid, as gode right,  
 As heire, and for a worthy knight,  
 With all the statis of the lond, 1395  
 Which came anon at his first sond,  
 With glad spiritis full of trowth,  
 Loth to do fault, or with a slouth  
 Attaint to be in any wise,  
 Ther richis was ther old servise, 1400  
 Which evir trew had ben yfond  
 Sith first inhabit was the lond;  
 And so recevid thei ther king  
 That forgottin ywas no thing  
 That ought to be done ne might plese, 1405  
 Ne ther sovèraine lord do ese;  
 And with them so, shortly to say,  
 As they of custome had done aye,  
 For sevin yere past was and more,  
 The father, the old, wise, and hore, 1410

King of the land, ytoke his leve  
 Of all his barons on an eve,  
 And told them how his dayis past  
 Were all, and comin was the last,  
 And hart'ily prayed 'hem to remember 1415  
 His sonnè, which yong was and tender,  
 That borne ywas ther prince to be,  
 If he returne to that countre  
 Might by adventure or by grace  
 Within any shorte time or space, 1420  
 And to be true and frendly aye,  
 As they to him had ben alway:  
 Thus he them prayd withoutin more,  
 And toke his leve for evirmore.  
 Knowin was how tendir in age 1425  
 This yongè prince a grete viage  
 Uncouth and straung, honours to seche,  
 Ytoke in hond with lityl speche,  
 Which was to sekin a princes  
 That he desired more than riches, 1430  
 For her grete name that flourid so  
 That in that time there was no mo  
 Of her estate, ne so well named,  
 For borne was none that er her blamed,  
 Of which princes somwhat before 1435  
 Here have I spoke, and some will more.  
 So thus befell as ye shall here;  
 Unto ther lord they made such chere

That joy was there to be present  
To see their troth and how they ment; I440  
So very glad they were each one  
That them among there was no one  
Whiche that desired more riches  
Than for their lord such a prince  
That they might please, and that were faire, I445  
For fast desired they an heire,  
And said grete surety were ywis.  
And as they were speaking of this  
The prince himself in him advised,  
And in plaine English undisguised I450  
Them shewid wholly his journey,  
And of their counsell can them prey,  
And told how he ensurid was,  
And how his day he might not passe  
Without in diffame and grete blame, I455  
And to him for ever a shame;  
And of their counsell and advise  
There he prayith them once or twice,  
And that they would within ten daies  
Advise and ordaine him such waies, I460  
So that it were no displeaunce,  
Ne to this relme oer grete grievance,  
And that he might have to his fest  
Sixty thousand gestes at the lest,  
For his intent within short while I465  
Was to returne unto this yle

That he came fro, and kepe his day;  
 For nothing would he be away.  
 To counsaile tho the lords anon  
 Into a chambir everychone 1470  
 Togithir went, them to devise  
 How they might best and in what wise  
 Purvey for their lord's plesaunce,  
 And the relm's continuance  
 Of honor, which in it before 1475  
 Had continuid evirmore:  
 So at the last they found the waies,  
 How that within the next ten daies  
 All might with paine and diligence  
 Be done, and cast what the dispence 1480  
 Might draw, and, in conclusion,  
 Made for ech thing provision.  
 When this was done, wholly tofore  
 The prince the lordis all before  
 Come, and shewid what they had done, 1485  
 And how they couth by no reson  
 Findin that within the ten daies  
 He might departin by no waies,  
 But would be sittene at the lest  
 Or he returne might to his fest; 1490  
 And shewed him every reson why  
 It might not be so hastily  
 As he desirid, ne his day  
 He might not kepè by no way,

For divers causis wondir grete; 1495  
Which when he herd in such an hete  
He fell for forow, and was feke,  
Still in his bed whole that weke,  
And nigh the tothir for the shame,  
And for the doubt and for the blame 1500  
That mightin on him be aret,  
And oft upon his brest he bet,  
And said, Alas! mine honour for aye  
Have I here lost clenely this day;  
Ded would I be; alas! my name 1505  
Shall aye be more henceforth in shame,  
And I dishonoured and reprevèd,  
And nevir more shall be beleved:  
And made swich forow, that in trouth  
Him to behold it was grete routh; 1510  
And so endured the dayes siftene,  
Till that the lords on an even  
Him come and told they redy were,  
And shewid in few wordis there  
How and what wise they had purvey'd 1515  
For his estate, and to him said,  
That twenty thousand knights of name,  
And fourty thousand without blame,  
All come of noble ligine,  
Togidir in a compane, 1520  
Were lodgid on a river's side,  
Him and his plesure there t'abide.

The prince tho for joy up arofe,  
 And where they lodgid were he goes  
 Withoutin more that same night, 1525  
 And these his suppir made to dight,  
 And with them bode till it was dey,  
 And forthwith to take his journey,  
 Leving the streight, holding the large,  
 Till he came to his noble barge : 1530  
 And when this prince, this lustie knight,  
 With his peple in armis bright  
 Was comin where he thought to pas,  
 And knew well none abiding was  
 Behind, but all were there present, 1535  
 Forthwith anon all his intent  
 He told them there, and made his cries  
 Thorough his hostè that day twife,  
 Commaunding every livis wight  
 There being present in his sight 1540  
 To be the' morow on the rivage,  
 Where he begin would his viage.  
 The morow come, the cry was kept,  
 But few was there that night that slept,  
 But trussed and purveid for the morow, 1545  
 For fault of ships was all ther sorrow,  
 For save the barge and othir two  
 Of shippis there saw I no mo :  
 Thus in ther doubtis as they stode,  
 Waxing the se, comming the flode, 1550

Was cried To ship goe every wight,  
 Then was but hie that hie him might;  
 And to the barge me thought echone  
 They went, without was left not one,  
 Ne horse ne male, trusse ne baggage, 1555  
 Salad ne spere, gardbrace ne page,  
 But was lodgid, and rome ynough;  
 At which shipping me thought I lough,  
 And gan to marvaile in my thought  
 How evir such a ship was wrought, 1560  
 For what peple that can encrese,  
 Ne ner so thicke might be the prese,  
 But all had romè at ther will,  
 There was not one was lodgid ill;  
 For as I trowe my felse the last 1565  
 Was one, and lodgid by the mast,  
 And where I loked I saw such rome  
 As all were lodgid in a towne.  
 Forth goth the ship, said was the crede,  
 And on ther knees for ther gode spede 1570  
 Downe knelid every wight a while,  
 And prayid fast that to the yle  
 They mightin comin in safety,  
 The prince and all the company,  
 With worship and withoutin blame, 1575  
 Or disclaundir of his gode name,  
 Of the promise he should retourne,  
 Within the time he did sojourne,

In his lordè biding his host,  
 This was ther prayir lest and most : 1580  
 To kepe the day it might not ben  
 That he' appointid had with the quene  
 To returnin withoutin flouth,  
 And so assurid had his trowth,  
 For which default this prince, this knight, 1585  
 During the time slept not a night,  
 Such was his wo and his difese,  
 For doubt he should the quene displese.  
 Forth goith the ship with such spede  
 Right as the prince for his grete nede 1590  
 Desirin would afir his thought,  
 Till it unto the yle him brought,  
 Where all in hast upon the sand  
 He and his peple toke the land  
 With hertis glad and cherè light, 1595  
 Wening to be in heven that night;  
 But or they passid had a while,  
 Entring in towardis that yle,  
 All clad in blacke, with chere piteous,  
 A lady which ner dispiteous 1600  
 Had be in all her life tofore  
 With fory chere and hert to tore  
 Unto this prince where he gan ride  
 Ycome and said, Abide, abide,  
 And have no hast, but fast retourne, 1605  
 No reson is ye here sojourne,

For your untruth hath us discried;  
 Wo worth the time we us allied  
 With you, that are so sone untrew;  
 Alas the day that we you knew! 1610  
 Alas the time that ye were bore!  
 For all this lond by you is lore;  
 Accursed be he you hidir brought!  
 For all our joy is turnd to nought;  
 Your acquaintance we may complaine, 1615  
 Which is the cause of all our paine.  
 Alas! Madame, quod tho this knight,  
 And with that from his horse he light,  
 With colour pale and chekis lene,  
 Alas! what is this for to mene? 1620  
 What have ye said? why be ye wroth?  
 You to displese I would be loth:  
 Knowe ye not full well the promesse  
 Which I made have to your princeffe,  
 Which to perfourme is mine intent, 1625  
 So mote I spede as I have ment,  
 And as I am her very trew,  
 Withoutin change or thoughtis new,  
 And al so fully her servand  
 As creature or man livand 1630  
 May be to lady or princeffe,  
 For she mine heven and whole richeffe  
 Is, and the lady of mine hele,  
 My worldis joy and all my wele.

What may this be, whence coms this spech? 1635  
 Tell me, Madame, I you besech,  
 For sith the first of my living  
 Was I so ferefull of nothing  
 As I am now to here you speke,  
 For doubt I fele mine hert to breke: 1640  
 Say on, Madame, tell me your will;  
 'The remnaunt is it gode or ill?  
 Alas (quod she) that ye were bore!  
 For for your love this land is lore;  
 'The quene is ded, and that is ruth, 1645  
 For sorow of your gret untruth:  
 Of two partes of the lusty rout  
 Of ladies that were there about,  
 That wont werin to talk and play,  
 Now are thei ded and clene away, 1650  
 And undir earth tane lodging newe;  
 Alas that er ye were untrew!  
 For when the time ye set was past  
 The quene toke counsaile sone in hast  
 What was to doe, and said Grete blante 1655  
 Your acquaintaunce cause would and shame,  
 And the ladies of ther avise  
 Prayid, for nede was to be wise,  
 In eschewing talis and songs,  
 That by them makin would ill tongs, 1660  
 And sey they were lightly conquest,  
 And prayid to a pore fest,

And foully had ther worship weved,  
 When so unwisely they conceived  
 Ther richè trefour and ther hele, 1665  
 Ther famous name and ther wele  
 To put in such an avinture,  
 Of which the sclaundir evir dure  
 Was like, without helpe of appele,  
 Wherefore they nede had of counsele, 1670  
 For every wight of them would say,  
 Ther closid yle an opin way  
 Was become to evèry wight,  
 And well apprevid by a knight,  
 Which he, alas! without payfaunce 1675  
 Had sone achevid th'obeifaunce :  
 All this was moved at counsell thrife,  
 And was concludid daily twise,  
 That bet was die withoutin blame  
 Than lose the riches of ther name ; 1680  
 Wherefore the deth'is acquaintance  
 They chese, and lest have ther plesaunce,  
 For doubt to livin as repaved,  
 In that they you so sone belevèd,  
 And made ther othes with one accord, 1685  
 That ete ne drinke, ne speke o word,  
 They should nevir, but er weping  
 Bide in a place without parting,  
 And use ther dayis in penaunce,  
 Without desire of allegeaunce, 1690

Of which the truth anon con preve ;  
 For why ? the quene forthwith her leve  
 Toke at them all that were present,  
 Of her defaults fully repent,  
 And dyid there withoutin more, 1695  
 Thus are we lost for evirmore ;  
 What should I more hereof reherse ?  
 Comin within, come se her herse,  
 Where ye shall se the piteous sight  
 That er yet was shewin to knight, 1700  
 For ye shall sein ladies stond  
 Ech with a grete rod in her hond,  
 Yclad in black with visage white,  
 Redy ech othir for to smite ;  
 If any be that will not wepe, 1705  
 Or who that makes counte'nance to flepe,  
 They be so bet, that all so blew  
 They be as cloth that died is new,  
 Such is their parfite repentance,  
 And thus they kepe ther ordinance, 1710  
 And will do evir to the deth,  
 While them enduris any breth.

This knight tho in his armis twaine  
 This lady toke, and gan her faine,  
 Alas my birth ! wo worth my life ! 1715  
 And even with that he drew a knife,  
 And thorough gown, doublet, and shert,  
 He made the blode come from his hert,

And fet him doune upon the grene,  
 And full repent closid his ene, 1720  
 And save that ones he drew his breth  
 Without more thus he toke his deth ;  
 For whichè cause the lusty host,  
 Which in a battaile on the cost  
 At once for sorrow such a cry 1725  
 Gan rere thorow the company,  
 That to the heven herd was the fowne,  
 And undir th' erth als fer adowne,  
 That wildè bestis for the fere  
 So sodainly afrayid were, 1730  
 That for the doubt while they might dure  
 They ran, as of their lives unsure  
 From the wodis unto the plaine,  
 And from valleys the high mountaine  
 They fought, and ran as bestis blind 1735  
 That clene forgottin had ther kind.  
 This wo not cesed, to counsaile went  
 These lords, and for that lady sent,  
 And of avise what was to done  
 They her befought she say would sone. 1740  
 Weping full sore, all clad in blake,  
 This lady softly to them spake,  
 And said, My Lordis, by my trowth  
 This mischefe it is of your flouth,  
 And if ye had that judge would right 1745  
 A prince that were a very knight,

Ye that ben of astate echone  
 Die for his fault should one and one ;  
 And if he hold had the promesse,  
 And done that longs to gentilnesse, 1750  
 And fulfilled the princes behest,  
 This hastie farme had ben a fest,  
 And now is unrecoverable,  
 And us a flaundir eye durable,  
 Wherefore I say, as of counsaile 1755  
 In me is none that may availe,  
 But if ye list for remembraunce  
 Purvey and make such ordinaunce  
 That the quene whiche that was so meke,  
 With all her women dede or seke, 1760  
 Might in your land a chappill have,  
 With some remembraunce of her grave,  
 Shewing her end with the pity  
 In some notable old city,  
 And nigh unto an highè way, 1765  
 Where every wight might for her pray,  
 And for all hers that have ben trew :  
 And even with that she changid hew,  
 And twise wishid astir the deth,  
 And fight, and thus passid her breth. 1770  
 Then said the lordis of the host,  
 And so concludid lest and most,  
 That they would in housis of thacke  
 Ther livis lede, and were but blacke,

And forsake all ther plesaunces, 1775  
 And turne all joy to penaunces,  
 And bere the ded prince to the barge,  
 And namid them shoud have the charge;  
 And to the herse where lay the quene  
 The remnaunt went, and doune on knene, 1780  
 Holding ther hond, on high con crie,  
 Mercy, mercy ! evèrich thrie,  
 And cursed the<sup>9</sup> time that evir slouth  
 Shoud have soche mastirdome of trouth,  
 And to the barge a longè mile 1785  
 They bare her forth, and in a while  
 Allè the ladies one and one  
 By companies were brought echone,  
 And past the se and toke the land,  
 And in new herfis on a sand, 1790  
 Put and brought werin all anon  
 Unto a city closed with stone,  
 Where it yhad ben usid aye  
 The kingis of the land to lay,  
 Aftir they raigned in honours, 1795  
 And writ was which were conquerours,  
 In an abbey of nunnis blake,  
 Which accustomid were to wake,  
 And of usage rise ech a night  
 To pray for every livis wight : 1800  
 And so befell, as is the guise,  
 Ordeint and said was the servise

Of the prince and eke of the quene  
 So devoutly as might yben,  
 And aftir that about the herfes 1805  
 Full many orifons and verfes  
 Withoutin note full foftily  
 Said were, and that full hertily,  
 That all the night till it was day  
 The peple in the church con pray 1810  
 Unto the holy Trinitie  
 Of thofe foulis to have pitie.

And when the night ypaft and ronnc  
 Was, and the newè day begonnc,  
 The yong morow with rayis red, 1815  
 Which from the fonne oer all con fpredd,  
 Atempirid clere was and faire,  
 And made a tyme of wholfome aire,  
 Befell a wondir cafe and ftrange  
 Among the peple, and gan change 1820  
 Sone the word and evèry wo  
 Unto a joy, and fome to two;  
 A bird all fedrid blew and grene,  
 With bright rayis like gold betwene,  
 As fmall thred ovir every joynt, 1825  
 All full of colour ftrange and coint,  
 Uncouth, and wondirfull to fight,  
 Upon the quen'is herfe con light,  
 And fong full low and foftily  
 Thre fongis in her harmony, 1830

Unlettid of evèry wight,  
 Till at the last an agid knight,  
 Which semid a man in grete thought,  
 Like as he fet all thing at nought,  
 With visage and ein all forwept, 1835  
 And pale, as a man long unslept,  
 By the herfis as he ystode  
 With hasty hondling of his hode  
 Unto a prince that by him past  
 Ymade the bridde somwhat agast, 1840  
 Wherefore she rose and left her song,  
 And departid from us among,  
 And spred her wingis for to passe  
 By the place where he entrid was,  
 And in his hast, shortly to tell, 1845  
 Him hurt, that backward downe he fell  
 From a window richly ypeint  
 With lives of many divers seint,  
 And bet his wingis and bled fast,  
 And of the hurt thus died and past, 1850  
 And lay there well an hour and more,  
 Till at the last of briddes a score  
 Come and assemblid at the place  
 Where the window ybrokin was,  
 And made swiche wamentacioun 1855  
 That pity was to here the soun,  
 And the warblis of ther throtis  
 And the complaint of ther notis,

Which from joy clene ywas reverfed;  
 And of them one the glas sone perfed, 186b  
 And in his boke of colours nine  
 An herbe he brought flourellesse, all grene,  
 All full of small levis and plaine,  
 Swart, and long with many a vaine,  
 And where his fellow lay this dede 1865  
 This herbe he down laid by his hede,  
 And dressid it full softly,  
 And hong his hed and stode thereby,  
 Which herb in lesse than half an houre  
 Gan oer all knit, and astir floure 1870  
 Full out, and wexin ripe the fede,  
 And right as one anothis fede  
 Would, in his beke he toke the graine,  
 And in his fellowes beke certaine  
 It put, and thus within the third 1875  
 Up stode and prunid him the bird  
 Which ded had be in all our fight,  
 And both togethir forth ther flight  
 Toke, singin from us, and ther leve  
 Was none disturb 'hem would ne greve. 1880  
 And when they partid were and gone  
 Th' abbessse the fedis sone echone  
 Gathirid had, and in her hand  
 The herbe she toke, well avisand  
 The lese, the fede, the stalke, the floure, 1885  
 And said it had a gode favour,

And was no common herb to find,  
 And well approved of uncouth kind,  
 And than othir more vertuouse;  
 Who so have it might for to use 1890  
 In his nede flowre, or lese, or graine,  
 Of ther hele might ybe certaine;  
 And laid it downe upon the herse  
 Where lay the quene, and gan reherse  
 Echone to' othir that they had sene; 1895  
 And taling thus the fede wex grene,  
 And on the drie herse gan to spring,  
 Which me thought was a wondrous thing,  
 And afir that floure and new fede,  
 Of which the peple all toke hede, 1900  
 And said it was some grete miracle,  
 Or medicine fine more than triacle,  
 And were well done there to assay  
 If it might ese in any way  
 The corsis, which with torchè light 1905  
 They wakid had there all that night:  
 Sone did the lordis there consent,  
 And all the peple' thereto content  
 With, ese words and litil fare,  
 And made the quen'is visage bare, 1910  
 Which shewid was to all about,  
 Wherefore in swone fell whole the rout,  
 And were so sory most and lest  
 That long of weping they not cest,

For of ther lord the remembraunce 1913  
 Unto them was such displeaunce  
 That for to live they called a paine,  
 So were they very true and plaine.  
 And after this the gode abbesse  
 Of the graine gan to chese and dresse 1920  
 Thre, with her fingirs clene and smale,  
 And in the quen'is mouth by tale  
 One aftir othir esily  
 She put 'hem and full conningly,  
 Which shewid sonè such vertue 1925  
 That previd was the medi'cine true,  
 For with a smiling countinaunce  
 The quene uprofe, and of usaunce,  
 As she was wont to every wight,  
 She made gode chere, for whichè sight 1930  
*The peple kneeling on the stones*  
*Thought they in heven were soule and bones ;*  
 And to the prince where he ylay  
 They went to make the same assay,  
 And when the quene it undirstode, 1935  
 And how the medicine was gode,  
 She prayid she might have the graines  
 To relevin him from the paines  
 Which she and he had both endured,  
 And to him went and so him cured, 1940  
 That streight within a litil space  
 Lusty and fresh on live he was,

And in gode hele, and whole of spech,  
 And lough, and said, Gramercy, lech!  
 For which the joy throughout the town 1945  
 So gret was that the bellis fown  
 Afraied the peple a journey  
 About the citie every way,  
 And come and askid cause and why  
 They rongin were so statily? 1950  
 And astir that the quene, th' abbesse,  
 Made diligence or they would cesse,  
 Such that of ladies sone a rout  
 Sewing the quene was all about,  
 And called by name echone and told, 1955  
 Was none forgettin young ne old;  
 There mightin men se joyis new  
 When the medicine fine and trew  
 Thus restorid had every wight,  
 So well the quenè as the knight, 1960  
 Unto full perfit joy and hele,  
 That fleting they were in such wele  
 As folke that wouldin in no wise  
 Desire more parfit paradise.  
 And thus when passed was the sorow, 1965  
 With mikil joye sone on the morow  
 The king, the quene, and every lord,  
 With all the ladies, by' one accord  
 Helde a generall assembly:  
 Gret cry was made through the country, 1970

The which aftir as ther intent  
 Was turnid to a parliament,  
 Where was ordainid and avised  
 Evèry thing and wel devised  
 That plesin might to most and lest, 1975  
 And there concludid was the fest  
 Within the yle for to behold  
 With full consent of young and old,  
 All in the same wise as before, €  
 As thing should be withoutin more, 1980  
 And thei shippid and thithir went,  
 And into straungè relmis lent,  
 To kingis, quenes, and duchesfes,  
 To divers princes and princeffes,  
 Of ther linage, and can them pray 1985  
 That it might like them at that day  
 Of mariage, for ther disport,  
 Come se the yle and them disport,  
 Where should be joustis and turnaies,  
 And armis done in othir waies, 1990  
 Signifying oer all the day  
 Aftir Aprilis within May,  
 And was avised that ladies tweine,  
 Of gode estate and well beseine,  
 With certaine knightis and squiers, 1995  
 And of the quen'is officers,  
 In manuir of an embassade,  
 With certain lettirs closed and made,

Should take the bargè and depart,  
 And seke my lady every part 2000  
 Till they her found for any thing  
 Both chargid have the quene and king,  
 And as ther lady and maistres  
 Her to beseke of gentilnes  
 At the day there for to yben, 2005  
 And oft her recommaund the quene,  
 And prayis for all loves to hast,  
 For but she come all woll be wast,  
 And the fest but a businesse  
 Withoutin joy or lustinesse, 2010  
 And toke them tokins, and gode spede  
 Praid God send 'hem astir ther nede.  
 Forth went the ladies and the knights,  
 And were out fourtene daies and nights,  
 And brought my lady in ther barge, 2015  
 And had well sped and done ther charge;  
 Whereof the quene so herti'ly glad  
 Was, that in soth such joy she had  
 When that the ship approchid lond  
 That she my lady on the sond 2020  
 Met, and in armis so constraine,  
 That wondir was behold them twaine,  
 Which to my dome during twelve houres  
 Neithir for hete ne watry shoures  
 Departid not no company 2025  
 Saving themselfe, but none them by,

But gave them layfour at ther ese  
 To reherfin joy and difese  
 Aftir the plesure and couragie  
 Of ther young and tendir agis; 2030  
 And aftir with many a knight  
 Brought thei were where as for that night  
 They partid not, for to plesauce  
 Content was hert and countinaunce  
 Both of the quene and my maistresse; 2035  
 This was that night ther busineffe;  
 And on the morow with huge rowt  
 This prince of lordis him about  
 Come, and unto my lady said,  
 Of her comming glad and well paid 2040  
 He was, and full right conningly  
 Her thankid and full hertily,  
 And lough and smiled, and said, Ywis  
 That was in doubt in safety is;  
 And commaundid do diligence, 2045  
 And spare for neithir gold ne spence,  
 But make redy, for on the morow  
 Yweddid, with Saint John to borow,  
 He would ybe withoutin more,  
 And let them wite this lese and more. 2050  
 The morow come, and the fervice  
 Of mariage in such a wise  
 Ysaid was, that with more honour  
 Was nevir prince ne conquerour

Ywedde, ne with such company 2055

Of gentilnesse in chivalry,

Ne of ladies so gretè routs,

Ne so befeen as all abouts

They werin there, I certifie

You on my life, withoutin lie. 2060

And the fest hold was in tentis,

As to tell you mine entent is,

In a rome in a largè plaine,

Undir a wode in a champaine,

Betwixt a rivir and a well, 2065

Where nevir had abbay ne fell

Yben, ne kirke, house, ne village,

In time of any man's age,

And durid thre moniths the fest

In one estate, and nevir cest 2070

From erly rising of the sonne

Till the day spent was and yronne

In justing, dauncing, lustinesse,

And all that fowned to gentilnesse.

And as me thought the second morow, 2075

Whan endid was all oldè forow,

And in surety evèry wight

Had with his lady slept a night,

The prince, the quene, and all the rest,

Unto my lady made request, 2080

And her besought oftin and praied

To mewardes to be well apaied,

And confidir mine oldè trouth,  
 And on my painis havin routh,  
 And me accept to her servise 2085  
 In such formè and in such wise  
 That we both mightin be as one;  
 Thus praied the quene and everichone;  
 And for there shoud ne be no nay  
 They stintin justing all a day 2090  
 To pray my lady, and requere  
 To be content and out of fere,  
 And with gode hert make frendly chere,  
 And said it was a happy yere;  
 At which she smiled, and said, Ywis 2095  
 I trow well he my servaunt is,  
 And would my welfare, as I trist,  
 So would I his, and would he wist  
 How and I knewè that his trouth  
 Continue would withoutin slouth, 2100  
 And be such as ye here report,  
 Restraining both courage and sport,  
 I couth consent at your request  
 To be ynamid of your fest,  
 And doin astir your usauce 2105  
 In obeying of your plesaunce:  
 At your request this I consent,  
 To plesin you in your entent,  
 And eke the sovèraine above,  
 Commandid hath me for to love, 2110

And before othir him prefer,  
 Against which prince may be no wer,  
 For his powir ovir all raigneth,  
 That othir would for nought him paineth;  
 And sith his will and yours is one 2115  
 Contrary in me shall be none:  
 Tho (as me thoughtin) the promise  
 Of marriage before the mese  
 Desirid was of every wight  
 To be madin the samè night, 2120  
 To put away all manir doubts  
 Of every wight thereabouts;  
 And so was do: and on the morow,  
 When every thought and every sorrow  
 Dislodgid was out of mine hert, 2125  
 With every wo and every smert,  
 Unto a tent prince and princes  
 Me thought brought me and my maistres,  
 And said we werin at full age  
 There to conclude our marriage, 2130  
 With ladies, knightis, and squiers,  
 And a gret host of ministers,  
 With instruments and sounes diverse,  
 That long werin here to reherse;  
 Which tent was church parochiall, 2135  
 Ordaint was in especiall  
 For the fest and for the sacre,  
 Where archbishop and archdiacre

Yfongin full out the fervice  
 Aftir the custome and the guife 2140  
 And holie church'is ordinaunce :  
 And aftir that to dine and daunce  
 Brought were we, and to divers plaies,  
 And for our spedè ech wight praies,  
 And merry was both most and lest, 2145  
 And said amendid was the fest,  
 And were right glad lady and lord  
 Of the marriage and th' accord,  
 And wishid us hert'is plesaunce,  
 In joy and hele continuaunce, 2150  
 And to the ministrils made request  
 That in encrefing of the fest  
 They wouldin touchin ther cordis,  
 And with some new joyeux accordis  
 Ymove the peple to gladnesse, 2155  
 And praidin of all gentilnesse  
 Ech to painin them for the day  
 To shew his cunning and his play :  
 Tho began fownis mervelous,  
 Entunid with accords joyous, 2160  
 Round about and in all the tents,  
 With thousandis of instruments,  
 That every wight to daunce them pained ;  
 To be merry was none that fayned ;  
 Which fowne me troublid in my flepe, 2165  
 That fro my bed anone I lepe,

Wening to have be at the fest,  
 But when I woke all was yfest,  
 For there n'as lady ne creture,  
 Save on the wals old portraiture 2170  
 Of horsmen, haukis, and houndis,  
 And hurt dere all full of woundis,  
 Some like bittin, some hurt with shot,  
 And as my Dreme semed that was not.  
 And when I wake and knew the trouth, 2175  
 And ye had seen, of very routh  
 I trow ye would have wept a weke,  
 For nevir man yet halfe so seke  
 Iwent escapid with the life,  
 And was for fault that sword ne knife 2180  
 I find ne might my life t'abridge,  
 Ne thing that kervid ne had edge,  
 Wherewith I might my wofull pains  
 Have voidid with bleding of vains.  
 Lo, here my blisse! lo, here my paine! 2185  
 Which to my lady' I do complaine,  
 And grace and mercy her requere  
 To end my wo and busie fere,  
 And me accept to her servise,  
 And to her service in such wise, 2190  
 That of my Dremè the substance  
 Might turnin once to cognisaunce,  
 And cognisaunce to very preve,  
 By full consent and by gode leve;

Or els withoutin more I pray 2195  
 That this same night or it be day  
 I mote unto my Dreame retourne,  
 And sleping so forthe aie sojourne  
 Aboutin the yle of plesaunce  
 Undir my ladie's obeisaunce, 2200  
 In her service, and in such wise  
 As it plese her may to devise,  
 And grace onis to be accept  
 Like as I dremid when I slept,  
 And dure a thousand yere and ten 2205  
 In her gode will. Amen, Amen!

## L'ENVOY.

Fairist of faire, and godelyist on live!  
 All my secre to you I plaine and thrive,  
 Requiring grace, and of my fore complaint  
 To be be helid or martired as a saint, 2210  
 For by my trowth I swere, and by this boke,  
 Ye may both hele and fle me with a loke.

Go forth, mine ownè true hert innocent,  
 And with humblenessse do thine observaunce,  
 And to thy lady on thy knees present 2215  
 Thy service new, and think how grete plesaunce  
 It is to live undir the obeisaunce  
 Of her which that may with her lokis soft  
 Give the the blisse that thou desirist oft,

Be diligent, awake, obey, and drede, 2220  
 And be not to wild of thy countinaunce,  
 But meke and glad, and thy nature yfede  
 To do ech thing that may her doe plesaunce;  
 When thou shalt slepe have aie in remembraunce  
 Th' image of her which may with lokis soft 2225  
 Give the the blisse that thou desirist oft.

And if so be that thou her namè find  
 Writtin in boké, or ellis upon wall,  
 Loke that thou do, as servaunt true and kind,  
 Thine obeisaunce as she were therewithall: 2230  
 Fayning in love is breeding of a fall  
 From the gracè of her whose lokis soft  
 May give the blisse that thou desirist oft.

Ye which that this ballade yredin shall  
 I pray you that you kepe you fro the fall. 2235

## THE DREME OF CHAUCER.

I Have grete wonder, by this light,  
 Howe that I lyve, for daye ne night  
 I maye not slepin welny nought;  
 I haye so many' an ydle thought,  
 Purely for the defaute of slepe, 5  
 That by my trowth I take no kepe

*The Dreme of Chaucer*] By the perion of a mourning knight sitting under an oak is meant John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the death of one whom he entirely loved, supposed to be Blanch the Dutchess. *Urry.*

Of nothing howe it cometh or gothe,  
 Ne me n'ys nothing lese nor lothe;  
 Al is ilichè gode to me  
 Joye or sorowe where so it be, 10  
 For I have felinge in nothing,  
 But as it were a masid thing  
 Al day in pointe to fall adoun,  
 For sorowful ymaginacioun  
 Is alway wholly in my minde. 15

And well ye wote that againste kinde  
 It were to livin in this wise,  
 For Nature ne wolde not suffise  
 Unto none erthy creäture  
 Not longè tymè to endure 20  
 Withoutin slepe and be in sorowe,  
 And I ne may ne night ne morowe  
 Slepyn, and this melancolye  
 And drede I havin for to die;  
 Defaute of slepe and hevinessse 25  
 Hath slaine my spirite of quicknessse,  
 That I have lost al lustihed;  
 Soche fantasies ben in mine hed  
 So I n'ot what is best to do: 30  
 But men might askin me whi so  
 I may not slepe, and what me is?

But nathèles who askith thys  
 Leseth his askyng trewily;  
 My selvin can not tellin why

The sothe, but trewly, as I gesse,  
 I holde it be a sikènessè 35

That I have suffrid this eyght yere,  
 And yet my bote is ner the nere,  
 For there is phisicien but one  
 That may me hele; but that is done; 40  
 Passin we ovir until este;

That wil not be mote nedes be leste:  
 Our first matir is gode to kepe.

So whan sawe I might not slepe  
 Til now of late this othir night 45

Upon my bedde I fate upright,  
 And bade one rechin me a boke,

A romauncè, and it me toke  
 To rede, and drive the night away;

For why? me thought it betir play 50  
 Than play either at chesse or tables.

And in this boke were writtin fables  
 That clerkis had in oldè time

And othir poetes put in rhyme  
 To rede, and for to be in minde, 55

While men lovid the lawe of kinde:  
 This boke ne spake but of soche thinges

Of quenis livis and of kinges,  
 And many othir thingis smale;

Amonge al this I fonde a tale 60  
 Whiche that me thought a wondir thing.

This was the tale: There was a king

That hight Ceix, and had a wife  
 The best that mightin berin lyfe,  
 And this quenè hight Alcyone; 65  
 So it befil thereaftir sone  
 This king wol wendin ovir se :  
 To tellin shortly, whan that he  
 Was in the se thus in this wise  
 Soche a tempest began to ryse 70  
 That brake ther maste and made it sal,  
 And clesste ther ship and dreint 'hem al,  
 That nevir was founde, as it telles,  
 Ne borde ne man, ne nothing elles:  
 Right thus this king ylosse his life. 75

Nowe for to spekin of his wife.

This ladie that was leste at home  
 Hath wondir that the kinge ne come  
 Home, for it was a longè terme;  
 Anon her herte began to yerne, 80  
 And for that her thought evirmo  
 It was not wele, her thoughtin so,  
 She longid so aftir the king,  
 That certes it were a pitous thing  
 To tell her hertely sorowful lyfe 85  
 Whiche that she had this noble wife,  
 For him she lovid aldirbest;  
 Anon she sent both est and west  
 To seke him, but they founde him nought.  
 Alas (quod she) that I was wrought! 90

And where my lorde my love he ded  
 Certis I n'yl nevir ete bred,  
 I make a vowe to my God here,  
 But I mowe of my lordè here.

Soche sorowe this lady to' her toke 95  
 That trewly I, that made this boke,  
 Yhad soche pite and soche routhe  
 To rede her sorowe, that by my trouthe  
 I farid the worfe al the morowe  
 Aftir to thinkin on her sorowe. 100

So whan that she coude here no worde  
 That no man myghtin finde her lorde  
 Ful ofte she fwouned, and saide Alas!  
 For sorow ful nigh wode she was,  
 Ne she ne coude no rede but one, 105  
 But downe on knees she fate anone  
 And wept, that pite was to here.

A! mercy, my swete lady dere!  
 Quod she to Juno, her goddesse,  
 Helpith me out of this distresse, 110  
 And yeve me grace my lorde to se  
 Sone, or to wete where so he be,  
 Or howe he fareth, or in what wise,  
 And I shal make you sacrifice,  
 And wholly yours become I shal, 115  
 With gode wil, body, herte, and al;  
 And but thou wolte this, lady swete!  
 Sendin me grace to slepe, and mete

In my slepe some certaine swevin  
 Where through that I may knowe evin 120  
 Whethir my lorde be quicke or ded.

With that worde she hinge down the hed,  
 And fel in a swoone as colde as stone;  
 Her women caught her up anone,  
 And broughtin her in bed al naked, 125

And she forwepid and forwaked  
 Was wery, and thus the ded slepe  
 Yfel on her or she toke kepe,  
 Through Juno that had herde her bone,  
 That madin her to slepè sone; 130

For as she praide right so was don  
 In dede, for Juno right anon  
 Ycallid thus her messangere  
 To do' her eraunde, and he come nere:  
 Whan he was come she bad him thus; 135

Go bet (quod Juno) to Morpheus,  
 Thou knowest him wel, the god of Slepe;  
 Nowe understande wel, and take kepe,  
 Say thus on my behalfe, that he  
 Go fast into the gretè se, 140

And bid him that on allè thinge  
 He take up Ceix body the kinge,  
 That lieth ful pale and nothinge rody;  
 Byd him crepin into the body,  
 And do it gone to Alcyone 145  
 The quene there she lyith alone,

And shewe her shortely' it is no nay  
 Howe it was dreint this othir day,  
 And do the body speke right so  
 Right as it was wonnid to do 150  
 The whilis that it was alyve :  
 Goith nowe fast, and hye the blive.

This messanger toke leve and went  
 Upon his way, and nevre' he stente  
 Tyl he came to the darke valey 155  
 That stante betwixtin rockis twey,  
 There nevir yet grewe corne ne gras,  
 Ne tre, ne nothing that ought was,  
 Ne best ne man, ne nothing elles,  
 Save that there werin a fewe welles 160  
 Came renning fro the clyffes adowne  
 That made a dedly flepinge sowne,  
 And rennin downe right by a cave  
 That was undir a rocke ygrave  
 Amyd the valey wondir depe 165  
 There as these goddis lay a flepe,  
 Morpheus and Eclympasteyre,  
 That was the god of Slep'is heire,  
 That slepte and did none othir werke.

This cave ywas also as derke 170  
 As hel pitte; ovir all aboute  
 They had gode leysir for to route  
 To vye who mightin slepè best;  
 Some hinge ther chinne upon ther brest,

And slepte upright ther hed yhed, 175  
 And some lay nakid in ther bed,  
 And sleptin whiles their dayis last.

This messaunger come renning fast,  
 And cried, Ho, ho! awake anone!  
 It was for naught; there herde him none: 180  
 Awake, (quod he) who lyith there?  
 And blewe his horne right in ther ere,  
 And cried Awakith! wondir hie.

This god of Slepe with his one eye  
 Cast up, and asked Who clepith there? 185  
 It am I, (quod this messangere)  
 Juno bade that thou shouldist gone,  
 And toldin him what he should done  
 As I have tolde you here before,  
 It is no nede reherse it more, 190  
 And wente his way whan he had saide.

Anone this god of Slepe abraide  
 Out of his slepe and gan to go,  
 And did as he had bidde him do;  
 He toke up the ded body sone, 195  
 And bare it forthe to Alcyone  
 His wife, the quene, there as she lay,  
 Right even a quartir before day,  
 And stode right at her bedd'is fete,  
 And callid her right as she hete 200  
 By name, and said; My swetè wife!  
 Awake, let be your sorowful lyfe,

For in your sorow there lyth no rede,  
 For certes, swete love! I am but dede;  
 Ye shall me ner on lyve yse: 205

But, gode swete herte! I praye that ye  
 Bury my body; soche a tide  
 Ye mowe it finde the se beside:  
 And farewell swete! my world'is blisse!  
 I pray that God your sorowe lyffe: 210  
 To lytel while þur blisse ylasteth.

With that her eyin up she casteth,  
 And sawe naught. Alas! for sorowe  
 She died within the thirde morowe.

But what she said more in that swowe 215  
 I may nat tellin you as now;e;  
 It were to longè for to dwel:  
 My first matere I wil you tel  
 Wherfore I have ytolde this thinge  
 Of Alcyone and Ceix the kinge. 220

For thus moche dare I sayin well,  
 I had be dolvin everidel,  
 And ded, right through defaute of slepe,  
 Yf I ne had red and take kepe  
 Of this ilke talè next before, 225  
 And I wil tellin you wherfore,  
 For I ne might for bote ne bale  
 Slepyn or I had redde this tale  
 Of this ydreinte Ceix the kinge,  
 And of the goddis of Slepinge. 230

Whan I had red this talè wele,  
 And ovirloked it everidele,  
 Me thought wondir if it were so,  
 For I had ner herde speke or tho  
 Of no goddis that couldin make 235  
 Men for to slepe ne for to wake,  
 And I ne knewe ner God but one,  
 And in my game I said anone,  
 (And yet me lyst right il to pley) 240  
 Rathir than that I shuldin dey  
 Thorough defaute of slepinge thus  
 I woldin gyve thilke Morpheus,  
 Or that goddesie hight Dame Juno,  
 Or some wight els, I ne rought who,  
 To make me slepe and have some rest 245  
 I will give him the althir best  
 Yeste that er he abode his lyve,  
 And hereonwarde right now as blyve,  
 If he woll make me slepe a lite,  
 Of downe of purè dovis white 250  
 I wol yeve him a fethir bed  
 Rayid with gold, and right wel cled  
 In fine blacke sattin doutremere,  
 And many' a pilowe', and every bere  
 Of clothe of Raines to slepe on softe, 255  
 Him thare not nede to turnin ofte;  
 And I wol yeve him al that falles  
 To his chambre and to his halles,

I wol do painte 'hem with pure golde,  
 And tapite 'hem ful many folde ; 260  
 Of one sute this shal he yhave,  
 If that I wiste where were his cave,  
 If he can make me slepin sone,  
 As did the goddesse Quene Alcyone ;  
 And thus this ylke god Morpheus 265  
 May winnin of me mo fees thus  
 Than er he wanne ; and to Juno  
 That 'is his goddesse I shall so do,  
 I trowe that she shal holde her paide.

I had unneth that worde isaide, 270  
 Right thus as I have toldin you,  
 Than sodeinly, I ne wiste howe,  
 Soche a luste anone me ytoke  
 To slepe, that right upon my boke  
 I fel aslepe, and therwith even 275  
 Me mette so inly soche a sweven,  
 So wondirfull, that nevir yet  
 I trowe no man ne had the wit  
 To connin wel my swevin rede,

No, nought Joseph withoutin drede 280  
 Of Egypt, he which that rad so  
 The king'is metinge Pharao,  
 No more than coude the leste of us,  
 Ne nat fearfly Macrobeus,  
 He that wrote al the' avision 285  
 Whiche that he met Kinge Scipion,

The noble man, the Affrican,  
 Soche mervailis fortunid than  
 I trowe, arede my dremis even ;  
 Lo ! thus it was, this was my sweven : 290  
     Me thoughtin thus, that it was Maye,  
 And in the dawning there I lay  
 Me met thus in my bed al naked,  
 And lokid forthe, for I was waked  
 With smalè foulis a gret hepe, 295  
 That had afraied me' out of my flepe  
 Through noise and swetnesse of ther songe ;  
 And as me met they fate amonge  
 Upon my chambre rose without,  
 Upon the tyles ovre' al about, 300  
 And evèriche songe in his wise  
 The moste swete and solempne servise  
 By note that evir man I trowe  
 Had herde, for some of 'hem songe lowe,  
 Some high, and al of one accorde : 305  
 To tellin shortly, at o worde,  
 Was nevir herde so swete a steven,  
 But it had be a thinge of heven,  
 So merie' a sowne, so swete entunes,  
 That certis for the towne of Tewnes 310  
 I n'olde but I had herde 'hem singe,  
 For al my chambre gan to ringe  
 Through singing of ther harmony,  
 For instrument nor melody

Was no where herde yet halfe so swete, 315  
 Nor of acordè halfe so mete,  
 For there was none of 'hem that fained  
 To singe, for eche of 'hem him paine  
 To finde out many crafty notes,  
 They ne ysparid nat ther throtes; 320  
 And, soth to saine, my chambre was  
 Ful wel depaintid, and with glas  
 Were al the windowes wel yglased  
 Ful clere, and nat an hole ycrased,  
 That to beholde it was grete joy, 325  
 For wholly al the story' of Troy  
 Was in the glaisinge ywrought thus,  
 Of Hector and Kinge Priamus,  
 Achilles and Kinge Lamedon,  
 And eke Medea and Jason, 330  
 Of Paris, Heleine and Lavine;  
 And al the walles with colours fine  
 Were paintid, bothè texte and glose,  
 And al The Romaunte of the Rose:  
 My wyndowes werin shet ech one, 335  
 And through the glasse the sunne yshone  
 Upon, my bed with bright bemis,  
 With many glad gildy stremis;  
 And eke the welkin was so faire,  
 Blewe, bright, and clere, ywas the ayre, 340  
 And ful attempre', in sothe it was,  
 For neithir colde ne hote it n'as,

Ne' in al the welkin was no clowde.

And as I lay thus, wondir lowde  
 Me thought I herde an huntir blowe 345  
 T' assay his gret horne, and to knowe  
 Whethre' it was clere or horse of fowne;

And I herde goynge up and downe  
 Men, horfis, houndes, and othir thinge,  
 And al men spekin of huntinge, 350  
 How they wolde fle the harte with strength,  
 And how the harte had upon length  
 So moche enbosed, I n'ot nowe what.

Anon right whan I herdin that,  
 How that they wolde on huntinge gone, 355

I was right glad, and up anone  
 I toke my horse, and forth I wente  
 Out of chambre; I nevir stente  
 Tyl I come to the felde without,  
 There ovirtoke I a grete rout 360  
 Of huntirs and of foresters,

And many relaies and limers,  
 That hied 'hem to the forest fast,  
 And I with 'hem: so at the last  
 I askid one lad, a lymere, 365

Say, felowe, who shal huntin here?

(Quod I) and he answered ayen,

Sir, the Emperour Oclonyen,

(Quod he) and he is here faste by.

A goddes halfe, in gode tyme, (quod I) 370

Than go we fast, and gan to ride :  
 Whan we come to the forest side  
 Evèry man ydyd right sone  
 As unto huntinge fel to done.

The maistrir hunte anone sote hote 375  
 With his clere horne yblewe thremote  
 At the uncouplinge of his houndis.

Within a while the harte founde is :  
 I halowed and rēthasid fast  
 A longe time : and so at the last 380  
 This harte rousid and stale away  
 Fro al the houndes a privy way.

The houndes had ovrshot him all,  
 And were on a defaulte yfal,  
 Therwith the hont full wondir fast 385  
 Yblewe a forloyn at the laste :

I was go walkid fro my tre,  
 And as I went there came by me  
 A whelpe, that fawned me as I stode,  
 That had folowed and coude no gode; 390  
 It came and crepte to me as lowe,

Right as it had me wele yknowe,  
 Helde down his hed and joyned his eres,  
 And laide al smothe adowne his heres.

I wolde have caught it up anone; 395  
 It fled, and was fro me ygone :  
 As I folowed and it forth went,  
 Downe by a floury grene it went

Ful thick of grasse ful softe and swete,  
 With flouris sele fare undir fete, 400  
 And lytil used, it semid thus,  
 For bothe Flora and Zephyrus,  
 They two that makin flouris growe,  
 Had made ther dwelling there I trowe,  
 For it was on for to beholde 405  
 As though the erthe there envye wolde  
 To be gayir than is the heven,  
 To havin mo flouris soche seven  
 As in the welkin sterris be,  
 It had forget the povirte 410  
 Of Wintir, through his coldè morowes  
 That made it suffre, and his sorowes  
 Al was forieten, and that was sene,  
 For all the wode was woxin grene,  
 Swetnesse of dewe had made it waxe. 415

It is no nede eke for to axe  
 Where there were many grene greves,  
 Or thicke of trees so ful of leves,  
 And every tree stode by him selve  
 Fro othir wel ten fote or twelwe, 420  
 So grete trees and so huge of strength,  
 Of fourty' or fifty fadome length,  
 All clene withoutin bowe or sticke,  
 With croppis brode, and eke as thicke,  
 They werin not an ynche asonder, 425  
 That it was shadde ovir all under;

And many' an hart and many' an hinde  
 Was both before me and behinde,  
 Of fawnis, fowirs, buckis, does,  
 Was ful the wodde, and many roes, 430  
 And many squirrilis, that sete  
 Ful high upon the trees and etc,  
 And in ther manir madin feltes :  
 Shortly, it was so ful of bestes  
 That though Argus the noble countour 435  
 Yfate to rekin in his countour,  
 And rekin with his figures ten,  
 For by tho figures newe al ken  
 If they be crafty, reken and nombre,  
 And tel of every thing the nombre, 440  
 Yet shulde he faile to rekin even  
 The wonders me met in my sweven :  
 But forthe I romed right wondir faste  
 Downe through the wode; so at the laste  
 I was ware of a man in blacke, 445  
 That fate, and had yturned his backe  
 Unto an ooke and hugè tre;  
 Lord! tho thought I, who may that be?  
 What eylith him to sittin here?  
 And anon right I went him nere; 450  
 Than founde I fitte evin upright  
 A wondir faire welfaring knight,  
 By the manir me thoughtin so  
 Of gode mokil, right yonge therto,

Of the' age of foure-and-twenty yere, 455  
 Upon his berde but litil here,  
 And he was clothid al in blacke;  
 I stalkid even unto his backe;  
 And there I stode as stil as ought,  
 The sothe to say he saw me nought; 460  
 For why? he hinge his hed adowne,  
 And with a dedly sorowful sowne  
 He made of rime ten verses or twelve  
 Of a complainte unto himselfe,  
 The mooste pite and the most routhe 465  
 That evir I herde, for by trouthe  
 It was grete wondir that Nature  
 Might suffre any creature  
 To have soche sorow' and he not ded;  
 Ful pitous pale, and nothing red, 470  
 He said a lay, a manir songe,  
 Withoutin note, withoutin songe,  
 And was this, for ful wel I can  
 Reherse it; right thus it began :  
 I have of sorowe so grete wone, 475  
 That joye ne get I nevir none,  
 Nowe that I se my lady bright,  
 Which I have loved with all my might,  
 Is fro me ded, and is agone,  
 And thus in sorowe' leste me alone : 480  
 Alas! o Dethe! what eylith the  
 That thou n'oldist have takin me

Whan that thou toke my lady fwete ?  
 Of all godenes she had none mete,  
 That was so faire, so freshe, so fre,  
 So gode, that men may wel yse.

485

Whan he had made thus his complainte  
 His sorowful hert gan fast fainte,  
 And his spiritis wexin dede,  
 The blode was fledde for purè drede  
 Downe to his herte to maken him warme,  
 For wel it feled the herte had harme,  
 To wete eke why it was adradde,  
 By kinde, and for to make it gladde,  
 For it is membre principal  
 Of the body, and that made al  
 His hewe ychaunge, and wexin grene  
 And pale for there no blode is sene  
 Within no manir lymme of his.

490

495

Anon therwith, whan I sawe this,  
 He farde thus yvil there he sete,  
 I went and stode right at his sete,  
 And grette him, but he spake right nought,  
 But arguid with his owne thought,  
 And in his witte disputid faste  
 Bothe why and howe his lyfe might laste,  
 Him thought his sorowes were so smerte,  
 And lay so colde upon his herte.

500

505

So through his sorowe' and holy thought  
 Made him that he ne herde me nought,

510

For he had welnye lost his minde,  
 Though Pan, that men clepe god of Kinde,  
 Were for his sorowes ner so wrothe.

But at the last, to faine right sothe,  
 He was ware of me howe I stode 515  
 Before him and did of my hode,  
 And had gret him as I best coude  
 Debonairly and nothing loude;  
 He said, I pray the be not wrothe, c  
 I herde the not, to faine the sothe, 520  
 Ne I sawe the not, Sir, truely.

Ah, gode Sir! tho no force (quod I)  
 I am right sory' if I have ought  
 Distroublid you out of your thought;  
 Forieue me if I have myffetake. 525

Yes, the amendes is light to make,  
 (Quod he) for there lithè non therto;  
 There is nothing misfaide nor do.

Lo howe godely yspake this knight,  
 As it had be anothir wight, 530  
 And made it neithir tough ne queint!  
 And I sawe that, and gan me' aqueint  
 With him, and founde him so tretable,  
 Right wondir skylful and reso'nable,  
 As me thoughtin, for all his bale, 535  
 Anon right I gan finde a tale  
 To him, to loke where I might ought  
 Have more knowleging of his thought.

Sir, (quod I) this game is ydone,  
 I holde that this hart be ygone, 540  
 These huntis can him no where se.

I do no force therof, (quod he)  
 My thought is theron ner a dele.  
 By' our Lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele,  
 Right so me thinkith by your chere; 545

But, Sir, o thing wollin ye here?  
 Me thinketh in' gret forowe' I you se,  
 But certis, Sir, and if that ye  
 Wolde aught discovir me your wo  
 I wolde, as wif God helpe me so, 550

Amende it if I can or may,  
 Ye mowin prove it by assay,  
 For by my trouthe, to make you whole  
 I wol do al my powir whole;  
 And telleth me of your sorowes smert, 555  
 Paraunter it may ese your herte,  
 That semeth ful fyke undir your side.

With that he loked on me aside,  
 As who saithe nay, that n'yl not be.

Graunt mercy, my gode frende! (quod he) 560  
 I thanke the that thou woldist so,  
 But it may ner the rather be do;  
 No man ne may my sorowe glade,  
 That maketh my hewe to fal and fade,  
 And hath myn understanding lorne, 565  
 That me is wo that I was borne;

May nought make my sorowis flyde,  
 Not all the rem'edies of Ovide,  
 Ne Orpheus, god of Melodie,  
 Ne Dædalus, with his playes flye, 570  
 Ne hele me may no physicien,  
 Nought Hippocrates ne Galen;  
 Me' is wo that I live houris twelve;  
 But whofo wol assaye him selve  
 Whether his hert can have pite 575  
 Of any sorowe let him se me,  
 I wretche, that dethe hath made al naked  
 Of al the blisse that er was maked,  
 I wrothe, the werste of allè wightes,  
 That hate my dayis and my nightes; 580  
 My lyfe, my lustis, be me lothe,  
 For allè fare and I be wrothe;  
 The pure deth is so ful my foe  
 That I wolde die it wil not foe,  
 For whan I folowe' it it wil flye, 585  
 I wold have him it n'il not me;  
 And this is paine withoutin rede,  
 Alway dyinge and be not dede,  
 That Sifyphus that lyeth in hel  
 Nay may not of more sorowe tel; 590  
 And who so wiste al, by my trouthe,  
 All my sorowe, but he hadde routhe  
 And pyte of my sorowes smerte  
 That man yhath a fendely herte,

For whofo seeth me first on morowe 595  
 May sayne that he hath met with Sorowe,  
 For I am Sorowe', and Sorowe' is I;  
 Alas! and I wyl tel the why,  
 My sorowe' is tournid to playnyng,  
 And al my laughtir to weping, 600  
 My glad thoughtis to hevinessse,  
 In travaile is myn ydlenessse,  
 And eke my rest, my wele is wo,  
 My gode is harme, and evirmo  
 In wrathe is tournid my playing, 605  
 And my delite in forowing,  
 Myn hele is turned into sickenessse,  
 In drede is al my fyckernessse,  
 To derke is turnid al my lyght,  
 My wytte is foly, my day night, 610  
 My love is hate, my slepe wakyng,  
 My mirth and melis is fasting,  
 My countinaunce is nicete,  
 And al abawed where so I be,  
 My pece is pleding, and in werre, 615  
 Alas, howe might I fare in werre!  
 My boldenessse is turnid to shame,  
 For false Fortune hath played a game  
 At chesse with me, alas the while!  
 The trayteresse false and ful of gyle, 620  
 That al behoteth and nothing halte,  
 She gothe upright and yet she halte,

That baggith foule and lokith fayre,  
 The dispitous and debonaire,  
 That scornith many a creture; 625  
 An ydole of false purtraiture  
 Is she, for she wol sonè wryen;  
 She is the monstri's hed ywryen,  
 As filthe, ovir ystrowed with floures,  
 Her mostè worship, and her floures, 630  
 To lyen, for that is her nature,  
 Withoutin faith, lawe, or mesure,  
 She false is, and evir laughing  
 With one eye, and that othir weping,  
 That is brought up she set al downe; 635  
 I likin her to the scoriowne,  
 That is a false and flateryng best,  
 For with his hed he makith fest,  
 But al amynd his flatiringe  
 With his taile he wil sorely stynge, 640  
 And envenim, and so wil she;  
 She is the envious Charite,  
 That is aye false and semith wele,  
 So turnith she her falsè whele  
 Aboute, for it is nothing stable, 645  
 Nowe by the fyre nowe at the table;  
 Ful many' one hath she thus yblent;  
 She is playe of enchauntèment,  
 That semith one and is not so:  
 The falsè thefe what hath she do 650

Trowest thou? by' our Lorde I wil the say.

At chesse with me she gan to play;

With her false draughtis ful divers

She stale on me, and toke my fers;

And whan I sawe my fers away,

655

Alas! I couth no lengir play,

But sayid, Farewel swete! ywis,

And farewell al that er there is;

Therwith Fortune ysayid Cheke here,

And mate in the' myd poynt of the' checkere 660

With a paunè errant. Alas!

Ful craftyir to play she was

Than Athalus, that made the game

First of the chesse, so was his name;

But God wolde I had ones or twise

665

Iconde and knowe the jcoperdise

That coude the Greke Pythagores,

I shulde have plaide the bet at ches,

And kept my fers the bet therby;

And though wherto? for trewily

670

I holde that wishe not worthe a stre,

It had be ner the bet for me,

For Fortune can so many' a wyle

Ther be but fewe can her begile,

And eke she is the lasse to blame,

675

My selfe I wolde have do the same,

Before God, had i ben as she,

She ought the more excusid be;

For this I say yet more therto,  
Had I be God, and might have do 680  
My wyl, whan she my fers ycaught  
I wolde have drawn the samè draught,  
For al so wise God gyve me resle  
I dare wel swere she toke the beste,  
But throughe that draught I have ylorne 685  
My blyffe, alas that I was berne!  
For evirmore I trowe trewly,  
For al my wil, my luste wholly  
Is turne, but wote ye what to done?  
By' our Lorde it is to dyin sone, 690  
For nothinge I ne leve it nought  
But lyve and dye right in this thought;  
'There n'ys planet in firmamente,  
Ne' in ayre ne' in erthe none elemente,  
'That they ne yeve me' a yeste echone 695  
Of wepyng whan I am alone,  
For whan that I advise me wele,  
And bethinke me evèrydele  
How that there lieth in rekininge  
In my sorowis for nothinge, 700  
And howe there livith no gladnesse  
May gladdin me of my distresse,  
And howe I have losse suffisaunce,  
And therto I have no plesaunce,  
Than may I say I have right nought; 705  
And whan al this falleth in my thought,

Alas! than am I ovircome,  
 For that is done this not to come:  
 I have more sorowe than Tantale.

And whan I herde him tel this tale 710  
 Thus pitoufly as I you tell,  
 Unnethis myght I lengir dwell,  
 It did myn herte so mochill wo.

A, gode Sir! (quod I) fay nat so,  
 Have some pite on your nature, 715  
 That fourmid you to a creture;  
 Remembrith you of Socrates,  
 For he ne countith not thre fiores  
 Of nought that Fortune coude ydo.

No, (quod he) i ne can not so. 720  
 Why, gode Sir, yes parde, (quod I)  
 Ne fay not so, for truely  
 Though ye had lost the ferfis twelve,  
 And for sorowe murdrid your selve,  
 Ye shulde be dampnid in this case, 725  
 By as gode right as Medea was,  
 That slough her childrin for Jafen,  
 And Phyllis for Demophoon,  
 That hing her self, so welaway!  
 For he had brokin his terme day 730  
 To come to her. Anothir rage  
 Had Dido, the Quene of Carthage,  
 That slough her self for Æneas  
 Was false, for whiche a sole she was:

And Echo dyed for Narcissus 735  
 Ne wolde nat love her; and right thus  
 Hath many' an othir foly done,  
 And for Dalila died Sampson,  
 That sloughe him selfe with a pilere;  
 But there is no man alive here 740  
 Wolde for ther feris make this wo.

Why so? (quod he) it is not so,  
 Thou wotest ful lytil what thou meneest,  
 For I have losse more than thou wenest.  
 And howe may that ybe? (quod I) 745  
 Gode Sir, tellith me al wholly  
 In what wise, howe, why, and wherfore,  
 That ye have thus your blisse ylore.

Blithely, (quod he;) come, sit the down;  
 I tel the on condicioun 750  
 Thou shalte wholly with all thy wit  
 Do thyne entente to herkin it.

Yes, Sir. Than swere thy trouthe therto,  
 Gladly to holdin the hereto.  
 I shal right blithe, so God me save, 755  
 Wholly with all the witte I have  
 Here you as wel as er I can.

A Godde's halfe, (quod he) and began.

Sir, (quod he) sithins firste I couthe 760  
 Have any manir witte fro youthe,  
 Or kindly understandinge  
 To comprehende in any thinge

What love was in mine ownè wit,  
 'Dredileffe I have evir yet  
 Be tributary and yeve rente 765  
 To Love wholly, with gode entente,  
 And through plesaunce become his thral  
 With gode wil, body, herte, and al;  
 Al this I put in his servage  
 As to my lorde, and dyd homage; 770  
 And full devoutly' I praide hym tho  
 He shulde beset myne hertè so  
 That it plesaunce unto him were  
 And worship to my lady dere.

And this was long and many' a yere 775  
 (Er that min hert was set o where)

That I dyd thus, and ne wist why,  
 I trowe it came me kindly;  
 Paraunter I was therto most able  
 As a white wal or a table, 780  
 For it' is redy to catche and take  
 Al that men wollin therin make,  
 Whethir men will portrey or painte,  
 Be the werkis nevir so quainte.

And thilke tyme I farid right so, 785  
 I was able to' have lernid tho,  
 And to have conde as wel or better  
 Parauntir eithir arte or lettir,  
 But for love came first in my thought  
 Therefore I ne forgate it nought; 790

I chees love to be my first crafte,  
 And therefore it is with me laste;  
 For why? I toke' it of so yonge age  
 That malice ne had my corage,  
 Not that time turnid to nothing, 795  
 Thorough to mokil knowleging,  
 For that tyme Youth my maistresse  
 Governid me in ydilnesse,  
 For it was in my firstè youth,  
 And though ful litil gode I couthe, 800  
 For al my werkis were flittyng  
 That time, and al my thought varyng,  
 Al thinges were to me yliche gode,  
 That knewe I tho, but thus it stode:

It happed that I came on a day 805  
 In to a place there that I sey  
 Trewly the fairist companie  
 Of ladies that er man with eye  
 Had sene toghithers in o place;  
 Shal I clepe it happe eithir grace? 810  
 That brought me there? nought but Fortune,  
 That is to lyin ful comune,  
 The falsè traitresse perverse,  
 God wolde that I coulde clepe her werse,  
 For now she worchith me ful wo, 815  
 And I wol tel the sone why so.

Amonges these ladies thus echone,  
 The sothe to sayin, I sawe one

That ne was lyke none of the route,  
 For I dare swere, withoutin doute, 820  
 That as the sommer's sonnè bright  
 Is fairer, clerer, and hath more lyght,  
 Than any other planet in heven,  
 The monè or the sterris seven,  
 For al the worlde right so had she, 825  
 Surmountin 'hem al of beaute,  
 Of manir, and of comlynesse  
 Of stature, and wel set gladnesse,  
 Of godelyhede, and so wel besey,  
 Shortly, what shal I more ysey? 830  
 By God and by his holowes twelve  
 It was my swete right al her selve;  
 She had so stedfast countenaunce,  
 So noble porte and maintenaunce,  
 And Love, that wel yherde my bone, 835  
 Yhad espyid me thus sone  
 That she fill sonè in my thought;  
 As helpe me God so was I cought  
 So sodainly, that I ne toke  
 No maner counsaile but at her loke 840  
 And at min herte; for why? her eyen  
 So gladly I trowe myn herte seyne,  
 That purely tho min ownè thought  
 Said it were bet serve her for nought  
 Than with anothir to be wele; 845  
 And it was sothe, for every dele

I wil anone right tel the why :

I sawe her daunce so comily,  
 Carol and sing so swetily,  
 And laugh and play so womanly, 850  
 And lokin so debonairly,  
 So godely speke and so frendely,  
 That certes I trowe that evirmore  
 N'as sene so blisful a trefore ;  
 For evèry here on her hed, 855  
 The sothe to fay, it was not red,  
 Ne neithir yelowè ne browne it n'as,  
 Me thought mosse like to golde it was ;  
 And whiche eyin my lady had,  
 Debonaire, gode, and glad, and sad, 860  
 Simple, of gode mokil, not to wide ;  
 Therto her loke n'as not aside,  
 Ne ovirthwart, but beset so wele  
 It drewe and toke up everydele  
 Al whiche that on her gan beholde ; 865  
 Her eyin semed anone she wolde  
 Have mercy, Folly wendin so,  
 But it was ner the rathir do ;  
 It n'as no counterfetid thinge,  
 It was her ownè pure loking, 870  
 Whiche that the goddesse Dame Nature  
 Had made 'hem opin by mesure  
 And close, for were she ner so glad  
 Her loking was not folishe sprad

Ne wildily though that she plaide,  
 But er me thought her eyin saide  
 By God my wrathe is al forieue;  
 Therwith her liste so well to live  
 That Dulneffe was of her adrad;  
 She n'as to sobre ne to glad;  
 In allè thingis more mesure  
 Ne had nevir I trowe creture;  
 But many' one 'with her loke she herte,  
 And that fate her full lyte at herte,  
 For she knewe nothinge of ther thought;  
 But wher she knewe or knewe it nought  
 Algate she ne' rought of 'hem a stre;  
 To get her love no nere n'as he  
 That woned at home than he in Inde;  
 The formist was alway behinde;  
 But gode folke ovir al othir  
 She loved as man may his brothir,  
 Of whiche love she was wondir large  
 In skilful placis that bere charge;  
 But whiche a visage had she therto!  
 Alas! my herte is wondir wo  
 That I ne can discrivin it,  
 Me lackith bothe Englishe and wit  
 For to undo it at the ful,  
 And eke my spirites ben so dull  
 So gret a thinge for to devise;  
 I have no wyt that can suffyfe

875

880

885

890

895

900

To comprehendin her beaute ;  
 But thus moche I dare faine, that she  
 Was white, rody, freshe, lifely hewed, 905  
 And every day her beaute newed ;  
 And nyghe her face was aldirbeste,  
 For certis Nature had soche leste  
 To make that faire, that trewly she  
 Was her chese patron of beaute, 910  
 And chese ensample' of al her werke<sup>c</sup>  
 And monstre, for be' it ner so derke  
 Me thinketh I se her evirmo ;  
 And yet moreovir, though al tho  
 That ever lived were now a lyve 915  
 Ne wolde thei have founde to discrive  
 In al her face a wickid signe,  
 For it was sad, simple', and benigne.  
 And soche a godely swetè speche  
 Yhad that swete, my lyv'is leche, 920  
 So frendely, and so well ygrounded,  
 Upon reson so wel ifounded,  
 And so tretable to al gode,  
 That I dare swere wel by the rode  
 Of eloquence was nevir fonde 925  
 So swete a sowning and faconde,  
 Ne trewir tonged, ne scornid lasse,  
 Ne bet coude hele, that by the masse  
 I durste swere, though the Pope it songe,  
 That ther was ner yet through her tonge 930

Man ne woman gretly harmid,  
 As for her was al harme yhid,  
 Ne lasse flatiring in her worde,  
 That purely her simple recorde  
 Was founde as trewe as any bonde 935  
 Or trouthe of any mann'is honde.

Ne chide she coulde nevir a dele,  
 That knowith al the worlde ful wele.  
 But soche a fairenesse of a necke  
 Yhad that swete, that bone nor brecke 940  
 N'as there none sein that missesatte,  
 It was white, smothe, streight, and pure flatte,  
 Withoutin hole or canel bone,  
 And by feming she ne had none.

Her throte, as I have nowe memoire, 945  
 Semed as a rounde tour of yvoire,  
 Of gode gretnesse, and not to grete;  
 And Fairè White ywas she hete,  
 That was my ladies namè right,  
 And she was therto faire and bright; 950  
 She ne had not her namè wronge:  
 Right faire sholdirs and body longe  
 She had, and armis evir lith,  
 Fattishe, fleshy, nat grete ther with;  
 Right white handis, and nailis rede; 955  
 Rounde bressis; and of a gode brede  
 Her hippis were; a streight flatte backe,  
 I knewe on her none othir lacke,

That al her limmis n'ere pure sewing,  
In as ferre as I had knowing : 960

Therto she coude so wel yplaye  
What that her lyst, that I dare saye  
That she was lyke to torchè bright,  
That every man may take of light  
Ynough, and it hath ner the lesse 965  
Of manir and of comlynesse.

Right so farid my lady dere,  
For every wight of her manere  
Moght catche ynough if that he wolde,  
Yf he had eyen her to beholde, 970  
For I dare swere wel if that she

Had among tenne thousande ybe  
She woldin have be at the beste  
A chese myroure of al the feste,  
Though they had stonidin in a rowe 975

To mennis eyen that coude have knowe;  
For where so men had plaide or waked  
Me thought the felowshippe as naked  
Withoutin her that I sawe ones  
As a corowne withoutin stones; 980

Trewily she was to min eye  
The' solein phœnix of Arabye,  
For there livith nevir but one,  
Ne suche as she ne knowe I none :  
'To speke of godenesse, trewly she 985  
Had as mochil debonairte

As er had Hester in the Bible,  
 And more, if more were possible;  
 And, sothe to sayin, therwithal  
 She hadde a witte so general, 990  
 So whole enclinid to al gode,  
 That al her witte was sette by the' rode  
 Without malyce, upon gladnesse;  
 And therto' I sawe ner yet a lesse  
 Harmful than she was in doing; 995  
 I say not that she n' hadde knowyng  
 What harme ywas, or ellis she  
 Had coude no gode, so thinkith me;  
 And trewly for to speke of trouthe,  
 But she had had it had be routhe, 1000  
 Therof she had so moche her dele,  
 And I dare faine and swere it wele,  
 That Trouthe him selfe over al and al  
 Had chose his manor principal  
 In her, that was his resting place; 1005  
 Therto she had the moste grace  
 To have stedfaste perseveraunce,  
 And esy' attempre govirnaunce,  
 That gvir I knewe or wiste yet,  
 So pure sufferaunt was her wit; 1010  
 And reson gladly she' understode,  
 It solowid wel she coude gode;  
 She usid gladly to do wele:  
 These were her manirs every dele.

Therwith she lovid so wel right 1015  
 She wronge do wouldin to no wight;  
 No wight ne might do her no shame,  
 She lovid so wel her owne name.

Her lust to holde no wight in honde,  
 Ne be thou fiker she wolde not fonde 1020

To holdin no wight in balaunce  
 By halfe worde ne by countinaunce,  
 But if men wolde upon her lye,  
 Ne sende men into Walakye,  
 To Pruise and to Tartarie, 1025

To Alisaundrie ne Turkye,  
 And bidde him fast anon that he  
 Go hodelesse into the drie se,  
 And come home by the Carrenare;

And, Sir, be ye nowe full ryght ware 1030  
 That I may of you here men faine  
 Wurshippe or that ye come againe.

She ne used no soche knackis smale:  
 But therfore that I tel my tale,  
 Right on this fame, as I have saide, 1035

Was wholly al my love ylaide,  
 For certis she was that swete wife,

My suffisaunce, my luste, my life,  
 Min hope, min hele, and al my blesse,

My worlde's welfare and my goddesse, 1040  
 And I wholly' hers, and every dele.

By' our Lorde! (quod I) I trowe you wele,

Hardly your love was wel beset,  
In'ot howe it might have do bet.

Bettir! ne not so wel (quod he.) 1045  
I trowe it, Sir, (quod I) parde.

Nay leve it wel. Sir, so do I;  
I leve you wel that trewily  
You thought that she ywas the best,  
And to beholde the alderfairest, 1050  
Who so had loked her with your eyen.

With myn! nay, al whiche that her feyen  
Sayid and swore that it was so,  
And though they ne had I wolde tho  
Have lovid best my lady fre 1055

Though I had had al the beaute  
That er had Alcibiades,  
And al the strenght of Hercules,  
And thereto had the worthinesse  
Of Alifaundre', and al the' richeffe 1060

That evir was in Babyloine,  
In Carthage or in Macedoine,  
Or in Rome or in Ninive,  
And therto al so hardy be  
As was Hector, so have I joye, 1065

That Achilles yslough at Troye,  
And therefore was he flayne also  
In a temple, for bothè two  
Were flaine, he' and Antilegius,  
And so faithe Dares Fregius, 1070

For the love of Polyxena,  
 Or ben as wise as Minerva,  
 I wolde evir withoutin drede  
 Have lovid her, for I muste nede.

Nede! nay, trewly I gabbè now; 1075  
 Nought nede, and I wol tellin howe,  
 For of gode wil min herte it wolde,  
 And eke to love her I was holde,  
 As for the fairist and the beste;  
 She was as gode, so have I reste, 1080  
 As was Penelope of Grece,  
 Or as the noble wife Lucrece,  
 That was the beste, he tellith thus  
 The Romane Titus Livius,  
 She was as gode, and nothing like, 1085  
 Though ther stories be autentike,  
 Algate she was as trewe as she.

But wherfore that I tellin the,  
 Whan that I first my lady sey  
 I was right yonge, the sothe to sey, 1090  
 And ful gret nede I had to lerne,  
 Whan that myn hertè woldin yerne;  
 To love it was a gret emprise,  
 But as my wite wolde beste suffise;  
 Astir my yonge and childely wit 1095  
 Withoutin drede I beset it  
 To lovin her in my beste wise,  
 To do her wurship and the servise

Whiche that I coude tho, by my trouthe,  
 Withoutin faining eithir flouthe, 1100  
 For wondir faine I wolde her se;  
 So mokill it amendid me,  
 That whan I sawe her a morowe  
 I was warished of al my sorowe  
 Of al day aftir tel' it were eve; 1105  
 Me thoughtin nothings might me greve  
 Were my sorowes nevir so smerte,  
 And yet she fyt so in min herte  
 That by my trouthe I n'oldè nought  
 For al this worlde out of my thought 1110  
 Yleve my lady; no trewly.

Nowe by my trouthe, Sir, (quod I)  
 Me thinkith ye have soche a chaunce  
 As shrifte withoutin repentaunce.

Repentaunce! nay, nay; fye! (quod he) 1115  
 Shuldin I nowe repentin me  
 To love? nay, certes, than were I wel  
 Worse than ywas Achitophel  
 Or Antenor, so have I joye,  
 The traitour that betrayid Troye, 1120  
 Or than the false Ganelion,  
 He that purchasid the traifon  
 Of Roulande and of Oliver: :  
 Nay, while that I am alive here  
 I n'yl foriet her nevirmo. 1125

Nowe, gode Sir, quod I to him tho,

Ye have wel tolde me here before,  
 It' is no nede to reherse it more,  
 Howe that ye sawe her first, and where,  
 But wolde ye tel me the manere 1130  
 To her whiche was your firste speche,  
 Therof I woldè you beseche,  
 And howe that she knewe first your thought,  
 Whethir ye lovid her or nought,  
 And telleth me eke what ye have lorè; 1135  
 I herde you tellin here before,  
 Ye saide thou n'otist what thou menest,  
 For I have losse more than thou weneſt?  
 And what losse is that? (quod I tho;)  
 N'il she not love you? is it so? 1140  
 Or havin ye ought done amis,  
 That she hath leste you? is it this?  
 For Godd'is love tellith me al.  
 Before God (quod he) and I shal.  
 I say right as I have ysaide, 1145  
 On her was al my love ylaide,  
 And yet she n'iste it ner a dele  
 Not longè tyme, levith it wele,  
 For be right fykir I durst nought  
 For al this worlde tel her my thought, 1150  
 Ne' I wolde have wrathid her trewly;  
 For wost thou why? she was lady  
 Of the body that had the herte,  
 And whoſo' hath that may not aſterte.

But for to kepe me fro' ydlenesse 1155  
 Trewly I dyd my bufincesse  
 To make songis as I best coude,  
 And oftin time I songe 'hem loude,  
 And made songis this a grete dele,  
 Although I coude nat make so wele 1160  
 Songis, ne knewe the arte so al,  
 As coude Lamek's sone Tubal,  
 That founde out first the arte of songe,  
 For as his brothir's hamirs ronge  
 Upon his anvelt up and downe 1165  
 Therof he toke the firste fowne.

But Grekes faine of Pythagoras  
 That he the first findir ywas  
 Of the' arte, Aurora tellith so;  
 But therof no force of 'hem two; 1170  
 Algatis songis thus I made  
 Of my felyng, min herte to glade,  
 And lo! this was the althir first,  
 In'ot whethir it were the werst:

Lorde! it makith min hertè light 1175  
 Whan that I thinke on that swete wight  
 That is so semely on to se,  
 And wilhe to God it might so be  
 That she wolde holde me for her knight,  
 My lady, that' is so faire and bright. 1180

Nowe have I tolde the, soth to say,  
 My firste songe. Upon a day

I bethought me what mochil wo  
 And sorowe that I suffrid tho  
 For her, and yet she wiste it nought; 1185  
 Ne tel her durst I not my thought:  
 Alas! thaught I, I can no rede,  
 And but I tel her I' am but dede,  
 And if I tel her, to fay sothe,  
 I am adradde she wol be wrothe: 1190  
 Alas! what shal I than ydo?  
 In this debate I was so wo  
 Me thought myne hertè braft atwaine,  
 So at the laste, sothe for to faine,  
 I bethought me that Dame Nature 1195  
 Ne formid nevir in creture  
 So mochil beaute trewily  
 And bountie withoutin mercy.  
 In hope of that my tale I tolde  
 With sorowe, as that I ner sholde 1200  
 For nedis, and maugre myne hed  
 I must have tolde her or be ded.  
 In'ot wel howe that I began,  
 Ful yvil reherce it I can,  
 And eke, as helpe me God withal, 1205  
 I trowe it was in the dismal,  
 That was the ten woundes of Egypte,  
 For many' a worde I ovirskipte  
 In telling my tale, for pure fere  
 Lest that my wordis mysseset were; 1210

With sorowful hert and woundes dede,  
 Softely, and quaking for pure drede  
 And shame, and stinting in my tale  
 For ferde, and min hewe allè pale;  
 Ful ofte I wexte bothe pale and red, 1215  
 Bowing to her I hinge the hed;  
 I durst not onis loke her on,  
 For wit, manir, and al, was gone;  
 I saide, Mercy, swete! and no more:  
 It n'as no game; it fate me fore. 1220

So at the laste, the sothe to saine,  
 Whan that myne herte was come againe,  
 To tellin shortly al my speche,  
 With whole herte I gan her beseche  
 That she wolde be my lady swete, 1225  
 And swore and hertely gan her herte  
 Evir to be stedfaste and trewe,  
 And love her alway freshly newe,  
 And nevir othir lady have,  
 And all her worship for to save 1230  
 As I beste coude, I swere her this,  
 For yours is al that er ther is,  
 For gvirmore, myne hertè swete!  
 And ner to false you but I mete  
 I n'yl, as wise God helpe me so. 1235

And whan I had my tale ydo  
 God wote she' acomptid not a flre  
 Of al my tale, so thoughtin me:

To tel shortly, right as it is,  
 Trewly her answere it was this; 1240  
 I can not nowe wel countrefete  
 Her wordis, but this was the grete  
 Of her answere: she sayid Nay  
 Al utterly. Alas that day  
 The sorowe' I suffrid and the wo!  
 That trewly Cassandra, that so 1245  
 Bewaylid the distruccion  
 Of Troye and of ilion  
 Had ner soche sorowe as I tho;  
 I durstin no more say therto 1250  
 For pure fere, but ystale away,  
 And thus I lyved ful many' a day,  
 That trewily I had no nede  
 Ferthir than at my bedd'is hede  
 Nevir a day to sechin sorowe, 1255  
 I founde it redy every morowe;  
 For why? I loved her in no gere.  
 So it befell an othir yere  
 I thought onis I wouldin fonde  
 To doe her knowe and undirstonde 1260  
 My wo; and she well undirstode  
 That I ne wilnid thyng but gode  
 And worship, and to kepe her name  
 Ovir all thynges, and drede her shame,  
 And was so busie her to serve, 1265  
 And pitie were I shouldin sterve,

Sithe that I wilned none harme iwis.

So when my ladie knewe all this,  
 My ladie yave me all whollie  
 The noble yest of her mercie, 1270  
 Savyng her worship by al waies;  
 Dredelesse I mene none othir waies,  
 And therewith she yave me a ryng,  
 I trowe it was the firste thyng :  
 But if myne hertè was iwaxe 1275  
 Glad that it is no nede to axè.

As helpe me God I was as blive  
 Yraifid as fro deth to live,  
 Of all happis the aldirbest,  
 The gladdist and the mošte at rest, 1280  
 For truilie that swetè wight,  
 When I had wrong and she the right,  
 She wouldin alwaie so godelie  
 Foryeve me so debonairlie ;  
 In all my youth, in allè chaunce, 1285  
 She toke me in her govirnaunce ;  
 Therewith she was alwaie so true,  
 Our joye was evir iliche newe ;  
 Our hertis werne so even a paire,  
 That nevir n'as that one contraire 1290  
 Unto that othir for no wo,  
 For sothe iliche thei suffrid tho.

O blisse, and eke o forowe bothe!  
 Iliche thei were bothe glad and wrothe.

All was us one withoutin were ;  
 And thus we lived full many' a yere  
 So well I can not tellin how. 1295

Sir, (quod I) and where is she now ?  
 Now ! quod he, and yfinte anone,  
 Therewith he woxe as dedde as ston, 1300  
 And faied, Alas that I was bore!  
 That was the losse that here before  
 I tolde the that I had ylorne.

Bethinke the how I faied beforne  
 Thou woste full lityl what thou menest,  
 For I have losse more then thou wenest. 1305

God wot, alas ! right that was she.  
 Alas, Sir ! how ? what maie that be ?  
 She is dedde ! Naie ! Yes, by my trouthe.

Is that your losse ? by God it' is routhe. 1310

And with that wordè right anone  
 Thei gan to strake forthe ; all was done  
 For that tymè the hart huntynge.

With that me thoughtin that this kyng  
 Began homewardis for to ride 1315

Unto a place was there beside,  
 Whiche that was from us but a lite,  
 A long castill with wallis white,  
 By Sainct John, on a richè hill,  
 As me mette ; but thus it befill : 1320

Right thus me mette, as I you tell,  
 That in the castell there was a bell,

As it had smittin houris twelve,  
 And therewith I awoke my selve,  
 And found me lying in my bedde, 1325  
 And the boke whiche that I had redde  
 Of Alcyone and Ceix the kyng,  
 And of the goddis of Slepynge,  
 I found it in myne hond ful evin;  
 Thought I this is so queint a swevin 1330  
 That I would by proceffe of tyme  
 Fonde to put this swevin in rime  
 As I can best, and that anon:  
 This was was my swevin, now it' is doen. 1334

*Explicit.*

*This seems an envoy to the Duke of Lancaster after his loss  
 of Blanch.*

My master, &c. When of Christ our kyng  
 Was askid, What is trothe or sothfastnesse,  
 He not a worde answerde to that askyng,  
 As who saieth, no manne is all true I gesse;  
 And therefore though I hight for to expresse  
 The sorowe' and wo that is in mariage  
 I dare not writen of it no wickidnesse,  
 Lest I my self fall est in soche dotage. 8

I woll not saie how that it is the chaine  
 Of Sathanas on whiche he knawith ever,  
 But I dare faine were he out of his paine

As by his will he would be boundin never ;  
 But thilkè dotid fole that eft hath lever  
 Ichainid be than out of prisone crepe,  
 God let hym nevir fro his woe discever,  
 Ne no man hym bewailin though he wepe. 16

But yet lesse thou do worse takith a wife;  
*Bet is to wedde than brennin in worse wife:*

But thou shalt have sorowe on thy fleshe thy life,  
 And ben thy wiv'is thralle, as saine these wise;  
 And if that holy writte maie not suffise  
 Experience shall the teche, so maie happe :  
 'Take the waie levir to be taken in Frise  
 Then est to fall of weddyng in the trappe. 24

This lityl writte, proverbis or figure,  
 I sende you, takith kepe of it I rede;

*Unwise is he that can no wele endure :*

*If thou be sikir put the not in drede*

'The Wife of Bathe I praie you that ye rede  
 Of this matter which that we have on honde :  
 God grauntin you your life frely to lede  
 In fredome, for foule is it to be bonde. 32

*Explicit.*

## THE ASSEMBLE OF FOULES.

*All Fowles are gathered before Nature on St. Valentine's Day to chuse their mates. A female eagle being beloved of three tercels requireth a year's respite to make her choice, upon this triall, Qui bien aime tard oublie, be that loveth well is slow to forget.*

THE life so short, the craft so long to lerne,  
The assaye so hard, so sharp the conquering,  
The dredefull joy, alwaie that flit so yerne,  
All this mene I by Love, that my felyng  
Astonieth with his wondirfull werkyng  
So sore iwis, that when I on him thinke  
Naught wete I well whether I flete or sink. 7

For all be that I knowe not Love in dede,  
Ne wot how that he quitith folke ther hire,  
Yet happith me full ofte in bokis rede  
Of his miraclis and his cruill ire,  
There rede I well he woll be lorde and sire:  
I dare not saie his strokis be so sore,  
But God save soche a lorde! I can no more. 14

Of usage, what for lust and what for lore,  
On bokis rede I oft, as I you tolde,  
But wherfore that I speke all this, naught yore  
Agon it happid me for to beholde  
Upon a boke i writte with lettirs old,  
And thereupon a certain thing to lerne,  
The longè daie full fast I radde and yerne; 21

For out of the olde feldis, as men saieth,  
 Comith all this newe corne fro yere to yere,  
 And out of oldè bokis, in gode faitth,  
 Comith all this newe science that men lere:  
 But now to purpose: as of this matter  
 To redin forthe, it gan me so delite  
 That all that daie me thought it but a lite. 28

This boke of whiche I makin mencion  
 Entitlid was right thus, as I shall tell,  
 Tullius of the Drame of Scipion;  
 Chapters seven it had of heven and hell,  
 And yerth, and foulis that therein do dwell,  
 Of whiche, as shortly as I can it trete,  
 Of this sentence I woll you faine the grete. 35

First tellith it when Scipion was come  
 In Affrike how he metith Massiniffe,  
 That hym for joie in armis hath inome;  
 Then tellith he her speche, and all the blisse  
 That was betwixt 'hem til the daie gan misse,  
 And how his auncester Affrikan so dere  
 Gan in his slepe that night till hym appere: 42

Then tellith it that from a sterrie place  
 How Affrikan hath hym Carthage yshewed,  
 And warnid hym before of all his grace,  
 And saied hym, What man, lerid eithir leude,  
 That lovith common profite well itheude,  
 He should into a blisfull place ywende,  
 There as joye is that last withoutin epde: 49

Then askid he if folke that here ben dede  
 Have life and dwellyng in an othir place?  
 And Affrikan saied Ye, withoutin drede,  
 And how our present worldly liv'is space  
 N'is but a manir deth, what waie we trace,  
 And rightfull folke shull gon astir thei die  
 To heven, and shewid hym the Galaxie: 56

Then shewed he him the little yerth that here is  
 To regarde of the hevin's quantite,  
 And after shewid he hym the nine speris,  
 And astir that the melodie herd he  
 That comith of thilke speris thryis thre,  
 That welles of musike ben and melodie  
 In this worlde here and cause of harmonie: 63

Then saied he him, Sens that yerth was so lite,  
 And full of tourment and of hardè grace,  
 That he ne shuld hym in this worlde delite;  
 Then tolde he him in certain yeris space  
 That every sterre should come into his place  
 There it was first, and all should out of mind  
 That in this worlde is doen of all mankynd: 70

Then praied hym Scipion to tell hym all  
 The waie to come into that hevin blisse;  
 And he saied, First knowe thy self immortall,  
 And loke aie busely that thou werche and wisse  
 To common profite, and thou shalt not misse  
 To come swiftly unto that placè dere  
 That full of blisse is and of soulis clere. 77

And brekirs of the lawe, the sothe to faine,  
 And likerous folke astir that thei ben dede,  
 Shull whirle about the world alwaie in pain  
 Till many' a worlde be passid, out of drede,  
 And then foryevin all ther wickid dede;  
 Then shullin thei come to that blisfull place,  
 To whiche to comin God sendin the grace. 84

The daie gan failin, and the darkè night,  
 That revith bestis from ther businesse,  
 Beraftè me my boke for lacke of light,  
 And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse,  
 Fulfilled of thought and busie hevinesse,  
 For bothe I had thyng whiche that i ne wolde,  
 And eke I ne had that thyng that I wolde. 91

But, finally, my spirite at the laste,  
 For werie of my labour all that daie,  
 Toke rest, that madin me to slepin faste,  
 And in my slepe I met as that I laie  
 How Afrikan, right in the self araie  
 That Scipion hym sawe before that tide,  
 Was come, and stode right at my bedd'is side. 98

The werie huntir slepyng in his bedde  
 The wodde ayen his minde goith anone,  
 The judge ydremith how his plices be spedde,  
 The cartir dremith how his cartis gone,  
 The rich of gold, the knight fight with his sone,  
 The sicke ymette he drinkith of the tonne,  
 The lovir mette he hath his ladie wonne. 105

Can I not faine if that the cause ywere  
 For I had radde of Affrikan beforne  
 That madin me to mete that he stode there,  
 But thus said he; Thou hast the so wel borne  
 In loking of myne olde boke all to torne,  
 Of whiche Macrobie ne raught not a lite,  
 That somedele of thy labour would I quite. 112

Thou Citherea, blisfull ladie fwete!  
 That with thy fire brond dauntist when the left,  
 That madist me this swevin for to mete,  
 Be thou my helpe in this, for thou maist best,  
 As wisely as I feigh the north north west  
 When I began my swevin for to write,  
 So yeve me might to rime it and endite. 119

This foresaid Affrikan me hent anone,  
 And forthe with hym unto a gate ybrought  
 Right of a parke ywallid with grene stone,  
 And oer the gate with lettirs large ywrought  
 There werin versis writtin, as me thought,  
 On eithir halfe, of full grete difference,  
 On which I shall you saie the plain sentence. 126

Through me men gon into that blisful place  
 Of hertis hele and dedly woundis cure,  
 Through me men gone into the well of grace,  
 There grene and lustie Maie shall er endure;  
 This is the waie to all gode avinture:  
 Be glad, thou reder, and thy sorowe' of cast,  
 All open am I; passe in, and spede the fast. 133

Through me men gon, then spake that othir side,  
 Unto the mortall strokis of the spere,  
 Of whiche Disdain and Daungir is the gide,  
 There nevir tre shall fruiet ne levis bere;  
 This streme you ledith to the sorowfull were  
 There as the fishe in prison is all drie;  
 The' eschewyng is onely the remedie.

140

These versis of gold and asure writte were,  
 Of whiche I gan astonied to beholde,  
 For with that one encrefid all my fere,  
 And with that othir gan my herte to bolde;  
 That one me het, that othir did me colde:  
 No wit had I for errour for to chese  
 To entre' or flie, or me to save or lese.

147

Right as betwixtin adamantis two  
 Of evin weight a pece of yron set  
 Ne hath no might to movin to ne fro,  
 For what that one maie hale that othir let;  
 So fared I, that I n'ist where me was bet  
 To entre' or leve, til Affrican my gide  
 Me hent, and shove in at the gatis wide,

154

And saied, It standith writtin in thy face  
 Thyne errour, though thou tell it not to me,  
 But dred the not to come into this place,  
 For this writyng is nothyng mente by the,  
 Ne by none but he Lov'is servaunt be,  
 For thou of love hast lost thy tast I gesse,  
 As sicke man hath of swete and bittirnesse.

161

But nathèles, although that thou be dull,  
 That which thou canst not doe yet maieft thou fe,  
 For many' a man that maie not stande a pull  
 Yet liketh it hym at wrestlyng for to be,  
 And demith whethir he doe bet or he ;  
 And if thou haddist connyng for t' endite  
 I shall the shewin mattir of to write. 168

With that my hand in his he toke anon,  
 Of whiche I comfort caught, and went in fast ;  
 But Lorde ! so I was glad and well begon !  
 For ovir all where I myne eyin cast  
 Were treis clad with leves that aie shal last,  
 Eche in his kinde, with colour freshe and grene  
 As emeraude, that joie it was to sene. 175

The bildir oke, and eke the hardie ashe,  
 The pillir elme, the coffir unto caraine,  
 The boxe pipetre, the holme to whippis lashe,  
 The sailing firre, the cypres deth to plaine,  
 The shotir ewe, the aspe for shaftis plaine,  
 The' olive of pece, and eke the dronkin vine,  
 The victor palme, the laurir to divine. 182

A gardein sawe I full of blösomed bowis  
 Upop a rivir in a grenè mede  
 There as swetenesse evirmore inough is,  
 With flouris white and blewe, yelowe and rede,  
 And colde and clere wellestremis nothyng dede,  
 That swommin full of smalè fishis light,  
 With finnis rede and scalis silvir bright. 189

On every bough the birdis herd I syng  
 With voice of angell in ther harmonie,  
 That busied 'hem ther birdis forthe to bryng,  
 The little pretie conies to ther plaie gan hie,  
 And furthir all about I gan espie  
 The dredfull roe, the buck, the hart, and hind,  
 Squirils, and bestis small of gentle kind. 196

Of instrumentes of stringis in accorde  
 Herd I so plaie a ravishyng swetnesse  
 That God, that makir is of all and lorde,  
 Ne herd nevir a bettir, as I gesse,  
 Therewith a winde, unneth it might be lesse,  
 Made in the levis grene a noisè soft  
 Accordant to the Foulis song on loft. 203

The aire of the place so attempre was  
 That ner was ther grevaunce of hot ne cold,  
 There was eke every wholsome spice and gras,  
 Ne no man maie there waxin sike ne old;  
 Yet was there morè joie a thousande fold  
 Then I can tell, or evir could or might;  
 There is evir clere daie and nevir night. 210

Undir a tre beside a well I feye  
 Cupide our lorde his arrowes forge and file,  
 And at his fete his bowe all redie laye,  
 And well his doughtir temprid all the while  
 The heddis in the well, and with her wile  
 She couchid 'hem aftir as thei should serve,  
 Some for to flea, and some to wound and carve. 217

Tho was I ware of Plesance anon right,  
 And of Arraie, Luste, Beaute', and Curtisie,  
 And of the craft that can yhave the might  
 To doen by force a wight to doen folie,  
 Disfigurid was she, I will not lie,  
 And by hymself, undir an oke I gesse,  
 Sawe I Delite, that stode with Gentilnesse: 224

Then sawe I Beautie with a nice atire,  
 And Youth, all full of game and jolite,  
 Fole Hardinesse, Flattirie, and Desire,  
 Messagerie, and Mede, and othir thre,  
 Ther namis shall not here be tolde for me,  
 And upon pillirs grete of jaspir long  
 I sawe a temple' of brasse ifoundid strong: 231

And about the temple dauncid alwaie  
 Women inow, of which some there ywere  
 Faire of 'hemself, and some of 'hem were gaie;  
 In kirtils all disheveled went thei there,  
 That was ther office er fro yere to yere;  
 And on the temple sawe I white and faire  
 Of doves sittng many' a thousande paire. 238

Before the temple dore full sobirlye  
 Dame Pece yfat, a curtaine in her honde,  
 And her besidis wondir discretlye  
 Dame Pacience ysittng there I fonde,  
 With face pale, upon an hill of sonde,  
 And althir nexte, within and eke without,  
 Behest and Arte, and of ther folke a rout. 245

Within the temple' of sighis hote as fire  
 I herd a swough that gan about to ren,  
 Whiche sighis were engendrid with desire  
 That madin every hertè for to bren  
 Of newè flambe; and well espied I then  
 That all the cause of sorowes that thei drie  
 Come of the bittir goddis Jelousie.

252

The god Priapus sawe I as I went  
 Within the temple' in soveraine place ystonde  
 In soche arraie as when the asse hym shent  
 With crie by night, and with sceptre in honde;  
 Full busilie men gan assaie and fonde  
 Upon his hedde to set of sondrie hewe  
 Garlandis full of freschè flouris newe:

259

And in a privie corner in disport  
 Founde I Venus and her portir Richeffe,  
 That was full noble' and hautin of her port;  
 Darke was that place, but aftirward lightnesse  
 I sawe a lite, unnethes it might be lesse,  
 And on a bed of golde she laie to reste  
 Till that the hote sonne began to weste.

266

Her gildid heris with a goldin threde  
 Iboundin were, untressid as she laie,  
 And nakid from the brest unto the hede  
 Men might her se, and, sothly for to saie,  
 The remènaunt covired well to my paie  
 Right with a lityl kerchefe of Valence;  
 There n'as no thickir clothe of no defence.

273

The placè gave a thousand favours sote,  
 And Bacchus, god of Wine, fate her beside,  
 And Ceres next, that doeth of hunger bote,  
 And, as I saied, amidis laie Cypride,  
 To whom on kneis the yong folkis cride  
 To be ther helpe: but thus I let her lie,  
 And farthir in the temple' I gan espie, 280

That in dispite of Diana the chaste  
 Full many a bowe ibroke hing on the wall  
 Of maidins, soche as gone ther tymis walle  
 In her service, and paintid ovir all  
 Of many' a storie', of whiche I touchin shall  
 A fewe, as of Calilo' and Atalante,  
 And many' a maide of which the name I want, 287

Semiramis, Candace', and Hercules,  
 Biblis, Dido, Phisbe, and Pyramus,  
 Tristram, Ifoude, Paris, and Achilles,  
 Helaine, Cleopatra, and Troilus,  
 Scylla, and eke the mother of Romulus;  
 All these were paintid on that othir side,  
 And all ther love, and in what plite thei dide. 294

When I was comen ayen into the place  
 That, I of spake, that was so sote and grene,  
 Forthe walked I tho my selvin to solace,  
 Tho was I ware where there yfate a quene,  
 That as of light the sommir sonnè shene  
 Passith the sterre, right so ovir mesure  
 She fairir was then any other creature. 301

And in a launde, upon a hill of floures,  
 Was set this quene, this noble goddesse Nature;  
 Of braunchis were her hallis and her boures  
 Iwrought after her craft and her mesure;  
 Neither n'as Foule that cometh of engendrure  
 That there ne were yprest in her presence  
 To take her dome and yeve her audience; 308

For this was on Sainct Valentin's daie,  
 When every Foule comith to chese her make  
 Of every kinde that men ythinkin maie,  
 And that so huge a noise gan thei to make  
 The yerth, the se, and tre, and every lake,  
 So full was, that unnethis there was space  
 For me to stande, so full was all the place. 315

And right as Alaine in The Plaint of Kinde  
 Devifeth Nature of soche araie and face,  
 In soche araie men mightin her there finde,  
 This noble empresse, full of allè grace,  
 Bad evèry Foule takin her owne place  
 As thei were wont alwaie fro yere to yere  
 On Sainct Valentines daie to standin there: 322

That is to saie, the Foulis of ravine  
 Were highist set, and then the Foulis smale,  
 That etin as them Nature would encline,  
 As worme or thing, of whiche I tell no tale,  
 And watirfoule fate lowist in the dale,  
 And Foules that liveth by fede sat on the grene,  
 And that so fele that wondir was to sene. 329

There mightin men the roiall egle finde,  
 That with his sharpe loke persith the son,  
 And othir eglis of a lowir kinde,  
 Of whiche that clerkis well devisin con;  
 There was the tiraant with his fethirs don  
 And grene, I mene the goshaunke, that doth pine  
 To birdes for his outragious ravine; 336

The gentle faucon, that with his fete distreineth  
 The kyng's hand, the hardie sperhauke eke,  
 The qual's foe, the merlion, that peineth  
 Hymself full oft, the larkè for to seke,  
 There was the dove, with her eyin so meke,  
 The jelous swan, ayenst his deth that singeth,  
 The oule eke, that of deth the bode ybringeth; 343

The crane, the geant, with his tromp's sounne,  
 The thief the chough, and eke the chattring pie,  
 The scornynge jaie, the ele's foe the heroune,  
 The false lapwing, alle full of trechirie,  
 The starling, that the counsaile can bewrie,  
 The tame ruddocke, and the cowarde kite,  
 The cocke, that horiloge is of thropes lite; 350

The sparow, Venus son, the nightingale,  
 That clepith forthe the freshè levis newe,  
 The swalowe, murdrer of the beis smale,  
 That maken honie of flouris freshe of hewe,  
 The weddid turtell with his hertè true,  
 The pecocke with his angell fethirs bright,  
 The sefaunt, scornir of the cocke by night; 357

The waker gose, the cuckowe, er unkinde,  
 The popingeie, full of delicafie,  
 The drake, destroyir of his ownè kinde,  
 The storke, the wrekir of advoutèrie,  
 The hote cormèraunt, full of glotonie,  
 The ravin wife, the crowe, with voice of care,  
 The throstill olde, and frostie feldèfare. 364

What should I saie? of Foules of every kind  
 That in this worlde have fethirs and stature  
 Men mightin in that place assemblid finde  
 Before that noble goddesse of Nature,  
 And eche of them ydid his busie cure  
 Benignèlie to chese or for to take  
 By her accorde his formell or his make. 371

But to the poinct. Nature held on her hond  
 A formell egle', of shape the gentillest  
 That evir she emong her workis fonde,  
 The moste benigne and eke the godeliest;  
 In her was every vertue at his rest  
 So farforthe, that Nature her self had blisse  
 To loke on her, and oft her becke to kisse. 378

Nature, the vicare of the' almightie Lorde,  
 That hote and colde, hevie, light, moiste, and drie,  
 Hath knit by evin nombir of accorde,  
 In esie voice began to speke and saie,  
 Foulis, take hede of my sentence I prairie,  
 And for your ese, in fordring of your nede,  
 As fast as I maie speke I will me spede. 385

Ye know well how on S. Valentine's daie,  
 By my statute and through my govirnaunce,  
 Ye chese your makes, and astir flie awaie  
 With 'hem as I doe pricke you with plesaunce,  
 But nathelesse, as by rightfull ordinaunce,  
 Maie I not let, for all this worlde to win,  
 But he that moste worthiest is shall begin.

392

The tercell egle, as ye knowe full wele,  
 The Foule roiall, above you' all in degre,  
 The wise and worthie, secreet, true as stele,  
 The whiche I have formid, as ye maie se,  
 In every parte as it best likith me,  
 It nedith not his shape you to devise,  
 He shall first chese and spekin in his gise.

399

And after hym by ordir shall ye chese  
 Astir your kinde, everiche as you likith,  
 And as your hap is shall ye win or lese,  
 But which of you that love most entrikith  
 God sende hym her that forest for hym sikith;  
 And therwithall the tercell gan she call,  
 And saied, My sonne, the choise is to the fall.

406

But nathelesse in this condicion  
 Muste be the choice of everiche that is here,  
 That she agre to his eleccion,  
 Who so he be, that should yben her sere;  
 This is our usage aye fro yere to yere,  
 And who so maie at this time have his grace  
 In blisfull tyme he came into this place.

413

With hed enclined and with full humble chere  
 This roiall tercell spake, and taried nought,  
 Unto my soveraine ladie', and not my fere,  
 I chose and chese with will, and hert, and thought,  
 The formell on your hand so well iwrought,  
 Whose I am all, and evir will her serve,  
 Doe what her luste to doe me live or sterve; 420

Besechyng her of mercie and of grace,  
 As she that is my ladie soverain,  
 Or let me die here present in this place,  
 For certis long maie I not live in pain,  
 For in my herte is corvin every vain,  
 Havynge regarde onily to my trouthe:  
 My dere herte! havith on my wo some routhe. 427

And if that I be founde to her untrue,  
 Disobeisfaunt, or wilfull negligent,  
 Avauntour, or in proceffe love anewe,  
 I prairie to you this be my judgèment,  
 That with these Foulis I be all to rent  
 That ilkè daie that she me evir finde  
 To her untrue or in my gilte unkinde. 434

And sith none lovith her so well as I,  
 Although she nevir of love me behet,  
 Then ought she to be mine through her mercie,  
 For othir bonde can I none on her knet,  
 For for wele nor wo nevir shall I let  
 To servin her, how far so that she wende:  
 Saie what you list, my tale is at an ende. 441

Full right as the fote and freshe redde rose newe

• Against the sommir sunne ycoloured is,  
 Right so for shame all waxin gan the hewe  
 Of this formell when that she herd all this;  
 Neithir she answerde well ne saied amis,  
 So fore abashed was she, till that Nature  
 Saied, Doughtir, drede you not, I you assure. 448

An othir tercell egle spake anon  
 Of lowir kind, and saied that should not be;  
 I love her bet then ye doe by Sainct John,  
 Or at the lest I love as well as ye,  
 And lengir have served her in my degre,  
 And if she should have loved for long lovyng  
 To me alone had be the guerdonyng. 455

I dare eke saie, if she me findin false,  
 Unkinde, jangler, rebell, in any wise,  
 Or jelous, doe me hangin by the halfe;  
 And but I berin me in her servise  
 As well aye as my wit can me suffise  
 Fro poinct to poinct, her honour for to save,  
 Take she my life and all the gode I have. 462

The thirde tercell egle answerid tho,  
 Now, Sirs, ye se the lityl lesir here,  
 For every Foule crieth out to be ago  
 Forthe with his make or with his lady dere,  
 And eke Nature her self ne will not here,  
 For taryng her, not half that I would seie,  
 And but I speke I must for serowe deie. 469

Of longè service avaunt I me nothing,  
 But as possible' is me to die to day  
 For wo as he that hath be languishing  
 This twenty wintre', and wel it happin may  
 A man may serve bettir and more to pay  
 In halfe a yere, although it were no more,  
 Than some man doth that hath servid ful yore. 476

I say not this by me, for I ne can  
 Do no servise that may my lady please,  
 But I dare say I am her trewist man,  
 As to my dome, and fainist wolde her please:  
 At shortè wordis, til that dethe me cese  
 I wil be hers whethir I wake or winke,  
 And trewe in al that hertè may bethinke. 483

Of al my lyfe syth that day I was borne  
 So gentle ple in love or othir thinge  
 Ne herdin nevir no man me besorne,  
 Who so that had right lesir and conninge  
 For to reherse ther chere and ther spekyng,  
 And from the morowe gan this spechè laste  
 Till downward went the sonnè wondir faste. 490

The noise of Foulis for to be deliverde  
 So loudè range, Have don and let us wende,  
 That wel wende I the wode had all to shiverd:  
 Come of, they cried; alas! ye wil us shende;  
 Whan shal your cursid pleding have an ende?  
 How shulde a judge on eithir partie leve  
 For ye or nay withoutin any preve? 497

The goſe, the cuckowe, and the ducke alſo,  
 So cryid Keke, keke, Cuckow, Queke, queke, hye,  
 Thorough myne eris the noyſe wente tho;  
 The goſe ſayd than, Al this n'ys worthe a flye,  
 But I can ſhape herof a remedye,  
 And wil yſay my verdite faire and ſwithe  
 For watir Foule, who ſo be wrothe or blithe. 504

And I for worme Foule, ſaid the ſole cuckow,  
 For I wil of min owne authorite,  
 For common ſpede, take on me the charge now  
 For to deliver us is grete charite,  
 Ye may abydin a while yet perde.  
 (Quod the turtel) If that it be your wil  
 A wight may ſpeke it were as gode be ſtil. 511

I am a fede Foule, one the unworthyeſt,  
 That wote I wel, and the leſt of connyng,  
 But bettir is that a wight'is tonge reſt  
 Than entremetin him of ſoche doynge  
 Of whiche he neither redin can nor ſinge,  
 And who ſo' it doth ful foule him ſelf acloyeth,  
 For *Office uncommittid ofte anoyctb.* 518

Nature, whiche that alway yhad an ere  
 To murmure of the leudeneſſe behinde,  
 With ſaconde voice ſaid, Hold your tongis there,  
 And I ſhal ſone I hope a counſaile finde  
 You to deliver and fro this noyſe unbynde:  
 I charge of every flocke ye ſhall one cal  
 To ſay the verdite of you Foulis all. 525

Assentid were to this conclusyon  
 The birdis al, and Foules of ravine  
 Have chosin first by plaine election,  
 The tercelet of the faucon to define,  
 Al ther sentence, and as him lust to termine,  
 And to Nature him gan they to presente,  
 And she acceptith him with glad entente.

532

The tercelet sayd than in this manere:  
 Ful harde it were to preve it by reson  
 Who lovith best this gentil formel here,  
 For everiche hath soche replicacion  
 That by skillis may non be brought adoun;  
 I cannat se that argumentes availe,  
 Than semith it there must be a battaile.

539

Al redy, quod these egles tercelles tho.  
 Nay, Sirs, (quod he) if that I durst it say  
 Ye do me wronge, my tale is not ydo;  
 For, Sirs, ne takith nat a grese I pray,  
 It may not be as ye wolde in this way;  
 Ours is the voice that have the charge in hande,  
 And to the judg'is dome ye muste ystande;

546

And therefore pece: I say as to my wit  
 Me woldin thinke how that the worthiest  
 Of knyghthode, and lengist had usid it,  
 Most of estate, of blode the gentillest,  
 Were fittingest for her, if that her lest,  
 And of these thre she wote her selfe I trowe  
 Whiche that he be, for it is light to knowe.

553

The watir Foulis have ther hedis laide

Togidir, and of shorte avisement,  
Whan evèriche had his verdite ysaide,  
They saidin sothely al by one assent  
Howe that the gose, with the facondè gent,  
That so desirith to pronounce our nede,  
Shal tel our tale, and prayed to God her spede. 560

And for these watir Foulis tho began  
The gose to speke, and in her cakelynge  
She said, Pece nowe, take kepe evèry man,  
And herken whiche a reson I shal forth bring;  
My witte is sharpe; I love no tarying;  
I say I rede him, tho he were my brother,  
But she wil love him let him love another. 567

Lo here a parfite reson of a gose!  
Tho (quod the sperhauke) nevir mote she the;  
Lo soche a thing it' is to have a tonge lose!  
Nowe parde sole yet were it bet for the  
Have holde thy pece than shewde thy nicete;  
It lyeth nat in his wit nor in his wil,  
But sothe is saide, *A sole can nat be still.* 574

The laughtir arose of gentil Foulis al,  
And right anone the sede Foules chosin had  
The turtel trewe, and gan her to 'hem call,  
And prayid her to say the sothè sad  
Of this matir, and askid what she rad?  
And she answered that plainly her entent  
She woldè shewe, and sothly what she ment. 581

Nay, God forbede a lovir shuldè change,  
 The turtel said, and wexte for shame al rede;  
 Though that his lady evirmore be siraunge,  
 Yet let him serve her ay tyl he be dede;  
 Forsothe I ne praise not the gos'is rede,  
 For tho she dyed I wold none othir make;  
 I wil be hers tyl that the dethe me take. 588

Wel ybourdid (quod the ducke) by my hat;  
 That men shouldin love alway causèlessè  
 Who can a reson finde or wit in that?  
 Dauncith he mery that is mirthèlessè?  
 Who shuldin recke of that is rechèlessè?  
 Ye queke yet (quod the ducke) ful wel and faire,  
*There be no sterres in the skye than a paire.* 595

Nowe fye, churle! (quod the gentil tercèlet)  
 Out of the donghil came that word aright;  
 Thou canst not se which thinge is wel beset;  
 Thou farest by love as owlis do by light,  
 The day 'hem blindeth, ful wel they se by night;  
 Thy kinde is of so lowe a wretchidnessè  
 That what love is thou canst not se nor gesse. 602

Tho gan the cuckow put him forthe in prece  
 For Foule that etith worme, and sayid blyve,  
 So I (quod he) may have my make in pece  
 I ne retche nought howe longè that ye survive;  
 Let eche of 'hem be soleine al ther lyve:  
 This is my rede, sens they may nat acorde;  
 This shorte lesson nedith not recorde. 609

Ye, have the glutton filde inow his paunche,  
 Then are we wel, sayid the emerlon,  
 Thou murdrir of the heifugge, on the braunche,  
 That brought the forth, thou most rufull glutton,  
 Live thou solein, wormis corrupcion!  
 For no force is of lacke of thy nature;  
 Go, leude be thou while that the world may dure! 616

Nowe pece (quod Nature) I commaundin here,  
 For I have herde al your opinion,  
 And in effecte yet be we ner the nere;  
 But, finally, this is my concludion,  
 That she her selfe shal have her election  
 Of whom her list, who so be wroth or blithe,  
 Him that she cheseth he shal her have as swithe: 623

For sithe it may not here discussid be  
 Who loveth her best, as said the tercèlet,  
 Than wol I done this favour to' her, that she  
 Shal have right him on whom her hert is set,  
 And he her that his hert hath on her knet;  
 This judge I Nature, for I may not lye,  
 To none estate I have none othir eye. 630

But as for counsaile for to chose a make,  
 Yf I were Reson, certis than woulde I  
 Counsaillin you the royal tercel take,  
 As sayd the tercèlet ful skilfully,  
 As for the gentilist and most worthy,  
 Which I have wrought so wel to my plesaunce  
 That to you it ought ben a suffisaunce. 637

With dredfull voice the formell her answerde ;  
 My rightfull lady, goddesse of Nature,  
 Soth is that I am er undir your yerde,  
 As is als' evèriche othir creture,  
 And must be yours while that my life may dure,  
 And therefore grauntith me my firstè bone,  
 And myne entent you wol I say right sone. 644

I graunt it you (quod she.) And right anone  
 This formel egle spake in this degre ;  
 Almighty quene ! unto this yere be done  
 I aske respite for to avyfin me,  
 And astir that to have my choyce all fre :  
 This al and some that I wold speke and sey ;  
 Ye get no more although ye do me dey : 651

I wol not servin Venus ne Cupide  
 Forsothe as yet by no manir of way.  
 Nowe sens it may none othir wayes betide  
 (Quod Dame Nature) here is no more to say ;  
 Than wolde I that these Foulis were away  
 Eche with his make for tarying lengir here,  
 And said 'hem thus, as ye shal astir here : 658

To you speke I, ye terceletes, (quod Nature)  
 Bethe of gode herte, and servith allè thre,  
 A yere is not so longe for to endure,  
 And eche of you paine him in his degre  
 For to do wel, for God wote quit is she  
 Fro you this yere, what astir so befall ;  
 This entremes is dressid for you all. 665

And whan this werk ybrought was to an ende  
 To evèry Foule Nature yave his make  
 By even acorde, and on ther way they wende,  
 And Lorde the blisse and joye which that they make!  
 For ech gan othir in his wingis take,  
 And with ther neckis eche gan othir winde,  
 Thankynge aye the noble goddesse of Kinde. 672

But first were chosin Foulis for to singe,  
 As yere by yere was alway ther usauce,  
 To singe a roundel at ther departing,  
 To do to Nature honour and plesaunce;  
 The note I trowe ymakid was in Fraunce;  
 The wordis were soche as ye may here find  
 The nextè vers, as I nowe have in minde, 679

*Qui bien aime tard oublie.*

Now welcom somir! with thy sonnys soft,  
 That haste this wintir wethirs ovirshake;  
 Saint Valentine! thou arte full hye on lofte,  
 Which drivist away the longe nightis blake,  
 Thus singin smalè Foulis for thy sake;  
 Well havin they cause for to gladin ofte  
 Sens eche of 'hem recovered hath his make,  
 Ful blisful maie they sing when they awake. 687

And with the shouting when ther songe was do  
 That the Foulis made at ther flight away  
 I woke, and othir bokis toke me to  
 To rede upon, and yet I rede alway;  
 I hope ywis to redin so some day  
 That I shal metin some thinge for to fare  
 The bet, and thus to rede I n'il not spare. 694

*Explicit.*

OF THE  
CUCKOWE & THE NIGHTINGALE.

*Chaucer dreameth that he beareth the Cuckow and the Nightingale contend for excellency in singing.*

THE god of Love, ah, *benedicite!*

Howe mighty and howe gret a lorde is he!

For he can makin of lowe hertis hie,

And of hye lowe and lykè for to die,

And hardè hertis he can makin fre :

5

He can makin within a litil stounde

Of sickè folkè whole, and freshe, and founde,

And of the whole he can ymakè feke;

He can ybindin and unbindin eke

That he wol have yboundin or unbounde.

10

To tel his might my wit may not suffise,

For he can makin of wise folke ful nice,

For he may do al that he wol device,

And lithy folkè to distroyin vice,

And proudè hertis he can make agrise.

15

Shortly, al that evir he wol he may;

Against him there dare no wight say naye,

For he can glad and greve whom him lykith,

And who that he wol he loweth or sikith,

And most his might he shedith er in May;

20

For evèry true gentle hertè fre,  
 That with him is or thinkith for to be,  
 Against May nowe shal have some sferinge,  
 Or to joye or ellis to some mourning,  
 In no selson so moche, as thinkith me: 25

For whan that they may here the birdis singe,  
 And se the flouris and the levis springe,  
 That bringith into ther remembèraunce  
 A manir ese ymedlid with grevaunce,  
 And lusty thoughtis ful of grete longing; 30

And of that longing comith hevinesse,  
 And therof growith oft grete sikènèsse,  
 And for the lacke of that that they desire;  
 And thus in May ben hertis set on fire,  
 So that they brennin forth in gret distresse. 35

I spekè this of feling trewily:  
 What! tho that I be olde and unlusty  
 Yet I have felte of the sickenèsse through May  
 Bothe hote and cold, and axis every day,  
 How fore iwis there wote no wight but I. 40

I am so shakin with the fevirs white  
 Of al this May ne slepe I but a lite;  
 And also it is not lyke unto me  
 That any hertè shouldin slepy be  
 In whom that Love his firy darte wol smite. 45

But as I lay this othir night waking  
 I thought howe lovirs had a tokining,  
 And amonge 'hem it was a commune tale  
 That it were gode to here the Nightingale  
 Moche rathir than the leudè Cuckowe finge. 50

And than I thought anon as it was day  
 I woldè faine go fomwhere to affay  
 If that I might a Nightingale yhere,  
 For yet had I none herde of al that yere,  
 And it was tho the thirdè night of May. 55

And right anon as I the day aspide  
 No lengir would I in my bedde abide,  
 But unto a wodde that was me fast by  
 I went forthe my self alone boldily,  
 And helde the way downe by a brokè fide 60

Tyl I came to a launde of white and grene,  
 So faire an one had I nevir in bene;  
 The grounde was grene, ypoudrid with daisye,  
 The flouris and the grevis alike hie,  
 Al grene and white, was nothing ellis fene. 65

There fate I downe among the faire flouris,  
 And sawe the birdes trippe out of ther bowris  
 There as they restid 'hem had al the night;  
 They were so joyful of the day'is lyght  
 They began of Maye for to done honouris: 70

They coudin wel that service al by rote,  
 And there was many a full lovely note;  
 Some songin loudè as they had yplained,  
 And some in othir manir voice yfained,  
 And some songin al out with the ful throte. 75

They proynid 'hem and madin 'hem right gay,  
 And daunfidin and leptin on the spray,  
 And evirmore were two and two in fere,  
 Right so as they had chofin 'hem to yere  
 In Feverere on Saint Valentine's day. 80

And the rivir whiche that I sat upon  
 It madin foche a noisè as it ron,  
 Accordzant with the birdis armony,  
 Me thought that it was the best melody  
 That mightin ben yherde of any mon. 85

And for delyte, I ne wotte nevir howe,  
 I fel in foche a flombre and a fwowe,  
 Nat al aslepe ne fully awaking,  
 And in that fwowe me thought I herdè singe  
 The sory birde, I mene the leude Cuckowe, 90

And that was upon a tre right fast by;  
 But who was than evil apaide but I?  
 Now God (quod I) that dyid on the crois  
 Yeve sorowe on the and on thy leude vois!  
 Ful litil joye have I now of thy crie. 95

And as I with the Cuckow thus gan chide  
 I herdin in the nextè bush beside  
 A Nyghtingale so lustily yfinge  
 That with her clerè voice she madin ringe,  
 Ecchoing thorough al the grene wode wide. 100

Ah ! gode swete Nightingale ! (quod I) then,  
 A litil hast thou ben to longè hen,  
 For here hath ben the leude sory Cuckow,  
 And songin songis rathir than hast thou ;  
 I pray to God that evil fire her bren ! 105

But now I wol you tel a wondre thing ;  
 As longe as I ylay in that fwouning  
 Me thought I wist what that the birdis ment,  
 And what they sayd, and what was ther entent,  
 And of ther speche I had full gode knowing. 110

There herdin I the Nightingale yfay,  
 Now, gode Cuckow ! goith some where awaye,  
 And let us that can singin dwellin here,  
 For every wight eschevith the to here,  
 Thy songis ben so elenge, in gode fay. 115

What, (quod she) what may the aylin as nowe ?  
 It thinkith me I singe as wel as thou,  
 For my songè is both true and eke plaine,  
 And though I can not crakil so in vaine  
 As thou dost in thy throte, I wot ner how. 120

And every wight may undirstandin me;  
 But, Nightingale, so may they not done the,  
 For thou hast many a nice queintè crie;  
 I have the herdè faine Ocy, ocy:  
 Howe might I knowin what that should ybe? 125

Ah, sole! (quod she) wost thou not what it is?  
 Whan that I say Ocy, ocy, ywys  
 Than menin I that I would wondre faine  
 That al they werin shamfully yflaine  
 That menin ought against love amis; 130

And also' I would that al tho had the dede  
 That thinkin not in love ther life to lede,  
 For who so wol not the god of Love serve  
 I dare wel say he is worthy to sterue,  
 And for that stil Ocy, ocy, I grede. 135

Eye! (quod the Cuckow) this is a queint lawe,  
 That every wight shal love or be to draw;  
 But I forfakin al soche company,  
 For myne entent ne is not for to die,  
 Noner while I live on Love's yoke to draw; 140

For lovirs ben the folke that ben on lyve  
 That most disefe yhave and most unthrive,  
 And most endurin sorow, wo, and care,  
 And that the lest yfelin of welfare;  
 What nedith it ayenist trowth to strive? 145

What! (quod she) thou art alle out of thy minde;  
 How might thou in thy churlinesse yfynde  
 To speke of Lov'is servauntes in this wise?  
 For in this world is none so gode service  
 To every wight that gentle is of kinde; 150

For therof trully comith al godenesse,  
 Therof al honour and al gentilnesse,  
 Thereof worship, ese, and al hert'is lust,  
 And parfite joye and ful assurid trust,  
 And jolytie, and plesaunce, and freshenesse, 155

And lowlyhed, largeesse, and curtisye,  
 And femelyhed, and trew company,  
 And drede of shamè for to done amys,  
 For he that trully Lov'is servaunt is  
 Were lothir to be shamid than to die. 160

And that thys is the sothe whiche that I sey  
 In that beleve I wil bothe live and dey;  
 And, Cuckow, so I rede thou do ywys.  
 Than (quod he) let me nevir havin blisse  
 Yf evir I to that counsaile obey. 165

Nyghtingale, thou yspekist wondre faire,  
 But for al that is the soth contrayre,  
 For Love ne is in yongè folke but rage,  
 And is in oldè folke a grete dotage;  
 Who most it usith he most shal enpaire; 170

For therof commeth disese and hevinesse,  
 So sorow', and care, and many' a grete sikenesse,  
 Despite, debate, and angre, and envy,  
 Depraving, shame, untrust, and jelousie,  
 Pride, mischefe, povertie, and wodenesse. 175

Loving is aye an office of dispaire,  
 And one thing is therin that is not faire,  
 For who that getteth of Love a litil blisse,  
 But if he be alwaie therewith, iwis  
 He maie full sone of age yhave his haire: 180

And, Nightingalè, therefore hold the nie,  
 For leve me well, for all thy queintè crie,  
 If thou be ferre or longè fro thy make  
 Thou shalt be as othir that ben forsake,  
 And then thou shalt yhotin as do I. 185

Fie! (quod she) on thy namè and on the,  
 The god of Love ne let the nevir the,  
 For thou art worse a thousandfolde than wode,  
 For many' one is full worthie and full gode  
 That had be naught ne haddin Love ibec; 190

For evirmore Love his servauntes amendeth,  
 And from all evill tachis 'hem defendeth,  
 And makith 'hem to brenne right in a fire  
 In trouthè and in worshipfull desire,  
 And when him likith joy inough 'hem sendeth. 195

Thou, Nightingalè, he sayid, be still,  
 For Love have no reson but it is will,  
 For oft tymis untrue folke he esith  
 And true folke so bittirly displefith  
 That for defaute of courage he let 'hem spill. 200

Then toke I of the Nightingalè kepe  
 How that she cast a sigh out of her depe,  
 And saied, Alas that evir I was bore!  
 I can for tene not saie one wordè more;  
 And right with that worde she braft out to wepe. 205

Alas! (quod she) my hertè woll to breke,  
 To herin thus this lendè birdè speke  
 Of Love, and of his worshipfull service;  
 Now god of Love, thou helpe me in some wise  
 That I maie on this Cuckowe ben awreke. 210

Me thoughtin then that he sterte up anon,  
 And glad was I tho that he was agon,  
 And evirmore the Cuckowe as he flaie  
 Ysayid, Farewell, farewell, poppingaie,  
 As though he had yscornid me alone. 215

And then ycame the Nightingale to me,  
 And sayid, Frende, forsoth I thankè the  
 That thou hast likid me for to rescowe,  
 And one avowe to Love ymake I now,  
 That all this Maie I woll thy singir be. 220

I thankid her, and was right well apaied.

Ye, (quod she) and ne be thou not dismaied  
 Tho thou have herd the Cuckow erst than me,  
 For if I live it shall amendid be  
 The nextè Maie, if I be not affraied. 225

And one thing I woll redin the also,  
 Ne leve thou not the Cuckow ne' his loves so,  
 For all that he hath saied is strong lesyng.  
 Naie, (quod I) thereto shall nothing me bryng  
 For love, and it hath do me mochil wo. 230

Ye, hath it? Use (quod she) this medicine,  
 Every daie this Maie or that thou dine  
 Go lokin upon the freshe daïsie,  
 And though thou be for woe in poinct to die  
 That shall full gretly lessen the of thy pine. 235

And loke alwaie that thou be gode and true,  
 And I woll sing one of the songis newe  
 For love of the, as loude as I maie crie;  
 And then she began this songè full hie,  
 I shrewe all 'hem that ben of love untrue. 240

And when she had ysong it to the ende,  
 Now farewell, (quod she) for I motè wende,  
 And god of Love, that can right well and may,  
 As mochil joyè fendè the this daie  
 As any yet lovir he evir sende, 245

Thus taketh the Nightingale her leve of me,  
 I praie to God alwaie with her to be,  
 And joye of love he sende her evirmore,  
 And shilde us fro the Cuckowe and his lore!  
 For there is not so false a birde as he. 250

Forthe she yflew the gentill Nightingale  
 To all the birdis that were in that dale,  
 And gate 'hem all into a place in fere,  
 And befoughtin 'hem that they wouldin here  
 Her disese; and thus she began her tale: 255

The Cuckowe, well it is not for to hide  
 How the Cuckowe and I fast havin chide  
 Evir sithin that it ywas daie light;  
 I praie you all that ye doin me right  
 Of that foule, and false, and unkindè, bride. 260

Then speke o birde for all by one assent;  
 This mattir askith gode avifement,  
 For we ben allè birdis here in fere,  
 And sothe it is the Cuckowe is not here,  
 And therefore we woll have a parliment; 265

And thereat shall the egle be our lorde,  
 And othir peris that ben of recorde,  
 And the Cuckowe shall be astir ysent,  
 And there shall be yevin the judgèment,  
 Or els we shall finally make accorde. 270

And this shall be ydone withoutin naie  
 The morowe aftir Sainct Valentine's daie  
 Undir a maple that is faire and grene  
 Before the chambir windowe of the quene  
 At Wodèstocke upon the grenè laie.

275

She thankid 'hem, and then her levè toke,  
 And flew into an hauthorne by that broke,  
 And there she fate and song upon that tre,  
 For terme of life love hath withholdè me,  
 So loudè, that I with that song awoke.

280

*Explicit.*

O leudè boke! with thy foule rudènessè,  
 Sithe thou hast neithir beaute ne' eloquence  
 Who hath the caused or yeve the hardinesse  
 For to appere in my ladie's presence?  
 I' am ful sikir thou knowest her benevo'lence,  
 Full agreable to all her abiyng,  
 For of all gode she is the best livyng.

287

Alas! that thou ne haddist worthinesse  
 To shewin to her some plefaunt sentence,  
 Sith that she hath thorough her gentillesse  
 Acceptid the servaunt to' her digne reve'rence.  
 O! me repentith that I ne' had science  
 And leisir als to make the more florishyng,  
 For of all gode she is the best livyng.

294

P ij

Beseche her mekely with all lowlinesse,  
 Though that I be ferre from her in absence,  
 To thinke on my trouth to' her and stedfastnesse,  
 And to' abridge of my sorowes the vio'lence  
 Which caused is, wherof knowith your sapience,  
 She like emong to notifie me' her liking,  
 For of all gode she is the best living.

301

## L'ENVOYE.

Aurore of gladnesse, daie of lustinesse,  
 Lucerne anight with hevenlie influence  
 Illumined, rote of beautie and godenesse,  
 Suspiris, whiche I effunde in silence,  
 Of grace I beseche aledge let your writyng,  
 Now of all gode sith ye be best livyng.

307

*Explicit.*

HEREAFTER FOLOWETH

## HOW PYTE IS DEDE

AND BURIED IN GENTYLE HERTE.

**P**YTE, that I have sought so yore ago  
 With hertè sore, and full of besy paine,  
 That in this worlde was nevir wight so wo  
 Withoutin dethe, and yf I shal nat faine  
 My purpose was to Pite to complaine  
 Upon the crueltie and tyrannye  
 Of Love, that for my trouth doth me to die,

7

And whan that I by length of certaine yeres  
 Had evir in one fought a time to speke,  
 To Pite ran I all bespreint with teres  
 To prayin her on Cruelte me' a-wreke;  
 But or I might with any worde out breke,  
 Or tel her any of my painis smerte,  
 I found her ded and buried in an herte.

14

A downe I fel whan that I saw the herse  
 Ded as a stone while that the swonne me lasse,  
 But up I rose with coloure ful diverse,  
 And pitously on her myne eyen I cast,  
 And nerir the corse I gan presin fast,  
 And for the soule I shope me for to pray;  
 I was but lorne; there was no more to say.

21

Thus am I flaine sith that Pite is ded;  
 Alas that day that evir it shuldè fal!  
 What manir man dare nowe hold up his hed,  
 To whom shal now any foro'wfull hert call,  
 Nowe Cruelte hath cast to fle us al,  
 In ydle hope folke redèlesse of paine,  
 Sith she is ded, to whom shal we complaine?

28

But yet encrefith me this wondir newe,  
 That no wight wote that she is ded but I,  
 So many men as in her tyme her knewe,  
 And yet she dyid all so sodainly,  
 For I have fought her er full besily  
 Sithins that I had firstè witte or mind,  
 But she was ded er that I coude her find.

35

Aboute her herse there stodin lustily,  
 Withoutin any mo. as thoughtin me,  
 Bountie, perfetely well armed and richely,  
 And freshe Beaute, and Lust, and Jolite,  
 Affurid Manir, Youthe, and Honeste,  
 Wisdome, Estate, with Drède and Governauce,  
 Confedrid both by bonde and aliaunce.

42

A complainte had I writin in my honde  
 To have yput to Pyte as a byl,  
 But I there al this company yfonde  
 That rathir wouldin all my causè spill  
 Then do me help, I held my plaintè still,  
 For to those folke withoutin any faile  
 Without Pite there maie no bill availe.

49

Then leave all vertues save onely Pitie,  
 Keping the corse, as ye have herd me saine,  
 Confedrid by bonde unto Crueltie,  
 And be assentid when I shall be flaine,  
 And I have put my compleinte up againe,  
 For to my foes my bill I dare not shewe  
 The' effect, which sayith thus in wordis fewe :

56

Humblift of herte, hyist of reverence,  
 Flowir benigne, coroune of vertues alle!  
 Shewith unto your roiall excellence  
 Your servaunt, if I durstin me so call,  
 His mortall harme in which he is ifall,  
 And nought all onely for his wofull fare  
 But for your renome, as he shall declare.

63

It standeth thus; that your contary' Crueltie  
 Allyid is ayenst your regalie,  
 Undir colour of womanly beautie,  
 For men shouldin not knowe her tyrannie,  
 With Bountie, Gentilleffe, and Curtesie,  
 And hath deprivid you thus of your place,  
 That is hie Beaute', apertenant to your grace: 70

For kindly by your heritage and right  
 Ye be annexid evir to Bountie,  
 And verily ye ought to doe your might  
 To helpin Trouthe in his adversitie;  
 Ye be also the coroune of Beautie,  
 And certis if that ye want in these twaine  
 The worlde is lore; there is no more to saine. 77

Eke what availeth manir and gentilleffe  
 Withoutin you, o most benigne cature!  
 Shall Crueltie ybe your governess?e?  
 Alas! what hertè maie it long endure?  
 Wherefore but ye rathir ytakin cure  
 To brekin that perillous aliaunce  
 Ye sleen 'hem that ben in your obeisaunce. 84

And furthir ovir, if ye suffir this  
 All your renome is fordoe in a throwe,  
 There shall no man ywete what pitie is;  
 Alas that your renome is fall so lowe!  
 Ye be' also fro your heritage ithrowe  
 By Crueltie, that occupieth your place,  
 And we dispairid that sekin your grace. 91

Have merceie on me, thou herenus quene,  
 That you have sought so tendirly and fore,  
 O let some streame of light on me be sene,  
 That love and drede you er longir the more!  
 For, sothily to faine, I bere so fore;  
 And though I be not connyng for to plaine  
 For God'is love have mercie on my paine. 98

My paine is this, that what so I desire  
 That have I not, ne nothyng like thereto,  
 And evir setteth desire mine herte on fire;  
 Eke on that othir side, where that I go  
 What manir thing that may encrese my wo  
 That have I redy unfought every where;  
 Me lackith but my deth and then my bere. 105

What nedith to shewe percel of my paine,  
 Sith every wo that herte maie bethinke  
 I suffir, and yet dare not to you plaine?  
 For well I wote though that I wake or winke  
 Ye recke not whethir that I flete or sinke';  
 And nathelesse yet my trouth I shall susteine  
 Unto my deth, and that shall well be sene: 112

This is to faine, that I will be yours ever,  
 Though ye me flea by Crueltie your so,  
 Algate my spirite shall nevir discevir  
 Fro your service for any paine or wo,  
 Sith ye be dedde, alas that it is so!  
 Thus for your deth I maie wepin and plain  
 With herte fore and full of besie pain. 119

*Explicit.*

*These Verses next following were compiled by Geff. Chaucer,  
and in the written copies folowe at the ende of The Com-  
plainte of Pite.*

THE longè nyghtis; when every creture  
Shuld have ther rest in somwhat as by kind,  
Or ellis ne may ther life not longe endure,  
It fallith moſte into my woful minde  
How I ſo farre have brought my ſelf behind,  
That ſafe the deth ther may nothing me liſſe,  
So diſpairid I am from allè bliſſe.

7

This ſame thought me laſtith til the morow,  
And from the morowe forth til it be eve;  
There nedith me no care for to borow,  
For both I have gode laiſir and gode leve;  
There is no wight that will my wo byreve,  
To wepe enough and wailin all my ſyll;  
The forè ſparke of peine now doth me ſpil.

14

This Love, that hath me ſet in ſoche a place  
That my deſire he wil nevir fulfyl,  
For neithir Pite, Mercy, neithir Grace,  
Can I not find, and yet my wofull herte  
For to be dede I can it not arace,  
The more I love the more ſhe doth me ſmerte,  
Thorowe whiche I ſe withoute remedie  
That from the deth I may no wiſe aſlerte.

22

Now sothly what she hight I wol reherse;  
 Her name is Bountie, set in womanhed,  
 Sadnes in youth, and beautie pridèlesse,  
 And plesaunce undir govirnaunce and drede,  
 And her surname is eke faire Ruthèlesse,  
 The wisè knit unto gode avinture,  
 That for I love her she fleth me gittleffe;  
 Her love I best, and shall while I may dure:

Bett than my selfe a hundrid thousand dele,  
 Than al this world'is richis or cature;  
 Now hath not Love me bestowid wel,  
 To lovin there I nevir shal have parte?  
 Alas, right thus is turnid me the whele!  
 Thus am I flaine with Lov'is furious darte:  
 I can but love her best my swetè so,  
 Love hath me taught no morè of his arte  
 But servin alwaye and stint for no wo.

Within my trewè carefull herte ther is  
 So mochil wo and eke so litil blisse  
 That wo is me that evir I was bore!  
 For al that thinge which I desire I misse,  
 And al that evir I wolde not iwis  
 That finde I redy to me evirmore;  
 And of all this I n'ot to whom me plaine,  
 For she that might me out of this ybring  
 Ne rechith nought whethir I wepe or sing,  
 So litil routh hath she upon my paine!

Alas! whan slepinge tyme is then I wake,  
 Whan I shuld daunce for fere lo than I quake;  
 This hevy life I lede, lo! for your sake,  
 Though ye therof in no wise hedè take,  
 Myn hert'is lady and whole my live's quene!  
 For truly durst I say as that I fele  
 Me semith that your swetè herte of stels  
 Is whettid now against me to kene.

57

My derè herte and best beloved fo!  
 Why lykith you to do me al this wo?  
 What have I don that grevith you or saide?  
 But for I serve and love you and no mo,  
 And whilest I live I wil evir do so,  
 And therefore, swete! ne bethe not il apaide;  
 For so gode and so faire as that ye be  
 It wer a right gret wondir but ye had  
 Of al servauntis both of gode and badde,  
 And best worthy of al them I am he.

67

But nevir the lesse, my righte lady swete!  
 Though that I be unkonninge and unmete  
 To serve as I coud best aye your highnes,  
 Yet is ther none fainir, that would I hete,  
 Than I to do you ese or ellis bete,  
 What so I wist that were to your highnes;  
 And had I might as gode as I have wil,

Than shuld ye fele wher it were so or none,  
 For in this world livinge than is ther none  
 That fainir wolde your hert'is wil fulfil.

77

For both I love and eke drede you so fore,  
 And algates mote and have don you ful yore,  
 That bettir loved is non ne nevir shal,  
 And yet I would beseche you of no more  
 But lovith wel, and be not wroth therfore,  
 And let me serve you forth, lo! this is al;  
 For I am nought so hardy ne so wode  
 For to desire that ye should lovin me,  
 For wel I wotte, alas! that may not be,  
 I am so litil worthy' and ye so gode,  
 For ye be one the worthyist on live,  
 And I the most unlikely for to thrive.

89

Yet for al this wetith ye full righte wel  
 That ye ne should me from your servyce drive,  
 That I ne wil aye with my witis five  
 Serve you truly what wo so that I fele,  
 For I am fet so hy upon your whele  
 That though ye nevir wil upon me rewe  
 I must you love, and bene evir as trewe  
 As any man ycan or maye on live.

97

But the more that I love you, godely fre!  
 The lassè finde I that ye lovin me:

Alas! whan shal that hardè wit amende?

Wher is now al your womanly pite,

Your gentilnes and your debonairte?

Wil ye nothings therof upon me spend,

And so whole, swete! as I am youris all,

And so grete wil as I have to you serve?

Now certis and ye let me thus ysterve

Yet have ye wonnin therupon but small,

107

For at my knowing I do nothing why:

And thus I wil besече you hertily,

That if evir ye finde whilis ye live

A truir servaunte to you than am I

Levith than, and fleith me hardily,

And I my deth to you wil al forgive;

And yf ye finde no trewir verily,

Wollin ye suffir than that I thus spil,

And for no manir gilt but my gode will?

As gode were than untrue as true to be.

117

*Explicit.*

## GODE COUNSAILE OF CHAUCER.

**F**LIE fro the prese and dwell with Sothfastnesse;  
Suffise unto thy gode though it be small,  
For horde hath hate, and climbyng tikilnesse,  
Prece hath envie, and wele is blent oer all;  
Savour no more then the behovin shall;  
Rede well thy self, that othir folke canst rede,  
And trouthe the shall delivir it' is no drede. 7

Paine the not eche crokid to redresse  
In trust of her that tournith as a balle;  
Grete rest standith in litil businesse;  
Beware also to spurne again a nalle;  
Strive not as doith a crocke with a walle;  
Demith thy self that demist othir's dede,  
And trouthe the shall deliver it' is no drede. 14

That the is sent receive in buxomenesse;  
The wraстыng of this worlde askith a fall;  
Here is no home, here is but wildirnesse;  
Forthe pilgrim, forthe o best out of thy stall;  
Loke up on high, and thanke thy God of all;  
Weivith thy luste and let thy ghost the lede,  
And trouthe the shall delivir it' is no drede. 21

*Explicit.*

# CHAUCER'S A, B, C,

CALLED LA PRIERE DE NOSTRE DAME.

*Chaucer's A, B, C, called La Priere de nostre Dame, made,  
as some say, at the request of Blanch Duchesse of Lanca-  
ster, as a praier for her private use, being a woman in  
her religion very devout.*

## A.

ALMIGHTIE and allmerciable Quene!  
To whom all this world fleith for socour,  
To have relese of sinne, of sorow, of tene,  
Glorious Virgine! of all flouris flour,  
To the I fle, confoundid in errour;  
Helpe and releve, almightie debonaire!  
Have mercy of mine perillous langour,  
Venquist me hath my cruill adversaire.

## B.

Bountie so fixe hath in my hert his tent,  
That well I wote thou will my succour be;  
Thou canst not warnin that with gode entent  
Axith thyne helpe, thine hert is aye so fre,  
Thou art largeffe of plaine felicite,  
Havin and refute of quiete and rest;  
Lo how that thevis sevin chasyn me;  
Helpe, Ladie bright! or that mine shyp to brest.

Qij

## C.

Comfort is none but in you, Lady dere!  
 For lo! mine sinne and mine confusioun,  
 Which ought not in thin presence for to' apere,  
 Han taken on me a grevous actioun,  
 Of veray right and disperatioun,  
 And as by right they mightin well sustene  
 That I were worthy mine damnatioun,  
 Ne were it of thy mercy, blisfull Quene!

## D.

Dout is there none, o Quene of mise'ricord!  
 That thou n'art cause of grace and mercy here,  
 God vouchidesafe through the with us to' accord;  
 For certis, Christ'is blisfull modir dere!  
 Were now the bow ybent in swiche manere  
 As it was first of justice and of ire  
 The rightfull God would of no mercy here;  
 But through the han we grace as we desire.

## E.

Ever' hath mine hope of refute in the be,  
 For here besorne full oft in many' a wise  
 Unto mercy hast thou recevid me,  
 But mercy, Lady! at the gret assise,  
 When we shall come before the High Justise,  
 So litil freut shall then in me ben found  
 That but thou or that day correctin me  
 Of very right mine werke will me confound.

## F.

Flying I fle for succour to thine tent,  
 Me for to hide fro tempest full of drede,  
 Beseking you that ye you not absent,  
 Though I be wicke: o help yet at this nede!  
 All have I ben a best in wit and dede,  
 Yet, Lady! thou me close with thine owne grace;  
 Thine enemye and mine (Lady, take hede)  
 Unto mine deth in point is me to chafe.

48

## G.

Gracious maid and modir! which that never  
 Were bittir nor in erth nor in the fe,  
 But full of swetenesse and of mercy ever,  
 Helpe, that mine Fadir be not wroth with me;  
 Speke thou, for I ne dare him not yse:  
 So have I done in erth, alas the while!  
 That certis but if thou mine succour be  
 To sinke eterne he will mine ghost exile.

56

## H.

He vouchidesafe, tell him, as was his will,  
 Become a man as for our alliaunce,  
 And with his blode he wrote that blisfull bill  
 Upon the crosse as generall acquitaunce  
 To every penitent in full cryaunce;  
 And therefore, Lady bright! thou for us prey,  
 Then shalt thou stent in alle his grevaunce,  
 And maken our foe to saylin of his prey.

64

Qij

## I.

I wotè well thou wilt ben our succour,  
 Thou art so full of boantie in certaine,  
 For when a soulè fallith in errour  
 Thine pitie goeth and halith him againe,  
 Then makist thou his pece with his Soverain,  
 And bringist him out of the crokid strete :  
 Whoso the lovith shall not love in vaine,  
 That shall he find as he the life shall lete.

72

## K.

Kalendis enluminid ben they  
 That in this world ben lightid with thine name,  
 And who so goith with the the right wey  
 Him dar not dredin in soule to ben lame.  
 Now Quene of comfort! sith thou art the same  
 To whom I sechin for my medicine  
 Let not mine so no more mine wound entame,  
 Mine hele into thine hond all I refine.

80

## L.

Lady! thine sorrow can I not portrey  
 Undir the croffe, ne his grevous pennaunce ;  
 But for your bothis peine I you do prey  
 Let not our aldir so make his bostaunce  
 That he hath in his leftis, with mischaunce!  
 Convid that that ye both han bought so dere :  
 As I said erst, thou ground of all substaunce!  
 Continue' on us thin pitous eyin clere.

88

## M.

Moyfes, that saw the bosh of flambis rede  
 Brenning, of which then nevir a sticke brend,  
 Was signe of thine unwemmid maidinhede;  
 Thou art the bosh on which there can descend  
 The Holy Ghoft, the which that Moyfes wend  
 Had ben on fire; and this was in figure;  
 Now Lady! fro the fire us defend  
 Which that in hell eternally shall dure.

96

## N.

Noble Princeffe! that nevir haddist pere,  
 Certis if any comfort in us be  
 That commith of the, Christis modir dere!  
 We han none othir melodie ne gle  
 Us to rejoyce in our adversite,  
 Ne advocat that will and dare so prey  
 For us, and that for as lite hire as ye,  
 That helpin for an Ave'mary or twey.

104

## O.

O very light of eyin tho ben blind!  
 O very lust of labour and distresse!  
 O tresorere of bountie to mankind!  
 The whom God chese to moder for humbleffe,  
 From his ancille he made the maistresse  
 Of heven and erth, our bill up for to hede,  
 This world awatith ay on thine godenes,  
 For thou ne failed'est nevir wight at nede.

112

## P.

Purpose I have sometime for to enquire  
 Wherefore and why the Holy Ghost the fought;  
 When Gabriel's voice come to thine ere  
 He not to werre us swich a wondir wrought,  
 But for to save us that he sithin bought;  
 Then nedith us no wepon us to save,  
 But onely there we did not as us ought  
 Do penitence, and mercy aske and have.

120

## Q.

Quene of comfort! right when I me bethinke  
 That I agiltid have both him and the,  
 And that mine soule is worthy for to sinke,  
 Alas! I caitife, whedir shall I fle?  
 Who shall unto thine sonne mine menè be?  
 Who but thine selfe, that art of pitie well?  
 Thou hast more routh on our adverfite  
 Than in this world might any tonguè tell.

128

## R.

Redresse me, modir! and eke me chastise,  
 For certainly my Fadir's chastising  
 Ne dare I not abidin in no wise,  
 So hidèous is his full reckining.  
 Modir! of whom our joy began to spring,  
 Be ye mine judge and eke my soul's lech,  
 For ay in you is pitie abounding  
 To each that will of pity you besech.

136

## S.

Soth is that he ne grauntith no pite  
 Withoutin the, for God of his godeneffe  
 Forgivith none but it like unto the:  
 He hath the made vicaire and maistèresse  
 Of all this world, and eke govirnereffe  
 Of hevin, and repressith his justise  
 Aftir thine will, and therefore in witnesse  
 He hath the crownid in so royall wise.

144

## T.

Temple devout! ther God chese his wonning,  
 Fro which these misbeleved deprivid ben,  
 To you mine foulè penitent I bring;  
 Receve me, for I can no ferthir fleen.  
 With thornis venemous, o hevin Quene!  
 For which the erth accursid was full yore,  
 I am so woundid, as ye may well sene,  
 That I am lost almost, it smert so fore.

152

## V.

Virgine! that art so noble' of apparaile,  
 That ledist us into the highè toure  
 Of Paradise, thou me wise and counsaile  
 How I may have thy grace and thy succour,  
 All have I ben in filth and in errour:  
 Lady! on that countrey thou me adjourne  
 That clepid is thine bench of freshè flour,  
 There as that mercy evir shall sojourne.

160

## X.

Xpen thine sonne, that in this world alight  
 Upon a crosse to suffer his passioun,  
 And suffered eke that Longeus his hert pight,  
 And made his hert'is blodè renne adoun,  
 And all this was for my salvatioun;  
 And I to him am fals and eke unkind,  
 And yet he will not mine dampnatioun;  
 This thanke I you, succour of all mankind! 168

## Y.

Ysaac was figure of his deth certaine,  
 That so ferreforth his fadir would obey  
 That him ne rought nothing for to be flaine;  
 Right so thy sonnè list a lambe to dey:  
 Now Lady full of mercy! I you prey,  
 Sith he his mercy furid me so large,  
 Be ye not scant, for all we sing or say,  
 That ye ben fro vengeance alway our targe. 176

## Z.

Zacharie you clepith the opin well  
 That wisht his sinfull soule out of his guilt,  
 Therefore this lessoun out I will to tell,  
 That n'ere thine tendir hert we werin spilt.  
 Now Lady bright! sith that thou canst and wilt,  
 Ben to the sede of Adam merciabile;  
 Bring us unto that paleis that is built  
 To penitents, that ben to mercie able. 184

*Explicit.*

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